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Vol. LVIII., No. 56 Commons R. R. Dec. 1909 MONTREAL, THURSDAY, JULY 22, 1909 PRICE, FIVE CENTS

FRANCE WEAKENED BY MORAL PLAGUE.

COUNTRYMAN'S CRITICISM.

Declares His Native Land Has Abjured the Christian Religion.

The more serious papers of Paris, such as the Soleil, the Figaro, and the Gaulois, are always dwelling upon the perils that France is being hurried into by the widespread social decay, says the Literary Digest. We are constantly being reminded of the principles laid down by all historians, from Herodotus to Ferrero, that no nation can stand the sapping ravages of moral corruption, and that in the whole history of Europe we see that it is the most moral nation, the most self-sacrificing, the soundest in heart and mind, which other things being equal, invariably comes off best in the struggle of war and peace. It is the dead body which calls down the eagles of destruction. This principle gives importance to the work of a Frenchman who warns, if he does not pass sentence on, his mother country.

FRANCE BECOMING DECREPIT.

France is becoming decrepit, as she has been for years decadent, says Mr. René Lavoullé. She is at present being devastated by seven moral plagues, he writes in his book, "Les Fléaux Nationaux." She is weakened by religious infidelity, depopulation, immorality, alcoholism, materialism, antimilitarism, and political corruption. Of infidelity and its evil effects he writes:

"France has, in its national policy, abjured the Christian faith, of which it was so long the champion. This is plainly proved by the attitude of the Government toward the Church, and the whole tenor of recent legislation. With this loss of faith has followed the loss of many qualities which work for national fortitude and for the character upon which national virility is based. Military prestige has vanished, the navy is a wreck, and does not now count as a serious factor in the plans of European cabinets, while the strained relations that have sprung up between social orders have made the country an object of criticism and an example and warning to other nations."

ANOTHER PLAGUE.

Race suicide is another plague which is sapping the vitals of France. This writer quotes Mr. Prévost, president of the last Congress of Social Economy, who compared the birth rates of the different European countries, and remarked of France: "If this condition of things continues, in twenty years there will be two Germans for every Frenchman, if indeed France survives long as a nation. The following figures are quoted in support of this contention: In the sixty years from 1846 to 1905 the population of Great Britain and Ireland increased 52 per cent; that of Germany 59 per cent; that of Austria 49 per cent; that of Italy 36 per cent; that of Russia 81 per cent; that of France 14 per cent; finally in 1907 the French population had decreased by 20,000. While the writer enumerates as causes of this decrease the crowding of the rural population into cities, the military system which forces country youths to spend three years of early life amid the corruptions of the town, and the crushing weight of taxation, which amounts to \$25 per capita, the principal causes lie deeper. They are moral and include selfish materialism, which concentrates the general mind on pleasure, and a diminished sense of duty, with the resultant increase in the number of suicides, of which 9,816 are recorded in the single year 1905.

DECAY OF LITERATURE.

The moral decay of French literature, art, and drama, he goes on to say, is doing its work in promoting French degeneracy and making Frenchmen of all classes the slaves of vice. Closely allied with this is alcoholism, concerning which he gives some startling figures.

While the consumption of alcohol in England is decreasing, and so diminishing seriously the revenue derived from its taxation, in France the records for the consumption of alcohol show that during the latter half of the nineteenth century the quantity drunk, per capita, had more than doubled. The amount of alcohol employed for the production of absinthe and similar liquors has almost tripled between 1874 and 1905. And in addition to the immorality, insanity and crime directly due to alcoholism, collapse of the moral sense, antipatriotism, and political corruption are now rampant in France, we are told.

PASSION FOR EASE.

"The passion for ease and comfort grows the more rapidly in proportion as it is gratified. More and more do we perceive in all classes,

PLOTTING AGAINST CATHOLIC CHURCH.

GERMANY AND FRANCE JOIN.

Former Efforts to Overthrow it Renewed by Masonic Order.

