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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION.

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA,
Ottawa, Canada, March 7th, 1900.

To the Editor of THE CATHOLIC RECORD, London, Ont.:

Dear Sir: For some time past I have read your estimable paper, THE CATHOLIC RECORD, and congratulate you upon the manner in which it is published.

Its matter and form are both good: and a truly Catholic spirit pervades the whole.

Therefore, with pleasure, I can recommend it to the faithful.

Blessing you, and wishing you success.

Believe me, to remain,
Yours faithfully in Jesus Christ,
† D. FALCONIO, Arch. of Larissa,
Apost. Deleg.

LONDON, SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 1904.

THE SITUATION IN FRANCE.

Premier Combes has not announced in so many words that it is the intention of the French Government to bring in a measure for the complete separation of Church and State in France, and the abolition of the Concordat, but the Radicals are certainly pushing him in that direction, and they have succeeded in making him announce that the question will come up for discussion by the Chamber of Deputies in January; at the same time he called attention to the draft of law formulated by the committee on the separation of Church and State which the Chamber constituted some time ago.

This announcement has been precipitated by the bold position taken by Pope Pius X. in his protest against the visit of President Loubet to Rome, in connection with the plain and powerful arraignment of the French Government uttered by the Holy Father in his address to the Cardinals on St. Joseph's day.

In regard to the President's visit, the Holy Father's protest as sent to all the Governments of Catholic States said:

"The official journey to Rome of M. Loubet, President of the French Republic, to visit Victor Emmanuel III. was an event so exceptionally grave, that the Holy See cannot pass it by without calling thereto the most serious attention of the Government represented by Your Excellency.

"It is hardly necessary to remind you that the heads of Catholic States, bound by this fact itself, by special ties to the supreme pastor of the Church, are under obligation to manifest toward him the greatest consideration in comparison with the sovereigns of non-Catholic States as regards his dignity, his independence, and his imprescriptible rights."

The Holy Father proceeds to show that France has enjoyed signal privileges from the Holy See, being united therewith by the closest traditional relations by virtue of a bilateral pact between the two parties. Thus France, through special favors, holds the protectorate of Catholic interests in the East, and is, besides, largely represented in the Sacred College of Cardinals, whereby it has a large share in the government of the universal Church.

In consideration of such relations it was a wanton insult to the Holy See that France should take the initiative by ostentatiously visiting in the person of its President the king who has possession of the Papal territories without having come to any agreement with the Holy Father, but in spite of oft repeated Papal protests against the unendurable situation in which the Pope is placed.

The matter is rendered all the worse as the visit to the Italian king was made in the Pope's own capital city, and in the palace which was, before the Italian occupation, the Pope's favorite residence, and the insult is enhanced by the fact that it was plainly deliberate, as the President was forwarned by the Holy Father that the projected visit would be regarded as an act of hostility and as a declaration that France would disregard entirely the Pope's claim to independence in his own city.

The Pope's pronouncement in this matter has given great offence to the anti-Catholic world, and some of the non-Catholic papers are discussing very earnestly whether the course which the Holy Father has chosen to adopt was the wisest he could choose. One thing is certain, that both the French and the Italian Chambers have chosen to approve of the hostile attitude to religion which was implied in President Loubet's action.

In the Italian Parliament no official action was taken. Signor Mazza, a boisterous Republican, declared that the note of the Papal Secretary of State, Mgr. Mery del Val, which was, of course, written by the Pope's order, was a perfect insult to the Government and people of Italy. He demanded that the Government should "take energetic action to prevent the invasion of the Church into the kingdom's affairs." He added that the Government had "forgotten all pride and the national dignity in answering the Vatican insult by giving hospitality to Cardinal Svampa when the king recently visited Bologna, and in leaving the defence of Italian rights to the people of France. Other members, among whom was Signor Guerci, spoke most disrespectfully of the Holy Father; but Premier Giolotti, on behalf of the Government, was more moderate. He maintained that the Pope's protest having not been sent to the Italian Government, did not require that any notice should be given it; nevertheless he concluded ominously: "It will be worse for the Church on the day when she illegally interferes in the affairs of the State."

