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THE TRIALS OF THE CHURCH.

(From the Catholic Standard.)

A sincere Christian can hardly find a stronger ground of belief in the Divine origin of the Catholic Church than is furnished by its enemies. The bitter persecution which it experiences from heresy and schism on all sides, is the fulfillment of the infallible promise of Jesus Christ, and shows how faithfully the Church discharges her sacred duties. The true disciples of Christ must ever be prepared for crosses in this life—and the arch-fiend would not so urgently stimulate the wicked to assail the Church if she were not zealously pursuing her divine mission. Apathetic Bishops, disorderly Priests, seldom experience hostility of temporal power or the enmity of worldlings. But let the episcopal functions be discharged with activity, energy, and zeal—let the clerical duties be performed with fidelity, with an eye solely to the honor of God and the salvation of souls, without looking back, or backsliding—and upon such a Bishop and such a Priest the hatred, the malevolence, the slander, and detraction of an infidel, a heretical, and a perverse age will infallibly be concentrated. Why is the Archbishop of Freiburg persecuted by the tyrannical government of Baden?—Harder and more painful still—why is the illustrious Confessor censured, even reviled, by nominal members of the Church, and professed subjects of his own episcopal authority? Had he flattered the vanity of princes of this world, had he betrayed his sacred trust in order to conciliate a vicious government—had he looked on in silence while the wolves were devouring his flock—had he tacitly sanctioned the irregularities, the sinful habits, the negligence, the profanations, the immoralities, the scandals, and criminal excesses of those whom it is his solemn duty to admonish, correct, and reprove—his days would have probably passed in peace, that peace, however, which the world gives; his person would not have been loaded with indignities and hardships; his actions would, most likely, have won for him the worthless favor of those whom God permits, for a while, to wield a little brief authority; his sacred office would not have been grossly outraged; his jurisdiction would not have been disputed; a schismatic committee would not have been appointed by a heretical government to administer functions which belong to him alone, as the person approved by the Holy See to govern, ecclesiastically or spiritually, the diocese of Freiburg; he would not have been dragged with contumely from his cathedral by the armed myrmidons of tyranny, and cast into a dungeon; and he would have escaped—what is a still harder trial to a faithful Bishop—the torture of seeing some of his own Priests and flock become the degraded objects of secular applause, because they had infamously deserted their spiritual standard, and basely violated their first duty in order to pander, for petty favors, to the foul passions of a Prince who, while indulging heretical spite, has given a lamentable example of the injustice and perfidy that too often reign in high places.

Severe, however, though his Grace's trials have been, heavy as are his cares and anxieties, deeply as his heart has been wounded by the treachery and grievous sin of those faithless Priests and laymen—not very numerous, we thank God—who became the tools of despotism, doing the deeds of Satan, he has his regards even here. By his courage, the rights of the Church and of his See have been preserved, the fidelity of his flock has been proved, and the admiration of the civilised globe—to say nothing of the voice of a clear conscience—nerves his fortitude, and comforts his bruised heart. Beyond the precincts of his province his righteous cause has been warmly espoused; and in Switzerland a noble reproof has just been administered to those traitors and deserters who have basely abetted the iniquitous conduct of the Badenese Government.

The See of Bale (Soleure) became vacant by the death of the late Bishop. As in some other quarters of the earth, the temporal power is unfortunately vested in the Cantons with a certain amount of right to interfere in the election of Bishops for vacant Sees. The consequence was, we need hardly say, that the Catholic Chapter and the Protestant Vorort did not harmonise in their views as to the Priest fittest to be elevated to the episcopal dignity. It so happened—fortuitously perhaps, but certainly rather unfortunately, though, we admit, very naturally—that the Swiss executive fixed their affections upon a clergyman who had disgracefully distinguished himself by publishing a pamphlet in which the conduct of the Archbishop of Freiburg was severely reprehended. M. Leu, the Provost of Lucerne—it is due to the worthy man to give the utmost possible publicity to his name and station—is one of those discreet, do-nothing ecclesiastics who dislike troubles, and would let thousands perish eternally rather than rudely disturb the comfortable let-be theory of which

