The Catholic Necord.

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THE QUESTION OF REUNION.

The Pope's letter addressed to the English people in behalf of Christian have replies sent to it from various about. quarters, from clergymen as individuals, as well as from those who from their prominent position have a representative character.

O: the latter class are the answers sent some time ago by the Archbishop of Canterbury and by the Presbyterian General Assembly. These answers though couched in respectful words such as would not have been addressed to the Holy Father by the same persons or bodies a very short time ago, hold out very little hope of any present official movement toward reunion. The objections which they all raise to the Holy Father's appeal are very much on the same ground, namely that he does not propose any com promise of doctrine in return for their acceptance of his offer to receive them kindly on their return to the one fold. There is also running through all the formal answers hitherto sent a very plain though somewhat disguised demand made, somewhat in the form of an ultimatum sent by one Government to another before a declaration of war, that the Holy Father shall virtually recognize the negotiating Churches as being integral organizations, fully entitled to be classed as independent branches of one great Church of Christendom.

This has been even more plainly stated by the press to be the only con dition on which the thought of the re union of Christendom can be entertained for a moment. Thus some o the London papers, especially the Standard, declared that as a preliminary condition of negotiations for reunion, the Pope must acknowledge that he treats with the Anglican establish ment on perfectly equal terms, and with a readiness to yield a good deal, even as he expected the Establishment also to yield something.

This view of the case is so supremely absurd and alien to the nature of the Church as established by Christ, that we wonder its incongruity does not appear to the gentlemen who have given expression to it. The Church of Christ Christian unity, and that the indwellwas not instituted for the purpose of effecting a combination with the religions which were to be found in the world, by a compromise of dectrine, whereby each religion should yield some prominent article of its belief, while others were to be incorporated into the common belief : and the New Testament shows clearly enough that the Apostles never entertained for a world to Christianity by any such method.

Christianity possessed the truth, and the first Christian missionaries were sent by Christ to make known that truth without abatement to the whole world, and the Catholic Church necessarily takes the same course at this day as she received from Christ the commis sion so to do.

The absurdity of asking the Catholic Church to yield some of her doctrines in order to effect a union will be apparent when it is considered that if we except the doctrine of the Pope's supremacy over the whole Church, which is practically rejected by all! Protestants, there cannot be named a single dectrine at issue between Catholics and Protestants, on which the latter agree, and even within the Church of England itself there is to be found every gradation of doctrine from extreme Latitudinarianism or Broad Churchism to extreme Ritualism or High Churchism, which admits and vindicates the truth of every Catholic doctrine. Every some and rejected by other sects.

We have said that the doctrine of the Pope's supremacy is the only one universally rejected by Protestant sects, but the very fact that they entertain the thought of negotiating for a reaccept this fundamental doctrine, at least in some modified form, among Christians is one which will way.

generally, and in fact no scheme has been proposed among them whereby such a compromise.

An incident has occurred at Grindelwald which at first sight might appear to contradict our view of the situation. Our readers will remember that a considerable number of prominent Protestant ministers of various denominations have been accustomed to meet annually at this Swiss town, which affords them a convenient opportunity of assembling in conference while they enjoy a pleasant vacation in visiting the mountain scenery of Switzerland. The object of this annual meeting is to confer on the subject of Christian unity, and to concoct reunion has not ceased even yet to measures whereby it may be brought

> The Holy Father's address to the English people was one of the subjects with which such a conference would be naturally expected to deal, and it was in fact discussed at the last meeting of the conference, and a letter has been forwarded to the Pope in reply to his appeal for unity. The document is signed by eighteen Anglican, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Baptist and Methodist members of the Conference.

> This document is in several respects a very strange one. The signers declare that "We lament the present divided state of Christendom, and with our Holiness we pray continually for the visible unity of the Catholic and Apostolic Church." Again, toward the close, the reply expresses the hope that the Triune God in His great power and mercy may overrule all things to the end that the visible unity of His Church may at length be fully mani fested according to His purpose.