The reunion, after a lapse of nearly thirty years, of the German Free Masonic lodges with the Grand Orient of France, occupies at the present moment very considerable space in the columns of the Italian, French and German papers, says a writer in the Liverpool Catholic Times and Opinion. It is a fact considered to be one of the most important events of the day and, according to the Italian journal, indicates that a further attempt will soon be made in Germany to revive the Kulturkampf and a systematic persecution of the Catholic Church. It would seem that the Grand Orient of France has recently become alarmed at the spread of Catholicism in Germany and its increasing power, and has therefore used every influence to induce the Free Masons of Germany to join with their French brethren in a fresh attempt to stamp out the religion and the name of Jesus Christ. It will be remembered that in 1902 Ernest Nathan, now Mayor of Rome, went to Barcelona to meet the grand masters of the Portuguese and Spanish lodges and also M. Combes and other persons of that type, with a view to planning a campaign for the creation of a great confederated Republic of the Latin races on anti-Catholic and anti-Christian lines. The papers at the time declared that it was then advocated that measures of unsparing severity should be adopted towards those who prevented or hindered the development of the scheme in question. Very soon after this meeting broke out in Portugal the violent and fierce campaign against the religious orders, which was the forerunner of the one that soon destroyed the religious Congregations in France.

Irish in the Household.

Bishop O'Donnell's Suggestion to Popularize Language.

Teelin Head, behind which Sliabh Liag rises in majestic proportions, was chosen this year as the scene of the Feis Tírconnail. Teelin is situated in Donegal Bay, in the parish of Glen Columbeille, which was intimately associated with the lives and labors of St. Columba and other sainted men and women of Tírconnail in the early days of its Christian glory. It was fitting, therefore, that the proceedings, held on the Festival of SS. Peter and Paul, should partake of a religious as well as a national character.

Addresses were delivered in Irish by the Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, Bishop of Raphoe; the Right Rev. Monsignor M'Glynn, and the Rev. Father Cassidy, P.P., Glencolumbkille. An eloquent oration on the Catholicism, the Battlebook of the Princess of Tírconnail, was delivered by the Rev. M. J. O'Donnell, D.D., St. Eunan's College, Letterkenny, and an Ode in Irish was recited by Mr. Patrick O'Dwyne, Killybegs.

The Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell also delivered a speech in English, and suggested the establishment of an Association of all who would agree to make Irish the household language for at least one hour in the day, and that the members of the Association should wear as a badge a medal of Ethne, the mother of St. Columba.

Follow Dictates of Conscience.

Marquis of Ripon's Advice to Young Men.

The Marquis of Ripon recently granted an interview to a writer on the staff of the Review of Reviews, in which he gave many interesting episodes of the active life from which he has just retired. Speaking of his conversion to Catholicity, and the fact that this step had not hindered his official career, he said:

"That is very remarkable, and I owe that to Mr. Gladstone. When I joined the Catholic Church I was fully convinced that by that act I had cut myself off forever from public service, and the Times told me so with the utmost emphasis. That it was not so was entirely due to Mr. Gladstone."

Asked to give his advice as to the management of public affairs for the benefit of younger men who are growing up in the service, he said:

"That is rather a large order, but if I had to say anything this is what I would say: 'In the government of the world, as in all the other affairs of life, accept no other than the voice of your own conscience. In dealing with the affairs of your own private life, let your moral judgment be supreme. In the governing of countries as in everything else, so live that all those over whom you wield authority shall recognize that your first object is to make truth and justice prevail. That at least has always been endeavored to order my life in whatsoever position I have been placed.'"

Noble words and worthy of a Catholic statesman.

LOGES MEET ANNUALLY.

LAND COMMISSION AND IRISH TENANTS WORK BEING ACCELERATED.

Strong Criticism Directed at Department by Mr. John Redmond.