he seems a votary. Had he kept his views to himself, no one would have a right to find fault. He was not called upon in any way to interfere in the troubles that afflicted the Church in Baden. He is not a German, or a Priest of the Province of the Upper Rhine, or a Badenese subject. His interference in the affairs of Freiburg was, therefore, an impertinence, a piece of wilful intermeddling; and the insolence of his observations in regard to Monsignor Vicari's conduct was as gratuitous as it was reprehensible. Well, upon this redoubtable champion of the civil power in its assaults upon the Church—upon this Priest who backed the Protestant Regent of Baden against the Catholic Archbishop of Freiburg, the Swiss executive, naturally enough, turned their eyes as the best man (for their purposes) to be installed in the vacant episcopal throne of Bale—Soleure. To so flagrant a nomination the Chapter, of course, demurred. The Government labored hard to restrain the freedom of the Chapter; but the latter were firm in the performance of high duty; and the negotiations, it may be remembered, were broken off last June. The Vorort thought that the inconveniences of the interregnum would force the Chapter to yield; but after a suspense of two months, during which all the appliances of power for removing difficulties, smoothing down objections, and winning over partisans were put in motion, but in vain, the question which threatened the extensive diocese of Bale with much trouble has been, under God's good providence, satisfactorily adjusted. The Abbé Leu has not received a mitre as the reward of his monstrous attack upon the Archbishop of Freiburg and the other members of the German Episcopacy. Although he retracted his pernicious pamphlet, after its condemnation by the Holy See, the Chapter of Bale persisted in their resolution not to elect such a man for their ecclesiastical superior. And very properly. For what is the value of such a retraction under the circumstances? M. Leu, or any other man who writes upon religious dogma, is liable to fall into error; and no one will think the worse of him; if, when the Holy See points out and condemns that error, he does his duty as a sincere Catholic, and humbly and piously submits to the decision of the supreme authority, instantly abandoning all controversy when Peter's Successor speaks from Peter's Chair. But M. Leu did not fall in this manner.—His pamphlet was a deliberate denunciation of the German Prelates because they did their duty faithfully and fearlessly to the Church; and we are told by good authority, that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The Abbé Leu's pen was guided by his feelings; and his retraction, though we hope it was sincere, may have been merely politic. At all events, such a man, at such a moment, was not, clearly, the fittest—the most worthy priest in Switzerland—to be presented to the Holy See for confirmation as Bishop elect of the diocese of Bale. Accordingly, when, at the invitation of the Pontifical Charge d'Affaires, the conferences between the Chapter and the Swiss Government were recently renewed, the great majority of the Cantons decided upon conceding the full right of the Chapter and accepting the appointment of the Canon Arnold of Soleure, whom they named along with five other Priests. Upon receipt of this satisfactory notification, the Chapter met and elected M. Arnold by a majority of 10 to 3, as the new Bishop of Bale, subject to the approbation of the Holy Father.

The selection of this exemplary clergyman has given great satisfaction in Switzerland, where he is much esteemed and respected for his talents and character. He studied theology at the French College of S. Sulpice; and since 1830 has been Canon-Precacher at the Cathedral of Soleure.

THE SPANISH REVOLUTION.

(From the Tablet.)

It is almost precisely eleven years since Espartero, after having wielded the supreme power for a long term of years, and having exercised it to the vast injury of the Catholic Church, was in an instant, and by causes which it is very difficult to assign, overthrown and banished. His power, to use O'Connell's expression at the time, "mouldered away without an effort," and the coincidence between his fall and the prayers ordered throughout the world for the Church of Spain by the Holy Father was too marked and evident to escape the observation of any, or to be denied by any except those whose stupid infidelity would deny that the very sun is shining in heaven.

