

The True



Witness

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The Issue Between the Government of France and the Vatican.

The True Witness will, under this head, each week give one or more articles of leading thought on this issue, whose paramount importance is arresting the close attention of all civilized countries of the world. We print in to-day's issue a speech delivered before the Protestant Minister's Club this week at Montpelier, Vt., by Rev. Wm. J. O'Sullivan, a very forceful speaker, who fitted for the priesthood at the Grand Seminary, and who has been heard with pleasure in Montreal in past years.

Father O'Sullivan prefaced his remarks with a few preliminary reflections, which he said it would be well to bear in mind for the proper comprehension of the question at issue. From time immemorial, or to be more exact, from the time of the establishment of Christianity in France, to our own day, all church property such as cathedrals, churches, episcopal residences, rectories, seminaries, colleges, church schools, monasteries, convents, land and buildings connected therewith belonged by every right and title to the church, to the monks, to the religious orders, the leading orders of men and women, belonged to them by as clear and fair a claim as the most strict justice and rightful proprietorship could possibly bestow under any law of civilized nations.

These properties were not gifts nor benefactions from the State, they were acquired precisely as similar properties have been and are acquired in our own country, in the United States. Catholics and Catholics alike from the piety and benevolence of individuals and the generosity and sacrifices of the faithful. This is simply a matter of positive history within the reach of all who wish to investigate. It is true that during the revolution of 1789, when anarchy, chaos, dementia, bloodshed, error reigned supreme, and the rights of God and man were outraged and set at naught church property of every description was sequestered, confiscated and sold, but when order was restored under Napoleon Bonaparte, who, with the true insight of the great statesman that he was—notwithstanding the overrunning ambition that brought him to Waterloo, exile and forlorn death, recognized and appreciated the fact that religion was a condition—"sine qua non"—an imperative necessity requisite, without which there could be no hope nor earnest peace, order or stability for the state. Hence it was that in 1801 he proposed to Pope Pius the VII, the reigning Pontiff and supreme authority in the Catholic Church throughout the world in matters ecclesiastical and spiritual, an agreement, a bilateral contract in perpetuity to be observed, kept and held by both parties until dissolved—mutually by said parties—that in the government of France and the supreme authority of the Catholic Church. In accordance with the contract and agreement, all accessible, tangible, properties, such as cathedrals, churches, schools, colleges, seminaries, monasteries, convents, rectories, etc., were to be restored to the church with clear title of unfettered proprietorship as before the revolution, with this proviso, that the certain church property, amounting to several millions' worth, had been sold by the revolutionary directors to individuals, and as it would be extremely difficult to reclaim these properties, the state, the government of France, guaranteed by this contract and agreement to pay in perpetuity as above stated a certain salary to the bishops and priests of the Catholic Church of France, which would amount to about 1 per cent of the values restored. Now, this agreement is the famous "concordat" between the government of France and the supreme authority of the Catholic Church, the Pope of Rome, and right there is the spark, the kernel, which explains and dates the whole question of issue

Pope Pius VII substantially consented to this contract and agreement for the Church of France, and for more than one hundred years this "concordat," or agreement, was in force and observed to the letter.

And now in our day and time comes the so-called Republic of France, the most tyrannical and despotic government on the face of the earth, masquerading under the name of liberty. The Chamber of Deputies and state officials composed of anarchists, socialists, infidels, haters of God and Christianity, issuing their ukase—Down with God—Down with religion. Therefore, separate the state from the Church. No more protection of the Church and her rights by the state.

