

The Catholic Record.

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London, Saturday, June 24, 1893.

OFFICIAL.

The annual retreat of the clergy of the diocese of London will begin at Assumption College, Sandwich, Ont., on the evening of July 10, and not of July 3, as had been announced. The change has been made to allow the exercises for the first Friday to be held as usual in the various parishes.

By order of His Lordship. M. J. TREANAN, Sec. London, Ont., June 12, 1893.

THE CHURCH AND THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

There are every day new evidences that the cause of religion, which has now been persecuted for more than twenty years in France, is on the eve of a great triumph. Time and the experience of the results of a purely secular education before now convinced Mr. Jules Ferry that he committed a grave error in setting up his judgment against that of the Catholic Church, in his advocacy of irreligious education, and he acknowledged that France had suffered morally from the policy of which he had himself been one of the chief promoters.

We have now a somewhat similar acknowledgment from Mr. Constans, ex-Minister of Finance, the recognized leading spirit of the Republican Party; and it is the wise course followed by the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII., which has produced the change in this instance. Mons. Constans is certainly not a Catholic of the most fervent kind, but it seems he is after all a Catholic at heart, though he has hitherto made his religion a secondary consideration to his political party.

Considering that for over twenty years, or ever since the Republic was established in France, the leaders of the Republican party have shown themselves hostile to religion, and have legislated constantly against the Church, it is no wonder that sincere Catholics have looked upon the Republic itself with suspicion; and it was with no little surprise that the Catholic monarchists heard Pope Leo XIII's word recommending them to accept the Republican form of Government without reserve, and to withdraw their support from those worn-out dynasties which can never hope reasonably to find a throne in France.

The late Cardinal Lavergne earnestly seconded the Pope's advice, but there were high ecclesiastical dignitaries who regarded the Holy Father's policy as a mistake. Among these the Archbishop of Paris was most prominent; and he did not hesitate to assert this openly.

The Holy Father, however, always far-seeing, did not cease to urge his views. With the Church all forms of Government are acceptable which are well administered; and though the Republic was not well administered, the Pope saw clearly that time had proved that the French people were in favor of it, and would have no other. The Pope's advice was, therefore, wise, whether we regard it as giving security that it will be no longer possible for the factions of the old monarchies to carry on the plots and counterplots which so disturbed the country in the past, or as an assurance that the Church conforms herself to the desires and needs of the whole people, and will work with them for the general interest, instead of being subject to the suspicion that she takes any part with the plotters who are endeavoring to overthrow the present established order of things.

The Pope's course has had another good effect, which, though not its direct purpose, will nevertheless have a great influence in reconciling the leaders of the Republican party to the Church. This is made evident by the speech of M. Constans, delivered before the Republican Club of Toulouse, in which he declared in favor of granting complete liberty of conscience, adding that he welcomes the Catholics to the Republic.

can side in the politics of the country. He said:

"I am in favor of absolute liberty of conscience. I recognize that Catholics in following the advice of Leo XIII. are strengthening the Republic, and I would wipe out all causes for grievance tending to create inequalities or arouse heartburnings. My theory of freedom of conscience I believe to be in accord with the real interests of religion and of man, and with the spirit of equality, liberty and fraternity which has made our popular Government dear to the people. The fundamental principles of the Republic must be maintained. They give the opportunity for progressive action. Religious toleration should be extended to all, and the Republic be made accessible to old foes. I would not indeed entrust them with the task of bearing the standard of the Republic, but would accept their help if sincerely professed."

With the Catholics of France taking a new interest in the political struggles of the country, and using their strength for the consolidation of the of the Republican form of Government, they cannot but have a powerful influence on future legislation; and the olive branch thus extended by Mons. Constans is an assurance that the Republicans are disposed under the new circumstances which have arisen, to repeal the anti-religious legislation which now disgraces the statute-book.

Before it can be said that religious toleration exists in France the schools taught by Christian Brothers and Sisters of various religious orders must be recognized by the State, and religious education must be introduced once more as part of the educational programme. The military laws must be amended so as not to take seminarians from their studies to spend one or two years in barracks to learn military drill, and the Sisters of Charity must be once more admitted as nurses in the State hospitals from which they have been excluded to the great injury of the public.

The condition of things arising out of the laws which have been passed on these subjects is not as bad as might have been expected, owing to the fact that the religious order have exhibited so much zeal in the face of prohibitory legislation that their schools even now are better attended than the godless State schools; and the young seminarians, forced to live in barracks for a year or two years, set an example of morality to their soldier comrades which makes the latter better Catholics, and when they themselves go back to the seminaries, their attachment to their sacred vocation is stronger than ever; and when they are ordained there is a new tie existing between them and the soldiery which is sure to have a good effect in the future, and to spread abroad a respect for religion through the country when the soldiers themselves return to their homes after the expiration of their term of service.