It is acknowledged, therefore, that n the purpose of the Almighty that the Church of Christ on earth should be visibly one. It is surely a natural in erence from this that there is in the Church some means instituted by God for the preservation of unity, some bond of union and supreme authority which ought to be respected; and ye another clause of the letter declares that the teachings of history show that existing divisions arose in defence of vital elements of Apostolic Christi anity and Scriptural truth." It is thus in one breath acknowledged that God instituted His Church to be one, and in the next, that man has the right to rend that unity, instead of being under obligation to submit to the authority residing in the Church to restrain dissensions, an authority instiuted by God Himself.

But the most curious feature of this document is the method it suggests for attaining unity. It states: "We are persuaded that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the only possible centre of ing spirit of the Father and the Son in every Christian heart not only constitutes a spiritual unity which man can neither create nor destroy, but furnishes the conditions of that manifested unity for which our Blessed Lord prayed.

Never was there made a more des perate attempt than this to travel by land and water at the same time. The moment the thought of converting the divine purpose of maintaining a visible unity of the Church is declared, vet we are told that the only bond of unity which can be recognized is the invisible indwelling spirit in every Christian heart, subject to the invisible head of the Church! This is evidently but an apology, and very lame one, for the divided state of the sects, and for which no remedy s applicable as long as sects are to b retained and adhered to; and very coolly the Grindelwalders propose that there shall be a unity, but a unity which shall preserve sectarianism with all its diversities and eccentricit ies. Here is the proposition in their own words:

"We believe that unity must be at tained, not by the absorption of Chris tians in any one communion of the divided Catholic Church, but by such a union as will conserve all the element of Christian truth and practice which in the Providence of God the various Christian communions have severally exhibited and defended.

We have heard very much of late in the way of objection to "absorption" Catholic doctrine is also accepted by of one sect by another in the event of a union being effected by any two denominations; but hitherto these objections have been uttered by individuals.

There is therefore no room for preserve a Babel of doctrine in the any compromise of doctrine which new Christian Church which will rewould be acceptable to Protestant sects sult from reunion. The Grindelwald idea is certainly a novel one for Christians, who have generally believed harmony could be attained by making that Christ instituted the ministry of His Church, "some Apostles and some Prophets, and other some Evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors for the edifying of the body of Christ: until we all meet into the unity of faith. . . that henceforth we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." (Eph. iv. 14.)

> According to the Grindelwald idea. it is absolutely necessary that united Christendom shall have a variety of tion at a considerable distance from the winds to which it may trim its sails railway stations, and the people are

From all this one thing is pretty clear, that the negotiations for unity which have hitherto been carried on between the various sects are not likely to have any practical results; and as far as the Pope's invitation to the people of England is concerned it is not likely that there will be any general or corporate movement toward union, but we may reasonably hope that there will be a movement of individuals toward the Church on so large a scale that the final result will be a real reunion without going through futile negotiations to prevent the "absorption " of sects.

SECRET SOCIETIES.

The Rev. Peter Rosen, of Heidelburg, Minnesota, has taken occasion from the recent condemnation of secret societies by the Pope, to issue a pamphlet on secret societies, in which be sets forth the reasons why Catholics cannot consistently be members of such associations, chiefly because they are religious organizations, and that the religion they teach is "a revival of Neoplatonism and the old Alexandrian syncretism which sprung up in the third century of our era as the rival of the Christian Church."

These words are said especially of the Odd-fellows. We are aware that Freemasonry, which is a society of much greater age than the Odd Fel lows, and which has a history mos varied, has a record which connects i directly with efforts to overturn Christianity, but it does not follow that all associations, even those which somewhat distantly, though too closely. imitate Freemasonry, have the same designs in view. A recent decree of the Holy Father

Pope Leo XIII., has condemned Odd ellowship, the Knights of Pythias, and similar societies, and we can entertain no doubt of the justice of this decree. The doctrines of the Catholic Church show that all oaths not taken in "jus tice, judgment, and truth " are unlaw ful, and on this ground the oaths taken by Odd Fellows and the Knights of Pythias are highly objectionable They are against justice, because under pretence of fraternity they oblige those who become members of these societies to set their brotherhood above the law by making them conceal crime when their brethren are the per petrators. Their oaths lack judgment. because the members of the society submit themselves to obey mandate which may be evil, and which experi ence proves to have been often evil.

