

just as in England as far as the government is concerned. Up to this we have not suffered from any interference.

Some forty years ago the case was different, as then any priest was forbidden to say Mass and to perform the various acts of the sacred ministry; hence Father Honderwanger and Father Le Bihan were ordered out of the country in those years.

(2.) The Grondwet states that none but Protestants can be members of the Volksraad and be employed in the government services. Catholics and Jews can never be elected members of parliament, nor hold any government situation. The government clerks, post and telegraph employees, officers of the police or the artillery, etc. must all be Protestants. Some years ago the government was not very exacting on this point, but the last three or four years the law is adhered to strictly for all applicants. The old hands are kept in; but no Catholics need apply now. There is no Catholic in either of the Volksraads.

(3.) No State subsidy can be granted to a school wherein a Catholic is teacher. This keeps us out of every chance of State support for the present, and prevents Catholic teachers obtaining employment in other schools.

Some ten years ago this law remained a dead letter and we received the government grant, but since the present Superintendent of Education took office, the law is carried out most exactly.

Such is our legal standing in the country.

It is difficult to reconcile the last two items with the conventions and treaties passed between the Transvaal and the home powers, England, France, Germany, Portugal. All their citizens have the right of a privileged nation: *i. e.* the same as the Boers, for commercial and industrial pursuits, to earn their living, etc. Now Protestants from those countries can have advantages, and do have them, which Catholics are debarred from. No such distinction is ever hinted at in these treaties; still, the State maintains this is a part of the local laws and does not concern the outside world, and so we ought to put up with it; this is poor comfort.

In our every day relations with the government we find the officials obliging and considerate, just the same as with everybody else.

Some burghers from the Lydenburg district petitioned the Volksraad some three years ago that notice be given to the Catholics to quit the country and to sell their properties. The Chairman stated he was sorry he could not do it, but the law did not allow it. I scarcely think that a similar proposal would be signed by all the Boers, though there is no love lost on their side toward us.

The Superintendent of Education thought fit some three years ago to attack us in a general circular sent to all ministers of religion. I had to contradict in a letter to the papers some of his statements, and all ended there as far as the public was concerned.

The petitions sent to the Volksraad praying that our disabilities be removed have never had any result; on one or two occasions they embittered the Boers the more against us.

The whole thing is a remnant of the old Dutch penal laws which the first Boer settlers brought to the Cape three centuries ago, and which they up-

held wheresoever they had the power; in the Cape first until the English occupation, then in the Free State Republic where these laws were repealed in 1884. When will they be repealed in the Transvaal? No one knows.

In the Cape and Natal the Catholics have their full freedom this last half century, and have never given any government cause of complaint. In the Free State we are on the same footing as anyone else for the last eleven years, and it has made no difference to anybody.

What the Pretoria Government dreads I cannot say. It is a matter of feeling on the part of the Boer, and feelings do not die quickly.

There is no doubt that the law debarring Catholics from any employment in the Government service is a serious loss to our people, and our schools are severely handicapped by the refusal of any State aid, which is open to all the Protestant schools. We have lived and hope to live all the same, but we feel the burden.

As for the Church's work, these are the particulars.

In Johannesburg we have two churches, one in town and one in the suburb of Fordsburg. Two schools for girls in town, a mixed one at Fordsburg, and the Marist Brothers' school for boys, give all our children a chance of a good Christian education. The girls' schools are under the care of the Sisters of the Holy Family (Immaculate Conception Branch) and number about 250 children. The Fordsburg school under the management of the same sisters has about 100. The Marist Brothers have over 500 boys. The latter, as well as the convent, prepare the children for the Cape University examinations, and have been very successful up to the present.

The Sisters of Nazareth have an orphanage with some 70 children. That number may soon be doubled when the new house is finished; they also take in the homeless old people; their work is greatly appreciated here; it is the first one of the kind in the Transvaal.

A community of 30 Sisters of the Holy Family (the Sisters of Hope Branch) is in charge of the town hospital; lately a staff of 30 lay nurses was added; it remains to be seen how the arrangement will work. The hospital is kept on a grand scale and would be a credit to any large town in Europe.

There are also missions in Pretoria, Potchefstroom, Lydenburg, Barberton; each of them has priest, church, convent and schools. Klerksdorp mission will be opened shortly, and the native mission of Vleishfontein completes the list. The permanent convents of Lydenburg and Barberton have to be built yet; the Sisters live in rented houses. Pretoria has two priests, also a boys' school under the management of a Catholic lady from Liverpool. The other above named missions have each one priest.

One priest travels along the mines and also in the northern districts where there is no church yet. I daresay Pietersburg will want a church, and school soon; then we shall have missions in all the important parts of the country, and the work of the travelling priest will be greatly lightened.

May God grant us a good lasting peace and his blessing upon our work.