In the French Parliament the Government, in the person of M. Combes, manifested more ill temper. M. Nisard, the French ambassador to the Vatican, was recalled. By this action the Government manifested its displeasure at the protest of the Holy Father. Yet it is to be remarked that all diplomatic relations between the two authorities were not entirely severed, as the charge of affairs of the embassy was left to the Secretary. M. Combes, however, explained that the intention of the Government in leaving this charge in the hands of a subordinate was to mark its strong displeasure at the note of the Papal Secretary of State. According to a recent cable report he said: "This recall signifies that we cannot allow the Holy See to interpret the presence of our ambassador in Rome in a sense favorable to its claims, or to make use of his presence to justify pretensions which we reject. It also means that we will not allow the Papacy to intermeddle in our international relations, and that we intend to have done once for all with the superannuated fiction of temporal power which disappeared thirty-four years ago." It is also stated that the purposes of the Government were approved by the Chamber of Deputies by a vote of 427 to 95. It is added that the outline of the plan as laid down by the Premier does not propose any further step beyond what has been taken, which is the recall of M. Nisard: and all attempts of the Socialists to force the policy of denunciation of the concordat were repudiated. We have no doubt it was this assurance on the part of the Government which secured so decisive a majority in favor of M. Combes' present policy.

It appears, therefore, to be settled that it is not M. Combes' intention to push this matter any further, and we may take it for granted that his threat to have the disestablishment of the Church and the annulment of the Concordat discussed in January is a mere "bluff" as the word goes in the parlance.

It is very true that M. Combes has shown in a way not to be mistaken his hostility to the Catholic Church, and we should not be much surprised at any new hostile measure which he might propose; and with the present Chamber it is possible he might be sustained in any such measures he might choose to adopt. But fatuously anti-Catholic and anti-Christian as he is, he is shrewd enough to know that there is a strong current of Catholic feeling in the country which the temporary success of his anti-Christian policy will not crush out. Thus, it will be remembered that in September last M. Combes insulted the Catholics of Brittany by personally unveiling at Treguier a statue of the blasphemous Renan whose only claim to distinction is that he was the author of a "life of Christ" the purpose of which is to overthrow faith in the divinity of the Son of God.

The Bretons were deeply stirred by this outrage, and perhaps there would have been a serious riot had not the Premier brought with him four squadrons of dragoons and gendarmes for his protection against an indignant people. As it was, the cries of "down with Combes," "a bas Combes," could not be suppressed.

The Bretons have since made public reparation for the insult to God, by erecting at their own expense a magnificent statue to "Mary the Immaculate Mother of God," and the popular feeling against the Combes Government has become irrepressible.

The Holy Father Pope Pius X. is deeply grieved, it must be admitted, because of the situation in France. It is certainly not from personal considerations, or for the upholding of his personal dignity that he entertains this sentiment, but it is because the situation is an evidence that religion has ceased to be a dominant influence with so large a proportion of the French people. This is to be regretted, for it must result in the loss of many souls.

The Holy Father has acted with great moderation and patience throughout the incident. He has no desire to widen the breach between himself and the French Government, and therefore, with all the provocation received he has shown a remarkable forbearance, for he is by nature a peacemaker, and he has always been regarded as essentially a man of supreme benevolence and goodness. For this reason, though while President Loubet was actually in Italy, and perpetrating his act of hostility against the Pope, Mgr. Lorenzello, the nuncio at Paris, was ordered to leave the city, he returned to his post when the visit was completed, and it is now said that he will not leave Paris unless expelled by the French Government—a thing which will not take place, for M. Combes must be aware that he has already exhausted the patience of the Catholic people, and that his own rule must soon come to an end. He threatens to bring forward his measure for the ending of the pact between Church and State in January: but January may see him dethroned from the premiership—a consummation much to be desired.

CHRISTIAN DIPLOMACY.

We have mentioned in another article that the anti-Catholic press are discussing at considerable length the question whether Pope Pius the Tenth's protest against President Loubet's visit to Rome was a blunder or a clever piece of diplomacy, and the opinion generally expressed by these hostile critics is that it comes under the former category. They reason that the French Government and people will be, and in fact are roused to anger by the Holy Father's action, and that their indignation will find expression in a way which will lead to disaster for the Church, and perhaps even to a schism, or a rationalizing of the French people.

