

In the eyes of the people of Paris Father MONSIEUR's cowardice was taken as a concession of the weakness of his cause, and was the subject of no little ridicule and remarks such as are freely indulged in by professional would-be wits, whose life is spent in sceptical mockery of the pretensions of all religious systems. There is no doubt, however, that the Dominican preacher acted according to the directions of his ecclesiastical superiors, whose experience in the line of public religious discussions has of late years been disastrous rather than advantageous to their cause. This cause, it may be noticed, has already been somewhat roughly handled by Father HYACINTHE in France, Bishop HERZOG in Switzerland, and Bishop REINKENS in Germany. Still objectors urge, if their cause is suffering, that of Pere HYACINTHE does not advance. To this is the answer: That if M. LORSON is not making more rapid progress in France, it is due to various hindrances. Not the least of these is the father's own impracticability. In the earlier part of his career he was so long kept under by the despotic rule of his ecclesiastical superiors both "religious" and secular, that he has well nigh become impatient of any superiors or any restraint whatever. He has arrived at the pitch when he must be CÆSAR or nothing. Hence the fears entertained as to his indisposition to submit even to the modified oversight of the Bishop of Edinburgh. Yet some such oversight is essential; for as he is at present the sole priest, the sole minister in his Church, if Church it may be called, which consists of but two congregations, to consecrate him a bishop would be a manifest absurdity, and would expose the movement in its very infancy to the ridicule of a people only too ready as all times to jibe at whatever they fancy exposes itself to being jibed at. Another difficulty lies in the unwillingness of Frenchmen to accept the Christian faith in any shape outside that of Rome. With all their hatred of religion, and their attractions towards infidelity, they are not so unreasoning as not to understand that a Church without a bishop, without a head, without a fixed standard of doctrine and discipline, is an anomaly, and inconsistent with the idea of the Church as founded by CHRIST—the only ideal a Frenchman has ever had placed before him. Wherefore, till the new society has been constituted in accordance with that pattern, and till it shows itself in communion with, and under the jurisdiction of one of the branches of the Catholic Church other than the Roman, the average Frenchman will look upon it simply as another Protestant sect, without any pretensions to Catholicity, and destined either to degenerate into a mere nest of fanaticism, or to die away with its author after an existence more or less brilliant. Another hindrance undoubtedly is that mighty wave of infidelity which is once more sweeping over France under the auspices of her present rulers, the opposition to whose godlessness, as well in the schools as in politics, offered, and rightly offered by the authorities of the Roman Church, is drawing a sharp line of demarcation between the religious and the irreligious of the country. With the latter class unhappily must be joined for this turn, all not professing *ex animo* the most Ultramontane doctrines. That is to say, lukewarm and selfseeking political religionists of the Roman Church, infidels, and the most of the so-called French Protestants, have made common cause in favour of a nearly utterly godless system of instruction—as bad as that with which this Dominion is afflicted—as opposed to an education in to which dogmatic principles of religion enter definitely as a part of the every-day teaching in the

