

with them. How many men have come to the knowledge of their God and Saviour, by being called away to the Crimea; and how many of the Testaments so freely given and so frankly received, are now finding their way back to France, and going into hamlets where the *colporteur* has never yet sown his precious seed. One of the last letters from the Crimea gives an account of the happiness of the few Protestants in Kamiesch who enjoy Protestant worship there, and the likelihood of a church being formed. The military authorities have shown every mark of respect and kindness to our chaplains, who are thus enabled fully to perform their arduous duties to the Protestant soldiers under their charge. At home, the people are unanimous in applauding the journalists who are waging war against the *Univers Religieux*, which, on the whole, has brought upon itself a pretty sound thrashing: its past sins have been vigorously exposed, and its hypocritical pandering to every new Power, when at the same time it has been ready to administer a dastardly kick to every fallen one, has been forcibly pointed out. This is only the manifestation of the feeling of contempt for Romanism which spreads daily, as new facts respecting the clergy come to light, in the individual experience of families, especially among the working population, where money is not plentiful. It constantly happens that working men resolve to bring up all their children as Protestants, and so once for all get rid of the baneful priesthood, and this not from studying Protestant doctrines, but from witnessing Protestant acts. Often as many as thirty or forty children are refused weekly at a single Protestant school in Paris, for want of room, and this when the friars' schools have room to spare, and open their doors gratuitously. Thus, were our schools numerous enough, and sufficiently supported, would constitute a well-founded hope for our rising generation.

While the population is thus slipping away from priestly influence, the ecclesiastical chasm between Ultramontaniam and Gallicanism is widening; the Ultramontanes are forcing down the wedge, and are giving it another blow by pronouncing the letter *u* in Latin as the Romans do, like *oo*, instead of giving it the sound of the French *u*. Soon the party to which a priest belongs will be known by the first word uttered in a church. The people slip between the two, some few into Protestantism, but the greater part, alas! into total religious indifference.

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#### THE RUSSIAN CHURCH AND SECTS.

Russia is the country of silence; its religious constitution is scarcely better known to us than its political organization, and, like it, is characterized by many mysteries difficult to solve, many eccentricities whose cause is not apparent. Debarred from all official documents, we are compelled to search the narrations of travellers for data relative to the condition of the Russian Church, and the sects which have separated from it. All these recitals concur in representing the religious state of the Czar's empire as most deplorable, the more so inasmuch as the orthodox worship, far from improving, seems, on the contrary, daily to degenerate.

The Russian Church, in its internal constitution, differs as much from the Romish Church as from the different Protestant communities. In accordance with the gospel, Protestantism recognizes between the disciples of the same Master only a difference of functions.—its clergy compose neither a caste nor a priesthood, are not required to practise celibacy;

and live in full liberty, with other functions, but with the same rights, the same duties and in the same external circumstances, as private Christians. The Romish Church, on the contrary, declares that ordination confers rights and privileges, and imposes duties, unknown to ordinary Christians, and its clergy constitute, in the bosom of society, an order by itself. This idea finds its most complete expression in the celibacy imposed upon the priesthood.

The Russian Church has succeeded in not accepting either of these two solutions of the problem. It imposes celibacy on the higher clergy, and forbids it to the simple priest; the bishop cannot be married, the priest must always be so, the rupture of the conjugal tie, whether by divorce or the death of his wife, deprives him, *ipso facto*, of the sacred character which, with ordination has invested him, and, stranger still, he is forbidden to re-marry, moreover, no condition is more miserable than that of the Russian cleric.

Entering young into the seminary, he there receives a very superficial course of instruction, which generally consists in the knowledge of the elements of the Slavonic language, and some smattering of theology, from which all controversy, even with the Romish Church, is sedulously excluded, add to this the study of singing, and of the complicated ceremonial of the Greek worship, and you have all the educational furniture of a priest. This, however, is enough to raise him to an intellectual level very superior to that of an immense majority of his nation. His studies completed, the priest marries (without this he cannot receive orders, unless he becomes a monk and enters a convent), and is located in some village. Then he begins a life of privation and of misery. The state, which arrogates to itself an absolute right of governing the church, does not take upon itself to provide for the wants of its clergy.—

The priest who is appointed to a *vicar*, nominally by a diocesan bishop, but really by the lord to whom the village belongs, is paid by that nobleman, receiving only a sum altogether insufficient for his own support and that of his family. Casual receipts must, therefore, supply his exigencies; and since there exists for holy offices and the functions of the ministry only a scale of fees, whose inapplicable provisions date from the time of Peter the Great, and have fallen into disuse, the priest spends his life in selling religion to his flock as dearly as he can, and two or three times a year makes the round of the cottages, and appropriates a tithe of all their productions. The peasant who on his part does his best to obtain what religion he must have as cheaply as possible, is compelled occasionally to submit to the exactions of his pastor. There is, in fact, a custom in the Russian Church, that the priests, at certain periods, should conduct worship in the houses of all their parishioners. The only result of this practice, which *might* be productive of much good, is an impost levied by the priest upon the believer, whom he thus compels to pay for his *Te Deum*. Moreover, the Russian Church specifies a great number of degrees of kindred within which marriage is forbidden, but reserves to itself the right of granting dispensations. In the villages, where the peasants marry among themselves, and are all relations, they are compelled continually to have recourse to the priest to obtain these dispensations, which he may refuse, which he sells as dear as possible, or at least grants only to those who have managed to get into his good graces. Thus is established between the priest who wields over his parishioners a definite power, and the peasantry who support him by their gifts, an exchange of good offices; but these relations are easy only in appearance, and most frequently conceal a real enmity between the pastor who is