The Church and the state have been heretofore united for the common good, for the welfare of all. We will put an end to that; we will separate. Then comes the law of separation under Combes. The solemn sacred "concordat" is done away with, the bilateral contract is set aside in ridicule and scorn. We will separate the Church and state. Yes, but we will appropriate all church property, no matter what the title or just claim of the Church. We, the Chamber of Deputies, we, the government of France, own all. Therefore, you nuns and sisters of France, though we have decorated you with the cross of the legion of honor for your deeds of heroism on the battlefield and your untold works of charity and benevolence, you must go. We want your convents and monasteries, your institutions and revenues, and they have gone, scattered over the world, therefore you monks and religious orders, who in medieval times preserved to the world the classic literature of ancient times and made France the garden of Europe, you must go. We want your properties and they have gone with untold loss to France—an inestimable boom to the world at large. The next progressive move on the part of the liberty loving Republic of France is the law of Cathedral associations, according to which the faithful may use their own churches, provided the municipality in which a certain church may be located, elect a body of trustees, who, apart from the authority of the bishop of the diocese may select, appoint, reject, or dismiss any clergyman, whomsoever, according to their own whim and sweet goodwill, and these trustees may be infidel, Jew or gentile or anything else. Having thus, after the manner of the highway gentleman with the mask and the flaming muzzle of the gun, sequestered and confiscated their cultural churches and all other property, this admirable, generous, liberty-loving republic of France courteously, announces to the clergy and Catholic people of the country that they will have permission to meet in their own churches for divine worship if they will only inform the government when they, the clergy and people, desire thus to assemble. Add to this that it is a legal misdemeanor for the clergy, or anyone else for that matter, to say a word good, bad or indifferent in criticism of the government or its enactments, add again to this that seminaries, ecclesiastical students, priests and even bishops and cardinals under 40 years of age are subject to the law of conscription, that is, that they, whilst citizens of France or returning to France from abroad, must serve three years in the army, and we begin to have a glimmer, a faint idea of what liberty of conscience, freedom of divine worship amount to in France to-day.

Now in face of this condition, this treatment of religion in this twentieth century Christianity and civilization, what is the attitude of the Pope, Bishop of Rome and the acknowledged supreme head of Christianity, or of the mother church of the world as some would have it? What is his response, his advice and counsel? Peace, patience, passive resistance but no violence. The government of France has outraged the dignity of nations, broken its solemn

and sacred compact with us. We and our predecessors kept and fulfilled its every provision to the letter, we have not been consulted with regard to its annulment, but let it go for peace sake. They have robbed you, despoiled you; support your clergy by your voluntary contributions, but make no compromise with tyranny and injustice. This we cannot do under the guise of policy, diplomacy, or otherwise; with St. Peter, the first Pope of Rome, we must say "non possumus," "we cannot." Let justice be done, let justice and right prevail though the heavens fall. This is but a step on the painful way of the cross, it is only a glimpse of Calvary; history must repeat itself; the servant, the spouse must walk in the way of the master, but the darkness and gloom will disappear from the fair lands of beautiful France, the clouds will break again as of yore, and the brightness and glory of the resurrection will illumine her horizon once more, and bring peace and gladness to the hearts of her children again. God still reigns, let men rough hew their ways as they will.

But it may be said, is not the population, are not the people of France, Catholics by an overwhelming majority? Why, then, do they endure this condition of things? Can they not by their suffrage, by their votes, turn the rascals out. Yes, very good in theory, but in practice somewhat different. In our own country governmental patronage is somewhat potential and has a practical bearing on our elections, but it is not a comparison in any feature whatsoever to what it is in France. There it goes down into every avenue and branch of business, commercial, mechanical, agricultural, etc. Every body who wants to do business in any walk of life or enterprise of any kind must have the government tag. They are the "creatures," the proteges of the government. We Americans can theorize, stand aghast and say how can this be? But, perhaps we may understand the situation somewhat if we reflect and consider conditions at home in our own country. What about the syndicates, the monopolies, the combines, the oligarchies within our own borders, which are said to own the United States Senate? The "Millionaire's Club" as it is called, ruling the United States, the home of liberty and freedom. What do your votes amount to against their power and influence? Even our grand, patriotic, sincere, single-minded President has to cater to the financial autocrats that in reality govern our country.

If this regime of spoliation and confiscation were applied to our own country, how would the people like it? If the local government should take Montpelier Seminary, Bethany Church, the Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church and St. Augustine's Church and school and apply the same regulations in regard to their rights, how would the citizens like it?