The eight German lodges which have openly allied themselves with the Grand Orient in Paris are the Sun of Brevinthe, founded in 1841; the Three Globes of Berlin, founded in 1840; whose Grand Master is Gerhardt, a Jew and Counsellor of the Empire; the Grand Lodge of German Free Masons of Berlin, founded in 1770, grand master, Count Delina, major-general in the German army; the Royal Grand Lodge of Friendly Masons of Berlin, founded in 1760; the Concordia of Darmstadt, founded in 1864; the Grand Saxon Lodge of Dresden, founded in 1811, whose Grand Master is the Protestant pastor, Klapp, well known as an extreme Modernist. Curiously enough, all these Lodges only meet once a year, and that on Whit-Sunday, and it was on Whit-Sunday that the compact which, if I read plain indication aught, is to result in a renewed persecution of the Christian religion was signed. It is notable, too, that Mayor Nathan, on learning this news, at once telegraphed his hearty congratulations both to Berlin and Paris, and it is expected that before long the Grand Masters of France, Germany and Italy will meet, their object being, as usual, to plant the foot of Freemasonry on the head of the Christian religion. It is expected that there will then be a recrudescence of anti-clericalism in Italy, the Syndic of Rome being constantly seen in company with the "Honorable" Padrecca, the editor of the abominable obscene and blasphemous "Asino." Everything, of course, is being prepared for the great anti-Catholic manifestations of 1910-1911 in Rome, which are to mark the anniversary of the fall of the temporal power and the inauguration of the monument to Victor Emmanuel II., one of the manifestations of an ostentatious triumph of anti-Christian Freemasonry in Italy, which, were it not for the action of the Church, would prove the country's undoing.

French Government

Modifies Law as to Home For Aged Priests.

The French Government has issued a decree modifying the law of 1904 which suppressed religious teaching orders, whereby in the near future permanent homes will be assured aged and infirm priests as members of the orders. Heretofore the law provided for the evacuation and sale of the houses of congregations if petitions that they be used as homes for members were not formulated within a stated time or if the funds in hand were not sufficient to properly maintain them. The Government now waives the first condition and undertakes the maintenance of the houses if the funds of the occupants are not sufficient for that purpose.

Echoes of Tercentenary

Appreciation of Montreal Aid at Cliff Haven.

To the Catholics of Montreal much is due for the successful opening of the great Tercentenary celebration of the discovery of Lake Champlain through the kindness of Rev. Gerald McShane and the members of his fine choir journeyed to Cliff Haven, the splendid celebration of the Pontifical Mass on Sunday, July 4th, was the most memorable event of its kind ever witnessed in the United States.

It will be of interest to the Catholics of Montreal to know that a beautiful souvenir booklet is being compiled which will contain all the addresses, sermons, musical programs, together with pictures of the distinguished lay and clergymen who visited Cliff Haven during the week of the Tercentenary celebration, views of the choir, the procession, the President and his party, etc. It is the intention to make the booklet a real work of art, which will pass for the most nominal sum and be a creditable and permanent summary of the memorable events of the celebration.

President Taft, during his stay at Cliff Haven, spoke of the great binding effect of the Tercentenary celebration, how it had brought France, England and Canada into closer and more friendly relation with the United States. Why, we have already taken up here the Dominion song, "Canada," as though it were our national air.

At the regular family gathering on Sunday evening July 11th Miss Frances Stafford, of Montreal, with a voice beautiful in its natural and refreshing tones, sang "Canada," and gave as an encore "Absence," Miss Stafford's rendition of "Canada" was so charming and spirited that its martial swing swept the great auditorium, and on every hand the tune has been caught up, until it seems to have permeated the very atmosphere of the Summer School.

LAND COMMISSION AND IRISH TENANTS WORK BEING ACCELERATED.

Strong Criticism Directed at Department by Mr. John Redmond.

A profitable discussion was initiated in the House of Commons by Mr. Kibride on the vote of a sum not exceeding £133,677 for the salaries and expenses of the Land Commission, says the Dublin Weekly Freeman. The amount of the vote is of some moment, but the real importance lay in the discussion of matters involving many millions of money, the existence of many thousands of people, and the general welfare of the country. In the speeches of Mr. Redmond, Mr. Kibride, Mr. Kavanagh and Mr. Birrell there was hardly any detail of the question of Land Purchase and Evicted Tenants left untouched. General results were criticized and defects in the machinery were examined with useful effect, to judge from the statement made by Mr. Birrell.

PACE OF LAND PURCHASE.