schools. Against this flood of unfaith, an isolated congregation or two, such as those of Father HYACINTHE, must clearly be well nigh powerless; and it is to be feared that many of the adherents of what rather boastfully claims to be the Gallican National Church are drawn together from a desire to listen to the wondrous eloquence of a man who occupies an anomalous, almost a nondescript position in the religious world, rather than from any real zeal for the Catholic faith. Their sole bond of union at present seems to be antagonism to the hard yoke that Vaticanism lays upon men's shoulders, and to the spirit of forbidding all free enquiry which is one of the differentiating marks between the Roman Church and Catholicism. At the same time, however, it must not be forgotten that all great religious movements and reformatinos take time. The Church of England, with all the aid that kings and queens could give her, was not cleared of error in a day. The Old Catholics of Germany are only just beginning to make head against the combined evils of infidelity under the guise of Lutheranism, prejudice and bigotry in the dress of Vaticanism, and open unfaith as presented by the disciples of STRAUSS and the Rationalists. In Switzerland Bishop HERZOG's strength of character, and his well organized system, are only just able slowly but surely to fight against the Unitarian Calvinists, and the furious Vaticanists, who are opposing him on either side. It would, therefore, be manifestly unfair to look for any rapid developments from the preaching and ministry of Father HYACINTHE. It is a matter for congratulation and hopeful prayer for the future to see that in spite of fierce opposition, and what is worse, the treachery of false friends in the priesthood, his community has been able not only to hold its own but also to become "two bands;" one, numbering 1,200 souls, worshipping in a church on the right bank of the Seine, in the Quartier Latin, the haunt of the students and the frequenters of the Sorbonne; the other, a much smaller building, on the left bank of the same river. Each of these chapels is crowded when the ex-friar officiates. This can easily be accounted for. Besides the charm of his eloquence, his theological education enables him to speak in terms the best fitted to reach an audience already imbued with religious sentiments. His imagination is as vivid as of old; his powers of describing Scriptural scenes as vigorous as before; while his conceptions are as harmonious in their utterances and as fervid in their colouring as when they swayed thousands in the cathedral of Notre Dame. His protests against the usurpations of the Papacy have lost none of their force, nor his arguments anything of their logic. His reverence for the Holy Scriptures as the paramount authority in matters of faith has deepened in proportion as his revolt from the un-Catholic dogma of the Infallibility has become more pronounced. His recognition of the authority of the early Councils, whose infallibility, however, he denies, is warm and grateful; and while he does not undervalue the great doctrine of Justification of Faith, he is careful not to involve himself in the errors of LUTHER and CALVIN by dissociating from that salient dogma its other half that works must enter into a man's religious life. As regards the Holy Eucharist Father HYACINTHE holds the Catholic faith as taught in the Catechism of the Church of England, that of the spiritual presence of CHRIST'S Body and Blood on the Altar after the words of consecration have been pronounced by the priest, and where, to the central truth of a commemorative sacrifice being offered at every Celebration. His Liturgy, with some alterations, is

that of the old Gallican Church, and is in French, not in Latin. Like COUNT CAMPELLO, he advocates voluntary confession; he vindicates with all his accustomed vigour the claims of the priesthood to the powers of the Keys; and insists, as an essential mark of the Church, on the doctrine of Apostolical Succession. Hence arises his strong desire to be formally affiliated to one of the recognized branches of the Catholic Church, and his determination, as soon as possible, to be adopted by the Scottish Church, under whose protection he has already placed himself. For all these reasons, therefore, it would seem a positive misfortune to the Church Catholic, if the movement he has so happily inaugurated should prove abortive. A general upheaval at present rules in France and separation between Church and State is imminent. With that separation must come the downfall of Ultramontaniam. What shall take its place? The true French Christians are longing for a Gallican National Church. These aspirations are indulged in by many priests and laymen who dare not avow them, but yet would fain break those present galling fetters which enslave their intellects and hamper their desires for a spiritual freedom, and give them instead a Church which shall combine Catholicity with liberty of thought, speech, and action. This Father HYACINTHE is prepared to offer them, and those who have accepted his teaching, though in many cases rather sympathetic proselytes than decided Christians, form a nucleus, round which the faithful in France will be able to cluster, on the arrival of that day when they must choose between the despotism of "free thought" and Vaticanism combined, or the baldness of the Protestant sects whose modicum of truth, in most instances, not untainted with gross error, can never satisfy the Catholic minded. To these the nascent Gallican Church of which Father HYACINTHE is the coryphaeus, will offer itself as the golden mean—none the less golden because self-seeking priests who have professed to join him have abandoned him in his hour of need, and calumniated him in public journals, which, like the *Figaro*, aim at serving their own interests by pandering to the worldling and playing the tuft-hunter to high ecclesiastical dignitaries, who would fain shut their eyes to the fact that the truth and beauty of the reformed Gallican Church are becoming known beyond the limits of Paris. Father HYACINTHE aims at the dissemination of light, and, therefore, does not confine himself solely to the metropolis, but occasionally makes tours in the provinces, delivering lectures and winning over influential proselytes to the cause he holds most sacred. It will thus be seen that in the development of the movement thus begun greater completeness must result. The end would doubtless be the coalescing of the Old Catholic Church of Germany and Switzerland, the Jansenist Church of Holland, and the Gallican Church of France—all of which would be in communion with the Churches of England, Scotland, Ireland, and America. To this coalition the Italian National Church, of which Count CAMPELLO is the pioneer, would aggregate itself; and thus we should see a new phase of the Reformation, four Churches arising out the present unreformed Roman Church, and their junction with five others, their elder sisters in the faith. Given that position, the reunion of Christendom—the central point of so many a longing gaze, would not be the utopian project that so many of the faithful at present believe it to be. *Adsit fausta dies!*

CATHOLIC CATECHISM.

No. XXIII.

Q. What is Ritual?