For eleven years has that ancient foe of the Catholic Church lived passive and forgotten; he has been doomed for that solid portion of the mature life of a statesman and a soldier to have as little to do with the interests of his country as if he were dead and buried. He now, by one of those revolutions nowhere more deserving the name than in Spain, by one

of those strange and sudden transformations of the scene, the magnitude of the results being as wonderful as the littleness of the means, been brought back in triumph to the place of his pride. He is once more the dictator of Spain, has once more, to all appearance, the fortunes of the Church and the nation in his feeble and irresolute, but not less dangerous, grasp.

Has he learned in his eleven years' disgrace to respect that power which overthrew him in so supernatural a manner? The Catholic Church, which in this interval, notwithstanding all the civil calamities and the jealousy which has entangled and harassed it, has made vast progress. The Concordat of 1851, that great work of the great Pontificate of Pius IX., has laid the foundations of a future quite as splendid as that which in the days of Ferdinand and Isabella made Catholic Spain the greatest monarchy of the earth. The Episcopate, which had been in ruins and almost levelled to the dust, has been restored, many Monastic Orders have been re-established amidst the rejoicing of the whole nation, still sound at heart in the Catholic faith, and nowhere have the Pastors of the Church displayed greater energy and zeal in the repression of an immoral and infidel propagandism. The single name of Balmeiz is enough to show, after whole decades of civil commotion, how much the old Catholicity of Spain is capable of achieving under any conceivable disadvantage. Is all this fair promise to fail, and is the Church in Spain again to prepare itself for days and years of oppression, like that which she suffers from the narrow despotism of the Diet of Switzerland?

One thing is certain, that Espartero's friends have begun as if they had thus far "forgotten nothing, and learned nothing." One of those hateful clubs which, under the name of Junta, have been usurping the functions of Government in the great towns, have commenced, by way of a pleasing sacrifice to the rising sun, by expelling the Jesuits from Valladolid. They know well that the Society of Jesus is the very kernel of the Church, and wherever deadly mischief has been intended against her, the Jesuits have ever had the honorable pre-eminence of being the first to suffer.

The proclamation of the Council of Ministers, put forth, indeed, before Espartero's arrival in Madrid, but doubtless in full conformity with the idea upon which he is likely to act, contains nothing to reassure us. An array of fine sentences, the hacknied common-places of revolutionists, which are placarded as a matter of course by every fresh set of political impostors: "responsibility," "morality," "economy," "a large and liberal constitution," "distribution of employments by merit and not by favor"—such are the hollow and wearisome changes on which it rings. By a hint at municipal deputations "in a decentralising sense," it throws out a sop to the old provincial feelings so strong in Spain. Two or three points, loosely expressed, indicate the line of policy which the new Ministry, professing to be one of coalition, mean to adopt. Such is the promise of organic laws to be issued on the removal of the censorship of the press and on public instruction. The Junta of Madrid had already resolved earnestly to advise the Ministers to bring in a bill for the revision of the Concordat. No allusion is made to this in the Ministerial programme. But they talk vaguely of the possibility "of every principle, how august soever, being converted into iniquity, of which we find examples in all religions, in the throne, and in the great institutions which have ruled nations." Finally there is a passage of disgusting and nonsensical blasphemy which might have been drawn from the *cahiers* of Louis Blanc or Lamartine, in which they liken liberty degraded in public estimation to Our Lord at the moment of the *Ecce Homo*.

On the other hand, there were, during the late disturbances, some instances of Catholic feeling on the part of those engaged in the insurrection, on which their just value is to be set in estimating the character of the movement. The defenders at some of the barricades were seen to kneel down, rosary in hand, when the *Angelus* bell sounded, and a Priest having to cross the barricades to take the Blessed Sacrament to a dying person, a party of the insurgents at once was detached to escort it. Protestants cannot understand this sort of thing; but we know that it is a spiritual law that faith may survive when other virtues are lost, indeed that perhaps faith is never entirely lost till a man becomes reprobate, and that the preservation of it, even in the most disorderly, is a germ which, at any moment, by the application of the healing virtues, of penance, may grow anew into the fair tree of grace.