In addition to all this, the Catholics—who formerly seemed to be apathetic and discouraged from the fact that the Freemasons and Infidels, by their active interference in all political movements, had secured the reigns of power in all departments of Government—are now taking a decided interest in the doings of their rulers, and the day cannot be far distant when they will resume the control to which their predominance in the country entitles them. We do not doubt that when the proper time arrives they will achieve just such a victory as the Catholics of Belgium gained, after they had been harassed for years under an Infidel rule as galling as that existing in France.

DR. BRIGGS.

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who also stripped him, and having wounded him, went away, leaving him half dead."

Dr. Briggs must, as he heard his condemnation, have thought of that historic voyage. Going quietly down to the great region of free thought, he is attacked, and found but few charitable Samaritans to bind up his wounds. He was following his own path of private interpretation of the Bible and employing critical analysis to discover what was authentic and what not, and all at once he is denounced as a heretic. The doctor's equanimity is undisturbed, and he, doubtless, does not attach much importance to the imputation. He was obeying the dictates of Protestantism not wisely but too well. Does it not uphold as a cherished dogma the private interpretation of the Bible, and encourages all to have done with a Church that claims this to be infallibility. If Calvin rejected certain portions of Holy Writ that did not accommodate themselves to his peculiar views, why may not Prof. Briggs do the same? What

power has the Presbyterian body to restrain its adherents from straying into forbidden paths? What right has it to curb the thoughts of her offspring and point out the truth that must be accepted without a remonstrance? It surely does not pose as an infallible body! And if not, why may it not be hopelessly wrong in condemning Prof. Briggs?

We repudiate the professor's doctrine, but we cannot help seeing in his position, the logical outcome of Protestantism. It, as a writer remarks, is in the presence of Rationalism like an iceberg gradually melting before the sun. Analysis of the Bible is destroying, block by block, the foundations of Holy Writ; and a man, wedded to certain lines of thought, must, if there be no warning voice to remind him of danger, drift out upon the quicksands of unbelief. Give him time, and he will be able, as Ingersoll says, to beat the ten commandments. And again how can Prof. Briggs, or any other Presbyterian, declare, with any show of reason, that the Bible is the Word of God? A Catholic only has the privilege of making this assertion, for he follows the teachings of a Church which he knows to be the pillar and ground of truth. A Protestant admits only those portions of Holy Writ that seem to him to be authentic. He may call to aid him in his investigation all the powers of criticism and analysis, but he will be ever unable to know what is authentic and what not. He may believe that his conclusions are accurate; but from conjecture to certainty there is a long step. And when there is a question pertaining to our eternal destiny we must have nothing but certainty: we need a voice that speaks without error and that can without doubt or hesitation point out the truth. How, then, may our separated brethren declare to us what books are not authentic? There are few ministers who will confess that they are able to grapple with the difficulties which this question entails. How also can he know if they are inspired? Some admit the four Gospels, and others accept only St. Matthew's and St. John's. "I would not believe the gospels," says St. Augustine, "if I were not forced to it by the authority of the Catholic Church;" and every Protestant who appeals to the authority of the Bible makes the same infallible testimony.

The recent controversy has had a very depressing effect upon Presbyterianism. It is a sign that its members are beginning to reason for themselves and that the old landmarks will in a short time be submerged beneath the tide of public criticism. Slowly and surely are the waves advancing, and Presbyterianism is powerless to stay their progress. It has no ready answer for the question that is asked by its adherents, "What is truth." We may hear the flashing epigram and sparkling bon-mot of the eighteenth century, but we will see bands of ministers paring and cutting down the Bible, with scientific scalpels. It is not an easy matter for the rank and file of Protestants to know what to believe. "The most simple of the faithful must before he can trust his faith revolve questions of authenticity—critic and history. In sooth it is not a dish of very palatable food for the mind of the faithful." No wonder they are "as little children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine."

SLANDERING RELIGIOUS ORDERS.

"How revolting is it to hear such calumnies against our Catholic neighbors," said a Protestant the other day. He was not in sympathy with the methods adopted by some divines in our midst, for the purpose of propagating the gospel of "Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will." What woeful malice they display who give their approval to the sickening publications that appeal to the vitiated and purulent taste of the ignorant! They pride themselves on being men of honor, and they permit itinerant lecturers of shady antecedents to vomit forth every species of accusation against a body of women whose sole crime is that they are Catholics. They should bid the poor deluded woman who is degrading them on every ministerial platform to go into retirement and reflect seriously on the punishment that St. Paul says awaits the liar.