Truth, too, is violated by thes oaths because, directly or indirectly, the members bind themselves to a specie of battledore and shuttlecock game with truth whenever the interests of these societies is at stake in examina tions before the public authorities.

We have no desire to defend these societies against the condemnation of the Holy See. There is plenty of reason in their nature and their man ner of procedure to merit condemna tion, and to show why Catholics should not become members of them, but we cannot give our approval to the invention of fanciful reasons why they should be condemned.

Father Rosen's book contains much useful and valuable information in regard to the condemned societies of which it treats, and gives good reas ons why Catholics should not join them; yet it appears to us that through excess of zeal he makes them responsible for the perpetration of evils they have never contemplated.

There is sufficient to justify the Holy Father in condemning these societies, in the fact of the rash oaths they take and not by any body professing to have without making them responsible for a representative character. The Grin what is not attributable to them ; but delwald conference is, we believe, the at all events, Catholics should not by union, shows that they are ready to first to put it on record that the only any means become members of these unity which is possible or desirable societies, or encourage them in any

RELIGION IN RUSSIA.

The Russian Schismatical clergy appear to have been stirred up of late with somewhat of a missionary spirit, and through Siberia, where there are no churches, and where owing to the sparseness of the population, a number of railway cars have been fitted up with all the appurtenances of a Greek church or chapel, and these cars are taken along with the railway trains and left at the stations along the route so that Mass may be celebrated and the sacraments administered to the people from time to time. These cars or churches on wheels are also sometimes drawn to villages or centres of populafor a journey toward all points of the given such instruction in religion as is usual in the Greek Church. In this way thousands of people are now reached more or less efficiently who have never, or at least very seldom, hitherto had an opportunity to attend the Orthodox service. One or two priests are in attendance in each car, and the religious spirit is infused into many who have been only nominally members of the Church.

In addition to this, the means of pro pagating the orthodox faith by the vio ent suppression of other religions is not neglected. Mussulmen, who are numerous in the empire, are generally left to enjoy and practice their pecu iar belief with very little interference from the Government. Their number is about 9,000,000 of whom about 3,000,000 are in European Russia and Siberia, he majority being in Central Asia, and 2,000,000 in Caucasia. There are also nearly 600,000 Pagans, most of when are Buddhists.

The Protestant population amounts o about 2,300,000. These are mostly Lutherans, originally from Germany, and they are the nucleus of the pro German party of the empire.

The Catholics are mostly in Poland, where they number 4,500,000. In the est of the empire there are about 3 000 000 Catholics, some of whom use he Latin, and others one of the Oriental liturgies, chiefly the Lithuanian or the Ruthenian. Those who use the Oriental liturgies are known by the name Uniats, or the United Greeks, and the Gregorian Armenians

The Jews have been subjected at various times to persecution, and this persecution was carried to great extremity under the late Czar, but the motive of it seemed to be more political than religious. It appears to have arisen partly from the supposition that their proclivities were toward Germany, and partly from the conviction that in their greed for the accumulation of wealth, they oppressed the rural population, especially in their character as money-lenders. Their persecution has abated under the pres ent Czar.

Among the Protestant sects, the inoffensive Mennonites twenty years ago claimed a population of 40,000. chiefly in the southern part of European Russia. These emigrated on a large scale to the United States and Canada, not on account of religious persecution, but because the military laws were changed. They are not allowed by their religious belief to serve in the army, and up to that time they were legally exempted from military duty. But the large armaments which the Europ ean powers now find it needful to main tain caused the Government to abolish the exemption, and as a consequence the Mennonites made a general exodus from the country.