The pace at which Land Purchase is proceeding and the administration of the Evicted Tenants Act were the two outstanding subjects of discussion. With regard to the first, the fact was emphasized that the so-called blockers of Land Purchase have succeeded in accelerating the speed at which transactions are carried out. The average amount of transactions in the past has been £5,000,000 a year, during the past few months the transactions have proceeded at an average of £8,500,000. The rate is close enough to Mr. Birrell's limit when he estimated that £10,000,000 a year would exhaust the capacity of administration. Mr. Redmond questioned that estimate when it was made, and he challenged it, again last week when it was shown that a marked increase had followed the pressure exerted by the Irish Party to secure greater expedition in the handling of the work of the Land Commission. As Mr. Kibride pointed out, no fewer than 5638 estates, to the value of £49,000,000, remain to be dealt with, and, even at the increased rate, six or seven years must elapse before these arrears are disposed of. There is urgent need of accelerating the rate to the figure calculated by Mr. Redmond to be within the capacity of the Commission. Even with the present staff the pace could be improved; but admittedly the office is undermanned. The real blockers of Land Purchase are the Treasury; the alleged obstructionists secured the slight addition to the staff which made possible the quickening of the procedure. If the work is to be done as it ought to be done, the machinery must be strengthened, and in this demand the Irish Party will have the co-operation of the representatives of the landlords.

TREASURY NIGGARDLINESS.

In the niggardiness of the Treasury the prime cause of the slowness of the operations is to be found; but there is another matter to which Mr. Redmond, Mr. Kibride, and the other speakers directed attention—the bewildering diffusion of the work among a number of offices in different streets. In a number of private houses, widely separated, the work of a great department charged with enormous duties and having an immense staff, is so split up that the individual bent on business with the Land Commission would need the assistance of a chart or a guide to bring him to the desired office. Mr. Redmond urged that, in the interests of the public, of order and despatch, all these offices should be contained in one building. Economy is not served by the present chaotic system; that indeed might be inferred from the fact that in this case the Treasury as represented by the Board of Works, who bought up three private houses instead of securing one decent building is responsible for the present state of affairs.

A CURIOUS CONDITION.

Another serious aspect of this question is the insanitary condition of the houses which, according to Mr. Redmond, have been condemned by the Corporation, and are so dangerous to health that no less than thirty per cent. of the clerks are incapacitated at one time or another every winter. This, apart from any other consideration, is another illustration of the result of Board of Works' economy. The Chief Secretary seemed to be very well satisfied with operations under the Evicted Tenants Act. He is of opinion that the question is practically settled. Mr. Redmond and Mr. Kibride, who are qualified to speak on the subject, do not share that view. Two thousand two hundred and eighty-five of the evicted have been restored to their holdings; but many genuine cases

still call for consideration.

Nobody desires to prevent the restoration of an evicted tenant to his holding, but it is justly claimed that preference should be given to the men who made sacrifices in the land war, and by their spirit and fortitude won reform. It was for them that this legislation was primarily intended, and even if the qualification had to be strained in their favor, they demand consideration in priority to the case of the tenant who took no stand in the agrarian agitation but lost his holding through some other cause.

Gentle Prelate.

Pius X is Also Forceful as a Statesman.

A London paper recently declared that although Pius X. could not be accounted so potent a force in international politics as Leo XIII, there was no doubt that his tenure of the throne of Peter had shown him to be the most sympathetic among rulers of modern times.

To Etudes (Paris), Leonce de Grandmaison contributes a study of the Sovereign Pontiff which goes to show that underneath the gentleness and charm of the priest, there is all the forcefulness of the statesman. Says M. de Grandmaison:

The Pontiff signs himself Pius, servant of the servants of God; he is also, however, a great master.

His pontifical work may be divided into three headings, namely: his administrative organization and internal government of the Church; his foreign policy; and his fight against Modernism.

In regard to the first, whether it be a question of the catechism, of Church music, of the codification of canon law, of frequent communion, of the organization of great seminaries, or whether the decisions and directions of the Pope take the form of Encyclicals, bulls, or decrees of the motu proprio type, there can be no gainsaying the masterly methods which characterize him.