Into the future destiny of the Spanish nation, as modified by this crisis, it would, indeed, require a keen and prophetic vision to penetrate. We may more safely predict what will not take place than what will. The union of the two peninsular king-

doms, which some visionary politicians are said to contemplate, is surely remote enough—a possibility which may still take many centuries to convert into fact, when, after three centuries of union, the various provinces of Spain itself are not even yet more amalgamated than Great Britain and Ireland. A republic is not even alluded to. All parties now seem to be fully aware that the monarchical element is essential to Spain, and that whatever party governs, whether Narvaez or Espartero, the Church or the Revolutionists, the Legitimists or the Constitutionalists, they must govern in the name of the Sovereign. The tenacity with which the Government of Isabella II. has held its ground, in spite of so many causes from which its overthrow might have been looked for, affords the presumption of its further continuance, were it only for the imperative necessity under which Spain finds itself of rest. They need, above all things, a settled Government, and will hardly bring back the legitimate successors at the cost of a civil war, and years of continued misery. The present revolution has been simply caused by the popular impatience of a corrupt ministry. It will do no good, whilst the cause of dissatisfaction remains, in the un-Catholic character of the class of functionaries, and another set will be just like those they succeed. Nothing can recall the greatness of Spain but the Catholic Church, which originally made it great, and by forsaking or crippling which, not by acting in its interests and like a Catholic power, Spain has become civilly degraded. Never was there a greater fallacy than to argue from the weakness of Spain against Catholicity. When she was Catholic she was strong. She has progressively declined from that very day when the Jesuits throughout the whole empire were robbed of their property and expelled. She then ceased to be governed by the political principles of Catholicity which constituted her national life, and, as a state governed on the wretched revolutionary principles she borrowed from France, she never prospered and never will.

THE WAR.

(From the Tablet.)

After a spring and summer spent in preparations and reconnoitings, it would seem that we are going to have, after all, a somewhat vigorous campaign in the autumn. Sir Charles Napier has not destroyed Cronstadt, or Helsingfors, nor even attacked Revel or Riga, nor is he likely very soon to perform or attempt any one of those feats, all of which seemed, some time ago, so easy to our newspaper strategists. But though no exploit at all, commensurate with the public expectation, is likely to be performed this season by the allied force in the Baltic, a very considerable commencement of hostilities has by this time been made, which is pretty sure to lead, or probably has already led, to the capture of the Russian forts on the isles of Aland, and the occupation of these by the division of French troops which a few weeks ago sailed from Calais in English ships. The islands of Aland occupy a commanding position at the opening of the Gulf of Bothnia, and nearly opposite that of Finland, have good and safe roadsteads, and evidently from the strength of their fortifications are considered by the Russians no inconsiderable possession. Bomarsund with its two neighboring forts is supposed to mount a couple of hundred pieces of cannon, and to be garrisoned by three or four thousand Russian troops, certainly no inconsiderable defence for an island which is described as having an area of only eleven square miles. The numerous other islands of the group are without any fortifications, and the greater number without inhabitants. It is pretty certain that Bomarsund will make, or has made, a very stout resistance, especially as only the lighter ships of the line, to the number of six or eight, will have depth of water and room enough to co-operate in the attack. However, amongst these are the four screw blockships, whose united broadsides, numbering upwards of 120 guns of the heaviest sort, are likely to make an impression very quickly upon the most solid defences. A force of steam-frigates of like strength to that which attacked Odessa will also give valuable aid, and if we add a proportion of the boats of the fleet, to the number of fifty or sixty, each carrying a large gun, or mortar, and take into account the strength of the French land force, nearly 10,000 picked troops, it will be pretty evident that the allies may count on obtaining secure and convenient winter quarters for any force they may think fit to keep in the Baltic after the season for hostilities shall have terminated. But, without wishing to underrate the importance of this conquest, or the moral and material advantage of securing such a basis for future operations, it may be questioned if the result of the operations in this quarter, supposing them to terminate with the capture of Bomarsund, will add anything to the reputation of the British navy. A finer fleet never sailed under the British flag than the one which Sir