The nuns whom she vilifies are proving themselves, by the ministrations of mercy in the hospital, by the works of charity among the poor and by their incessant labor in the cause of education, to be worthy of the respect of every Canadian, irrespective of creed.

They are] entitled to the honor that every man of clean living pays a true woman.

A Religious leads a life incomprehensible to the world. It cannot understand that renunciation of self demanded of all who give themselves to the service of Christ. It is pious by fits and starts, and has sentimental longings for better things; but to work and live without earthly pleasure, in humility and obedience, unto the end, is beyond its comprehension. Priests and nuns are better than others, and they know well that they are what they are by the gratuitous gift of vocation. They want room only and freedom to act. They are certainly doing much for the common weal. They are in most cases men and women of culture, and can justly claim a right to social amenities. The fanatical crusade against them can be explained only by a hatred of Catholicity—a fundamental article in the creed of some Protestants. No other reason can be assigned. If some souls are called to a higher spiritual level who can complain. "The vocation of many," says a learned writer, "is to marry; of others, to remain unmarried; of some, to quit the world; of others to mix with it for its advantage; of some, to give the superfluity of their wealth to God and the poor; of others, to leave all that they possess for the higher departments of Christian service." This is the Church's doctrine; and it is most obviously and unquestionably borne out by the very letter of the Bible.

They will be persecuted, but persecution is to them what the rain and sun are to the flowers of the field. If earnest and intent upon the glory of God they will always succeed, despite the lectures of the Margaret Shepherd stripe and the ministers who are devoid of every manly feeling. "In all things we suffer tribulation, but we are not distressed; we are straitened, but are not destitute; we suffer persecution, but we are not forsaken; we are cast down, but we perish not." Such is the spirit that animates every religious. What boots it for the ministers to prostitute their time and talents to a cause that can be productive of no appreciable good? The very garb they wear should remind them that they are pledged to speak true and fair, to feed their flocks with the solid food of truth and not upon the garbage of falsehood and misrepresentation. Happily for the honor of our country the ministers engaged in this delectable occupation are not numerous and represent a species that can be found nowhere except in Upper Canada. There are others who have but scorn for the ignoble warfare. They live in peace, and are content to let others do the same. They visit the sick and poor, and go to their graves with the respect and esteem of those with whom they lived. Every honest opinion has rights, but rampant bigotry deserves the contempt of all who think life a too serious thing to spend in slander.

THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

The secession of Count Paul von Hinstroch from the Jesuit order is agitating the minds of certain writers who do not hesitate to repeat the oft-repeated calumnies against the Society of Jesus. The Count severed his connection with the order because, forsooth, it was destroying his individuality. And yet for some years he was a witness of the daily life of a Jesuit, and apparently failed to realize the truth of the axiom that grace does not destroy but perfect nature; that nature, under the influence of the monastic principle, assumes in a measure the high prerogatives of which it was deprived by the sin of Adam. Monasticism purges nature of all that is low and ignoble, gives it a clear perception of its destiny, and courage to accomplish it. Nature is left intact, but all that may retard its activity and usefulness is swept away. A man imbued with the monastic idea is no longer swayed by the selfish motives that dominate the actions of the world; his higher faculties, freed from the servitude of the organs of sense, find their legitimate sphere of action among what is true and best. In a word, he acquires complete control of himself; and this is individuality in its highest perfection.

The Count has not yet given to the world the true reason of his secession. We do not question his right in leaving the order because he did not have the grace of vocation, but he proved recreant to his duty as a true man in attempting to justify his action by maligning the Society of Jesus. He should have stepped gently out and played a role in other scenes more congenial to his ideas and notions of

individuality. The traditions of the family of which he is a member should have induced him to pursue a course more consistent with its honorable fame.

And yet the Society of Jesus needs no vindication. Its past history, gemmed with deeds of heroism and of unwearied endeavor for the temporal and spiritual advancement of mankind, commends itself to the praise and admiration of impartial men.

Our own age beholds the sons of Ignatius true to the spirit of their saintly founder; and we could mention many a tribute from distinguished lips to their learning and self-sacrificing devotion. They adorn everything they touch. Their names are written on the roll of the world's famous literati and scientists. Every scheme that may improve the condition of the human race absorbs their attention, and every system born of falsehood and error finds in them stern and relentless antagonists. The world hates them, as it hates everything that runs counter to its interests and objects.

"It is an unparalleled glory for the Society of Jesus that the enemies of the Church should unanimously strike at it, denounce it and calumniate it—a singular privilege, a glorious prerogative, which has made their name the most glorious that could be borne by Christians in the times in which we live."