Outside of the religious beliefs w have enumerated there is a large number of sects not conforming to the Russian Church, of which they are offshoots.

Persecution extends to some of these sects, especially to the Raskolniks, who are very numerous, though it is impossible to ascertain their number, as the Government ignores their existence, and refuses even to estimate them in the official census. The chief reason for which they are persecuted is be cause of their frequent and stolid resistance to the general policy of the Government.

The Catholics and Protestants have both been subjected to severe persecution on religious grounds, as it has long been the policy of the Government to oblige all to acknowledge the Czar as the religious, as well as the secular, head of the Empire.

A recent cable despatch states that the Polish Catholics are now complaining of persecution because the priests were ordered to read in their churches in the Russian language the announcement of the recent birth of the Princess Olga, and that they have ap- Catholic Times.

pealed to the Vatican to protest against the order.

There can be no doubt that there is something more serious than this, if they have asked the Holy Father to interfere for their protection. The fact that the despatch emphasizes the giving of the order that the announce ment was required to be read in Russian, leads to a suspicion that there was something more than the mere ordering that this announcement should be made. It is probable that the order forbade the use of the Polish language in instructing the people the only language in which they can be effectually taught; for it is well understood that it is the aim of the Government to abolish all that is distinctively Polish in order to Russianize the population, and eventually to in duce, or rather to force, them into the rthodox Church. The priests naturally resist orders

given them to disuse the Polish tongue, as it must be employed to have the people understand their teaching. If such orders are complied with it means that the people are to grow up in ignorance of their religion, and of everything else. It is no such mild measure as the mere order that an announcement should be made of the birth of a Princess, that would make the priests appeal to the Pope, but we can readily understand that they feel aggrieved at being prevented from speaking to the people in their own tongue.

It is scarcely a year since twentyfour priests and ecclesiastics were panished to Central Russia from the Seminary of Kielce for giving instruction in Polish to the seminarians. The pretence was that seditious literature was circulated under cover of the Pol ish language. The sedition consisted merely in the circulation of purely reigious publications in connection with he Apostleship of Prayer. The pretext was, therefore, of the flimsiest possible character.

Many priests have been deported and churches closed to the Catholics or pretexts equally frivolous, the churches being turned, in most instances, into orthodox chapels: and parishes have been deprived of their pastors, leaving, in many instances, several parishes with a combined population of six or eight thousand souls to be ministered to by a single priest who has to travel forty or fifty and even sixty versts (from twenty six to forty miles) to fulfil the duties of his office and these priests are not even allowed to have curates, if curates could be procured, which is itself a difficulty owing to the banishment of so many priests. In consequence of these persecuting

measures the people cannot be pro perly instructed, and their faith in many places grows cold, and the neglect of their religious duties is most deplorable. It is somewhat astonishing, too, that Russia should thus wage ar upon the Catholic Church, whose teachings develop good citizens : for the Government ought to know that it could not adopt more efficient measures than they employ to propagate Nihilism and Anarchism, which are the greatest causes of terror to the authorities. There is no surer way to create Anarchists then to deprive the people of their religion. They who sow the wind shall surely reap the whirlwind, and this Russia is reaping abundantly.

Recently Governor Kochanov, whose jurisdiction extends from Wilna over the greater part of Russian Poland. gave orders that Government architects should not approve of the building of any Catholic churches unless they can easily be turned into Orthodox "tserkievs." The object of this is, of course, that they may be ultimately seized by the Government for the schismatical worship.

In spite of all these arbitrary meas ures, the Poles, especially in Podlachia, are firm as a rock in their adherence to their faith. They have never shown more religious fervor than at he present moment.

was hoped at the beginning o the reign of the young Czar that he would pursue a more liberal and tolerant policy, the more especially as he manifested considerable respect for the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII; but from present appearances, it does not seem that these expectations are to be realized.