We would remind these prophets of ill that the Church has passed successfully through many storms quite as serious as the present one, and has come out of the ordeal unscathed and triumphant; and we have no doubt that on this occasion, history will repeat itself. What else means the promise of Christ that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church, and that He Himself will remain with its pastors even to the consummation of the world? What else, the command which He gave to His Apostles to preach His Gospel to every creature?

The condition of the Church in France at the close of the eighteenth century, was certainly even worse than at the present moment; for faith seemed to be extinct when the votaries and promoters of the reign of King Terror dared to seat a woman of ill repute on the altar of Notre Dame to receive as the incarnate "goddess of reason," the homage and worship of the giddy multitude. Yet only a few years passed before religion was restored in all its splendor and with greater influence than it exercised just before such atrocities were perpetrated. We do not for a moment doubt that God will keep His promises, and that the faith of the people will assert itself once more, and that the Church will come forth resplendent from the ordeal, with her people purified and strengthened in the faith by the trials they shall have undergone.

For what was the Church instituted? Was it not to teach the nations a pure morality through the inculcation of the true faith—that faith which is taught in the Sermon on the Mount, and throughout the Gospels, and which comprises the principles of justice and charity, fortitude and temperance, and our duties to God, our neighbors and ourselves?

It is not the purpose for which Christ established His Church on earth, to teach such diplomacy as prevails too widely among modern nations—a diplomacy of cunning and strategy, how they might overreach each other—but to tell them of the will of God, and how they are to fulfil that will and sit down in the Heavenly Kingdom with the holy Patriarchs and prophets, with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and David, and others who are described as "men after God's own heart."

A great injustice had been perpetrated when the last remnant of the Patrimony of St. Peter was wrested in September 1870 from the Saintly Head of the Church, Pope Pius IX., and that injustice was not repaired when Pius X. came to the Pontifical throne. Why then should he not raise his voice to tell the world that a great wrong had been done, and that Catholic nations, all of whom had suffered from that wrong doing, should take steps to see it repaired?

This is what Pius X. did in denouncing the hostile demonstration of President Loubet against the Church when he visited King Victor Emmanuel III., the representative of the sacrilegious robbery of 1870.

And, further, it was the duty of Pope Pius to tell the rulers of France that they were opposing the will of God. "He committed a diplomatic blunder," say the Church's enemies! It was not a question of diplomacy, it was a matter of right versus wrong, of justice and religion against spoliation and robbery. It was the Pope's duty as the supreme vindicator of justice and equity to protest against a crying iniquity whereby God Himself was robbed, and to call upon Catholic rulers to repair the iniquity, for God has given to princes a sword for the protection of right, and they bear not that sword in vain.

Christ commissioned His Apostles to preach the truth, and in doing so, the Apostles refused to listen to the State authorities who admonished them, under threat of severe penalties, to preach no more in the name of Christ crucified. They obeyed not this injunction, but declared that their teachings were in accordance with what Christ had commanded them; and "it is better to obey God than men." This was just the position in which Pope Pius X. found himself when President Loubet visited Rome ostentatiously, making no secret of the fact that his visit was made to condone the spoliation of the Church; and to make the matter more clear, Premier Combes proclaimed the same in the Chamber of Deputies, that France must regard the open spoliation of the Church as an accomplished fact which must not be called into question, and which France will never attempt to change.

How different is the conduct of the present rulers of France from that of King Pepin the Short who took up the sword to wrest from the Lombard usurper Astolphus the territories he had taken from the Patrimony of the Holy Father Stephen III. and the Roman Empire and to restore them to that Pope "doing justice so far as he was able to the See of Peter." How different from Charlemagne are his unworthy successors, M. Loubet and M. Combes; whereas Charlemagne declared himself to be "the punisher of injustice of every kind and the protector of the Church of God."

Signor Gilott's covert threat to legislate against the Church should she interfere illegally in affairs of the State, is mere mendacious bombast. There is no fear of illegal interference of the Church with the just acts of the Parliament but she must denounce sin in the form of spoliation or robbery, and it is this denunciation against which the Italian Premier raves. Besides, it was necessary that the Pope should warn other Catholic powers against being entrapped into a recognition of Italy's usurpation, at least until a proper arrangement should be agreed upon between the rightful monarch and the usurping government whereby the independence of the Church and its Head should be recognized to govern mankind spiritually and in accordance with divine law.