Let us beware! There is a monster looming up and showing its head even over our mountains—anarchy, socialism, widespread discontent and restiveness under the duress of uncontrolled autocrats in wealth and influence. Beautiful France is suffering to-day from the infidel, anti-Christian writings of Voltaire and Rousseau. Let us beware! Our public libraries are becoming a danger and a menace to our country. As a Vermont citizen, as a clergyman I want to thank Governor Proctor for his brave, sincere, wise words to the pupils of the commercial class of St. Michael's school. "I know," said he on this memorable occasion, "that our public libraries are filled with books perhaps harmless in themselves, but dangerous, injurious in the hands of children, because of the pernicious principles they proclaim regarding God, humanity, society and government. Children, young men, young ladies, have your reading supervised by your rev. pastor or by the good Sisters and you will be saved from this contamination, this insidious poison that is scattered broadcast over the country perverting the minds and corrupting the hearts of the youth of the country."

Would to God that these words of wisdom and warning were heard and

heeded in every school and home of the United States. Would to God that they had such men as Governor Proctor guiding the ship of State in France to-day.

But the reflection will naturally suggest itself, in his day, in the face of the experience of the past and the lessons of their own history, how can the men of France be so foolish—what can be their motive? Well, it is said, "whom the Gods would destroy they first dement—make foolish."

HON. JAMES BRYCE

Washington's New Ambassador, Pays Warm Tribute to Irish.

On the eve of his departure to take up the work of British Ambassador to the United States, Hon. James Bryce, one of the foremost diplomats of England, pays a warm tribute to the Irish people. A cable from London says:

"Since Irish affairs promise to monopolize our next Parliamentary session, peculiar interest attaches to Mr. Bryce's two speeches last week, at Newcastle and Aberdeen. He spoke with a wonderful sense of responsibility, neither overflowing too much with easy sympathy for the Irish cause, whose battles he need no longer fight, nor dwelling too prominently on the difficulties which his successor must meet. The law, he insisted, must still protect private rights and private property, and preserve peace even when both parties wanted to break it, which is not uncommon, he said, in Ireland. The disorder of which we hear so much, or have heard so much in the past, has never practically disappeared, nevertheless the demand which Ireland makes for some changes in her administration and government is still undiminished."

"He dwelt upon the fact that many of the changes which Ireland needs cannot be given her because they would not be accepted unless they were given by some sort of Irish authority. 'The Irish people,' he concluded, 'are by no means so unfit for self-government as it suits some of us in England to think.'"

Catholics Ready to Defend Faith with Arms.

Cabinet Conceding

Paris, Jan. 22.—M. Delahaye, Conservative, in the Senate to-day, declared that the Catholics were ready to die for their faith, and that if attempts were made to close the chapels of Notre Dame de Lourdes and of Montmartre, they would defend them with arms. The Senator added: "MM. Combes, Clemenceau and Briand cannot suppress God."

The Cabinet to-day approved a bill suppressing the formality requiring a declaration before holding a public meeting, as required by the law of 1881, thus creating a *modus vivendi* under which the churches can remain open for public worship, even though the Vatican authorities persevere in their present attitude. The new bill was introduced in the Chamber of Deputies to-day.

Episcopal Minister Embraces Catholic Faith.

Uniontown, Pa.—Rev. Dr. S. E. J. Lloyd, for thirty years a rector in the Episcopal Church, and for four years rector of St. Peter's Church in this city, preached his farewell sermon last Sunday, preparatory to renouncing the Episcopal faith and embracing the Catholic. On January 30 Dr. Lloyd will go to Chicago, where he will join the Catholic Church, devoting his time to doing missionary work in Chicago. He will be accompanied by his wife and son, who also will embrace the Catholic faith. In his sermon Dr. Lloyd said that he considered Catholicism the only true religion, and that he will devote the remainder of his days to convincing others of it. He was presented with many tokens of esteem by the members of the congregation.

Abbey's Effervescent Salt

ALL DRUGGISTS, 25 and 60c. BOTTLE.

"TYPHOID"

This preparation puts the whole system in the best possible condition to avoid the above very prevalent malady and resist its enervating effects. A morning glass—a deserts spoonful in a tumbler of tepid water—you will not regret.

Fire at Cote des Neiges.

Brothers of the Holy Cross suffer \$15,000 Damage.