She is now a Catholic.

On Saturday last Miss Charlotte Frazer, daughter of Dr. Persifor Frazer, the eminent scientist of this city, was received into the Church at old St. Joseph's, Willings alley.

The time-worn slander that the Church is opposed to learning finds greater than would the same thing full and complete refutation in the constant accessions she receives from the educated classes. - Philadelphia

SUFFERING ARMENIA.

It is one of the boasts of Christendom that the Christian powers control the world, exercising such an influence over the most barbarous and lawless nations as to bring them within the influence of civilization, and to oblige them to respect civilized usages, in their treatment of the subjects of the humblest of the Christian States.

But do the Christian powers really feel the importance of protecting Chris. tians, or is the boast of their great influence a mere braggadocio or phantasy? Certainly the events which are now taking place in the city of Constantine the Great would incline one to the latter opinion.

Years ago the Christian world was shocked by the atrocities in Bulgaria which resulted in the Russo Turkish war, and led to the practical independence of the Balkan States. The people of the British Empire were not behind hand in denouncing these atrocities, and the outspoken denunciations of the rapacious and murderous rule of the Turk, uttered by Mr. Gladstone, are even now ringing in the ears of the public. British sentiment was undoubtedly roused to a readiness to force the British Government to step in and save the Bulgarians and other Christian peoples under Turkish rule from a repetition of such outrages. Elsewhere in Europe a similar spirit

was aroused, and yet there was no nation except Russia which so felt the horror as to take active measures to stop it. Russia avowedly wished to save the Christians of the Turkish Empire from the repetition of such barbarities, and it succeeded to this extent that the war then carried on resulted in the liberation of the suffering provinces from the savage rule under which they had so long suffered. At the critical moment when it seemed that the Turkish Empire was about to be annihilated, Great Britain sent her war ships to Constantinople, and set an army on the march from India to prevent Russia from completing her work, and so a peace was made which while it secured the autonomy of the suffering provinces and practically deprived Turkey of any sway, nevertheless kept the Sultan on his throne with a nominal sovereignty over them, while the rest of his European and the whole of his Asiatic Empire remained intact.

There were and are, no doubt, strong political reasons why England should not wish Russia to extend her dominion so as to control the Eastern Mediterranean, and she could not permit Russia, single-handed, to arrange the maps of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Yet in the presence of so grave a situtation as presents itself before the eyes of the world, there should be chivalrous feeling enough among the powers to make some arrangement mutually satisfactory in order to remedy the terrible evils developed under Moslem rule over Christians

By the treaty of Berlin which provided for peace, Turkey engaged, in favor of its subjects in all parts of the Empire, Armenia being of course, included, that they should be treated kindly and protected from lawlessness. These promises were only made to be broken, and the atrocities which continued to be practiced culminated in the Moosh massacre, with the history of which our readers are familiar.

There is not the last doubt that the Sultan and his Government are directly responsible for the horrors which have been perpetrated. The evidences of this have been accumulating ever since the International Commission began its investigations into the matter, and the only conclusion to which we can come is that the continued existence of Turkish rule is a reproach to humanity. The Turk should be ousted from Europe, and in Asia he should be placed under strong control, to say the least

It was a noble thought of Peter the Hermit seven hundred years ago to ask Europe to rescue Jerusalem from the Turks, the purpose being to save the Christians of the country from just such treatment as the Armenians are subjected to to-day, and to give pious pilgrims an opportunity to visit the sacred places where the work of man's redemption was accomplished; and Europe, then entirely Catholic, responded nobly, though there were jealousies among the various powers who combined for the purpose, just such as there are to day. These jealousies did not prevent them from pursuing their main object, though the task they then undertook was much be now. The Crusades lasted one hundred and ninety - five years, but though Jerusalem was for a considerable time occ tians they were Nevertheless the sands who took p showed the high s which they were least served to c Islam into Europe a much later peri ably have otherwi It is certain th Turks in perpetra

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