The decisive vote whereby the French Government's policy was approved by the Chamber of Deputies is no argument in favor of the justice of this decision. It is a proof only of the pride of race which dominates the Chamber, which seems to be of opinion that a French Parliament can do no wrong. The law of God should not be violated by a Parliament any more than by an individual.

True Christian Diplomacy is the diplomacy of justice and truth not that of cunning falsehood and violence, and the anger of the French Chamber against the Pope does not prove that its cause is just.

THE BIBLE AND THE POPE'S BIBLICAL COMMISSION.

Attacks upon the veracity of the Bible by Protestant ministers of all denominations are becoming more and more frequent every week. Within the last couple of weeks several of the most prominent of the ministers of divers denominations in the United States have delivered from their pulpits such attacks. Two are reported as having proved to their own satisfaction, from their pulpits that the books of the Pentateuch were not written by Moses and are not historically true, and others have shown that the prophecy of Jonas and Daniel are not in accordance with what history teaches of the belief of the ancient nations referred to in these books, especially Assyria and Persia, and of the manners and dynasties of these nations. The doctrine of the resurrection of the body, the everlasting punishments of hell, the Resurrection of Christ and other Christian teachings were also elaborately refuted, while, strange to say, the preachers still declared that they are teaching the pure Christianity which is the coming religion of the twentieth century.

We are reminded by such facts of a story which has been for some time going the round of the papers, and which describes very well what might have occurred in many a Protestant parish or circuit of the United States or Canada very recently:—

"A certain minister visited one of his parishioners the other day, and noticed that his hearer's Bible which lay on the table was so terribly mutilated that beside the covers, there were only a few pages left in the Sacred Book. Whole books had been torn out, while in other parts verses or chapters had been mercilessly clipped out.

"The pastor was very indignant and rebuked his parishioner for using the volume so badly, to which the man replied: "Well sir, it was from yourself that I received the instruction which led me to treat this Bible so. You have been giving many sermons about the Bible, and when I came home after listening to them, I cut out whatever part of the Bible you said was not true. You said in one sermon that the verses about the Trinity in one of John's epistles is spurious, and when I came home I cut them out, as I wanted my Bible to contain only what is true. After this you proved in a sermon that the gospel said to be of the same John was not written by him, but was a forgery of later date, so I cut out what is called John's gospel. Another day you proved all the books of Moses to be forgeries, so they were cut out also, and so I continued as you proved that different books and chapters were of no historical value, until the book was in the condition you see it. I assure you I followed faithfully your instructions, and that is why it now consists of only the covers and a few torn pages."

The minister was, of course, astounded at this revelation of the consequences of his higher criticism, so-called, but it is not recorded whether he was cured of his more than half-scepticism.

It is within the memory of many of our readers when the Protestant clergy had the greatest possible respect for the Bible, which they regarded as most truly God's inspired word, but that day has passed away, probably never to return.

It is now left to the Pope and the Catholic Church to defend the Sacred volume from the attacks of its quondam friends, and the Pope is doing the work effectually. The Biblical Commission which Pope Leo XIII. established for the purpose of a full critical investigation of the history and interpretation of the books of the Bible is doing its work thoroughly, and will in due time publish the results of its labors, but the work is so wide that it will be some years before it will be completed, There are peculiar facilities in Rome for making the necessary investigations into all documents bearing on the subject, as nowhere else are there so many ancient manuscripts which are needful for the successful prosecution of the work as in the Vatican library. The work of the commission will be, when it appears, the most interesting and reliable commentary which has ever been written on the Bible.

We can safely assert that the most modern discoveries of science will in no respect throw discredit upon the Bible, but that they will bear out its truth all the more, the more rigidly it is examined in the light of science. There may be parts of Holy Scripture which were but imperfectly understood until they were read in the light which modern science throws upon them, but the most recent discoveries of science have verified and illustrated the Scriptures, and caused many apparent discrepancies in the Holy Book to disappear, as the laws of physical science have become better understood. We have no doubt that this will continue to be the case the more carefully the truths of science are investigated with regard to their effect upon the credibility of the Bible.