The chapel in connection with the Normal School of the Brothers of the Holy Cross at Cote des Neiges was damaged to the extent of \$15,000 last night, causing havoc in the school and practically wrecking the infirmary. Combustion started in the chapel, and, although there were twenty persons in the infirmary and school, all escaped without injury. The fire was caused by the straw in the Infant Jesus crib becoming ignited in some manner.

The chapel, school and infirmary were all contained in a wooden structure situated about five hundred yards from the large boys' college, which contains over three hundred inmates. The Normal School occupied the west end, the infirmary the east end, and the chapel, where the fire originated, the angle.

The fire was discovered at seven o'clock by Brother Alexis, the Superior of the Normal School. He found that all the portion of the interior near the altar was ablaze and he was almost suffocated by the smoke which rushed to his face.

The local brigade, in charge of Chief Lawlor, was prompt in responding to the alarm, but fearing lest the flames might reach the college, Mr. E. F. Prendergast, a citizen, telephoned to the city for help. A reel from the Chaboillez Square station reached the scene in about fifteen minutes. With three streams, the firemen had the blaze under control in about half an hour, but not before the chapel had been reduced to ashes. As to the contiguous school and infirmary, the structures were left standing, but the interior is so badly damaged by water and smoke particularly the infirmary, that they will have to be pulled down.

While working at the top of a ladder, Chief Lawlor was struck on the head by a piece of wood which fell from the roof, but he sustained only a slight bruise. A local fireman named Paquette lost his footing and dropped from a third story dormer window into a snow bank without sustaining any serious injury.

The total loss is estimated at \$15,000, of which \$5,000 is covered by a policy in the Alliance Assurance Co.

Father Adam was, at the last meeting of the Board, delegated to interview the parish priest and obtain more information.

On Tuesday night Father Adam reported that the school was practically filled to its capacity and that admission had been refused to about two hundred pupils, who had been obliged to seek other schools. He believed it would be of advantage to the Board to have such an institution under its control. He said it was Father Callaghan's wish that the Board should assume the payment of salaries immediately, but in case the Board was unable to do so, he was willing to wait till next September.

When Father Adam had completed his report, Judge Piche proposed that it be set in writing.

Father O'Meara, on the other hand, thought something ought to be done at once. Judge Piche observed that any proposal which came from his side of the table always seemed to be suspected and made the object of unnecessary fuss.

"That may be your own opinion. In this case, I would advise you to speak for yourself, and not judge others by what you think. We are no longer children, to be spoken to in this manner, nor is this place the court house," replied Father O'Meara.

"If you are not in the court house, I am not here to be catechised," retorted Judge Piche.

Commissioner Vallieres pronounced himself in favor of accepting the report immediately. Judge Piche raised a point of order to the effect that all the discussion over this matter had no right to take place, as the report of Father Adam did not appear on the order of the day.

Father O'Meara then wanted to know how it was that the report did not appear there and who had made out the order of the day.

Judge Piche answered that he did not know.

"But we ought to be able to learn who made out this order of the day," continued Father O'Meara. "What if a fool had made it out?"

Commissioner Semple maintained the point of order raised by Judge Piche, and the incident was closed upon the adoption of the Judge's motion for the placing of Father Adam's report in writing.

A Chained Library.

One of the finest of living Irishmen is Sir William Butler, the commander of the forces in South Africa, whose position it was the first consideration of the English party to destroy. An early chapter of General Butler's life is Canadian, which, of course, makes his career still more familiar to Irishmen in Canada. The General has lately been lecturing upon the future of Ireland. In this future he insists that the Irish people shall make their own laws, shall educate their children as they wish, and shall tax themselves and spend the taxes as they like. To the hastening of this future he counsels the rising generation of Irishmen to strict temperance. Temperance, he reminds us, leads in the first place to just judgment, just judgment leads to justice, and justice is the virtue opposed to all cruelty. Justice is outraged by modern barbarians, who drive priests from their churches in France and women from their homes in South Africa.

CARDINAL RICHARD'S THANKS.

Mr. Frank J. Curran, president of St. Patrick's Society, has received from Paris the following cablegram in reply to the message of sympathy sent by the Society to the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris: "Lively thanks for pious sympathy of our Irish and Canadian brethren Cardinal Richard."