One is conscious that in many of his encyclicals, His Holiness seems to deliberately dissociate himself from the classical form of the pontifical Encyclical and, in common language, makes his behests known to the world at large, the highly educated and the humbly educated being addressed in the same terms.

Referring to the difficulties connected with the disestablishment of the Church in France, especially at the outset of this momentous crisis, when all the anti-clerical passions of an atheistic government were let loose upon the nation, M. de Grandmaison shows that the firmness of the Pope softened much of the bitterness of the struggle between the opposing parties, and enabled the churchmen to issue therefrom with the full honors of war. Says the writer:

Owing to the peculiar difficulties with which the whole crisis was encumbered, a weak Pope might have been excused had he compromised with the enemy to any extent.

But transience of any kind was the remotest from the Pope's mind. He was among the few who saw that the strength of the Church lay largely in her pacific action and in maintaining the spirit of non-reprisal.

The result was that the Church in France has issued stronger from the conflict, and that the cause of Catholicity has gained by the attempt of the French anti-clerical party to overthrow the religion that won for the French people the greater part of their greatness. His fight against the spirit of agnosticism and "half-protestantism" that is becoming common enough among Catholics, indicated that he, before any other, perceived the approach of that spirit of rebellion which subsequently came to be known under the name of Modernism.

More than any other leader or teacher of men, he has clearly defined the limits of scientific enquiry and shown that materialism is the real bar to the advance of civilization, just as religion is the true basis on which it is founded.

Considered as a diplomatist or as an organizer, there can be no doubt, says the French writer, that Pius X must, as the guide of the Church in one of the most critical ages in all her history, have proved himself, in every way, worthy of the highest traditions of the Church.

Everything he has undertaken has prospered, and there is no question that under his safe guidance, a new era has opened for the welfare of the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Truth Society of Ireland

has grown from very small beginnings, but in its career has circulated over half a million penny Catholic booklets which have probably had two and a half million readers. It is regrettable to learn, however, that owing to the death of young Catholic writers, prizes offered for original booklets through the kindness of the Archbishop of Tuam had to be withdrawn.

PERSECUTION OF ORDERS.

Ever since this meeting a furious persecution has raged in France against the Christian religion and the "idea of God," which has brought the country to its present condition of chaos and anarchy. But chaos and anarchy are precisely what the Continental Free Masons desire, for their object is not the welfare of mankind, but the chance of fishing in troubled waters, which may benefit their influence. For some time past most serious charges have been made against them by a number of Continental journals to the effect that they have been at the bottom of dangerous conspiracies to which lamentable events can be traced. Until clear, convincing evidence can be produced—and the difficulty of producing it is obvious—such accusations cannot be taken as evidence against them. But of their efforts to stir up clerical strife and to engage the worst elements of society in their warfare against Christianity there can be no doubt, and one day there will, I feel sure, be an exposure of their more recent methods, fully documented.

UNFRIENDLY FEELING AROUSED.

The card that the Grand Orient of France, which virtually commands the Grand Orient of Rome, has just played in inducing the German lodges to recognize it and to become associated with it, is a matter of great political significance, and it is not surprising that the Roman papers should take the subject up as they are doing. The unfriendly feeling which the Italian Free Masons and so-called Liberals have provoked between Italy and Austria has undoubtedly created a sense of anxiety throughout the peninsula. The Italians have within the last few days voted large sums for the improvement of their army and navy, and doubtless some Italian statesmen, more unscrupulous than others, view this alliance between the German and French Free Masons very favorably, hoping that it may lead to a weakening of the imperial power and idea, both in Germany and Austria, irritated beyond measure by the continual pin-pricking of the Italian newspapers and speech-makers, menaces Italy seriously.

By this time it is highly important that English Catholics, and indeed all Catholics should keep their eyes steadily fixed on the movements of the great anti-Christian and Pantheistic association. A few years ago people did not trouble their heads about Free Masonry, but looked upon it as a purely benevolent society. Indeed, for aught I know, the contrary, it is so still in England; but upon the Continent it is otherwise.

The man in the street in Italy and in France now knows what the Free Masons are and what he is to expect from them; and realizes the wisdom of the Church in fulminating its supreme excommunication against an association which stops at nothing when its interests are at stake.