In confirmation of this we may here say that the scientific discoveries of late date in astronomy, geology, and archaeology were at one time supposed to be irreconcilable with statements made in the Bible, but more careful examination into these matters have dispelled such a notion, and the best scientists have admitted that there is a wonderful accord between the Biblical statements, and the truths which scientific research has made incontestible.

Geology has been a favorite field on which unbelievers have maintained that the Bible has been found wanting. It must be remembered that the Bible was never intended to be a treatise on geology; but the discoveries of geologists show that the incidental references of the Bible to the facts of geology are quite in accord with what has been discovered by the most recent geological researches.

It is still not quite certain whether the days of Genesis are long periods of time, or days of twenty four hours each, but science and the Bible do agree that before the earth was formed to be the abode of man, it was in a chaotic condition, and that it was by gradual steps fitted for its final purpose, and this gradual preparation may have required the long period which geology shows to have been requisite for this purpose—or the long period requisite, even though millions of years were necessary for the purpose, may have been before the six days commonly called "the six days of creation, inasmuch as the first verse of the Book of Genesis suggests that there was a long period between the creation of matter, including the heavens as well as the earth, even before the first day of the preparation of the earth to be man's abode, which was the day on which light was made. Then followed the creation of plants and animals of all kinds, and at last of man, the dominant being of the earth: and all this agrees perfectly with what science teaches.

It would need too long a treatise for us to put into our columns in detail here the points of accord between Genesis and science, but we can say confidently that there is no disagreement between the two, while the points of resemblance are numerous and remarkable, and the more so as the Book of Genesis was written so many centuries before geology was dreamed of as a science.

The Cosmagonies given in the sacred Books of pagan religions are in direct opposition to science and right reason, but this is not the case with that of Scripture, and we have no doubt this will be fully shown by the papers which will be issued by the Roman Biblical Commission; and what we have said of the account of creation given in Genesis may be said equally of other parts of Holy Scripture which relate to events which touch upon other sciences than geology, that there is no disagreement between science and revelation.

ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL.

The time is now near at hand when the picnic in aid of this worthy institution will be held in this city. Rev. Father Stanley, to whose management the picnic has been entrusted, is, we are glad to be able to say, receiving the loyal support and encouragement of the committees in charge of the various booths, etc.; while, in turn, these ladies and gentleman are very materially aided in their good work by the generosity of the people, not only of this city, but of the surrounding country. Altogether the prospects are very encouraging; and we have no doubt but that Queen's Park will be crowded on Dominion Day by the friends and well-wishers of the good Sisters of St. Joseph, under whose care the Hospital is conducted.

A SCHOOL DISPUTE.

Complaints are being made in some of the papers concerning harsh treatment of the Protestant ratepayers of Curran School Section in Plantagenet Township, Prescott Co., Ont.

The story as told by Dr. Derby, who represented the Protestant ratepayers at the meeting of the Orange Grand Lodge held in Picton on June 8th, and following days, was that the French Catholic majority in the school section had taken possession of the Public school for the use of the Catholic Separate school children.

The Protestant children, as it appears further, attended the Separate school, but on April 26th they were turned out by the teacher who informed them and their parents that they might have for their Public school the old log building which had been previously used as a Separate school.

Dr. Derby asked the aid of the Grand Orange Lodge to regain for the Protestants of the section the newer school-house, which is said to be worth $1,000, and in response to this appeal, the Grand Master, Dr. Sproule, was authorized by the Grand Lodge to appoint a committee to look into the case and to take such action on the report as he might deem advisable.

From other sources we learn that the Catholic School Board purchased the newer school house from the Public School Trustees for $500, the Public School Trustees deeming it advisable to sell, as there were only a very small number of Protestant children in the section, and those who are there were willing to attend the Separate school, provided their religion were not interfered with.

It is so contrary to the usual course of Catholic Trustees to treat Protestant children and their parents discourteously that we do not believe the story as it has been told before the Orange Lodge. It has on its face the marks which indicate that it was concocted to excite the sympathy of the Grand Lodge, and to this extent it has succeeded, inasmuch as the Grand Master declared that he would probably appoint three able lawyers to investigate the case, and would act when he should learn the result of their enquiries. We are antecedently confident that it will be found that the Catholic Trustees have acted honorably, and we deem it probable that they had it thoroughly understood with the Prot-