They have been accused of "moral corruption;" and Voltaire, their most bitter enemy, does not hesitate to declare that the charge astonishes him, because for seven years he saw them leading a most laborious and frugal life, and that this fact could be attested by thousands of men who had been pupils beside him.

They have been persecuted, "but because they did not fear to die they live." They numbered but ten at the time of the Bull of their institution, and to-day they are in every part of the globe. In great cities they are combating error, forming young men to bear the banner of a blameless life; and in desolate missions, far away from civilization, they are planting in pagan hearts the seeds of Christ's teachings. A Jesuit is called a slave—a mere tool of his superiors. True, he pledges himself to obey his superiors; but their behests are ever for good: and better far a man to consecrate his energies to a noble cause than to devote them to pleasure or to worldly ambition. His independence is simply restricted, not destroyed. If he chooses to give up rank and all that man holds dear the world is the gainer.

They are—and we use the words of an Atheist—they are successful in all paths of learning—in eloquence, history, antiquities, geometry, light and profound literature; there is hardly any class of writing in which they do not number men of great merit.

A TREASONABLE DESIGN.

We called attention last week to a statement of Mr. Dalton McCarthy in his speech at St. Thomas to the effect that the French—meaning the French-Canadians—have not "equal rights with us (British Canadians) in this Dominion."

In his Woodstock speech he further declared that if the people of Quebec are successful in their endeavors to protect the Manitoba Catholic minority, "more would be done towards the destruction of the British North America Act than if twenty Governments had been defeated." This is a threat that if by constitutional means the Protestant Ascendancy Party cannot establish the ascendancy they are looking for, they are ready to break up the Canadian Confederation.

We are glad to have these avowals from Mr. McCarthy of the designs he entertains, with the full approval of the new party he has undertaken to form, and who, we are informed, applauded vociferously these announcements of his intention to establish a despotism in this Dominion in which the ascendancy of the English-speaking races is to be established; and by this he means, of course, Protestant ascendancy and Catholic inferiority.

It was not absolutely necessary that such an avowal should be openly made. Mr. McCarthy's intentions could be read in his every speech; but as he was the originator of the defunct "Equal Rights" movement, some persons might have been attracted to his party under the delusive belief that they were really the friends of equal liberty for all British subjects. It will now be known that it is the avowed purpose of the McCarthyites to upset the order established by the Parliament of Great Britain; that the French population all the rights and liberties of British subjects, it being

understood, of course, that they would be as faithful and loyal to the British throne as other races.

The French-Canadians have observed faithfully their part of the compact, and on many occasions sealed it with their blood.

When the other British colonies of America declared their independence, the French-Canadians were invited to cast in their lot with them; but they refused, and by this refusal saved the whole of British America to Great Britain. Afterwards when war was declared between Great Britain and the United States, they repelled all attempts at invasion, and thus again made secure the basis for what is now the Dominion of Canada. In return for all this the McCarthyite programme is for Canadians of British origin to institute a policy of petty persecution against all Catholics under pretence that the British must be the dominant race.

This is, of course, a breach of the original compact, and the pretext is a very shallow one. We are well aware that the object of attack is really not so much the race as the creed of our French-Canadian brethren. To repel this, we by no means ask that Catholics should unite to form one party against their Protestant fellow-citizens. We do not for a moment believe that the Protestants of Canada will as a body second Mr. McCarthy's views, and we do not desire to see the political parties of Canada formed on religious lines. There must be mutual toleration if we desire the prosperity of the country in which we live; but for this very reason Mr. McCarthy's efforts to create religious dissensions must be defeated. We therefore ask equally our Catholic readers and all liberal Protestants to set themselves resolutely against all politicians who adopt the McCarthy programme and platform. It is the platform of the P. P. A.; and, though not the platform of all the Orangemen, it is likely to have the support of the most rabid classes of Orangemen. Firmness and cool determination on the part of Catholics without any exhibition of needless alarm will certainly be crowned with success in the end, and defeat the project.

We have seen that Mr. McCarthy's party are ready to destroy the British North America Act if their designs cannot be otherwise accomplished. To this we may well reply that we too would sooner see that Act shattered than permit the accomplishment of such designs; so the threat can have no terrors for us. But what would be the result of the destruction of the British North America Act? It is now pretty generally conceded that if the plan of Confederation, whereby the many petty isolated Provinces which now constitute Canada were made one strong Dominion, prove a failure, there will be no serious obstacle to our absorption, Province by Province, into the United States; and it is clear enough that those who, like Mr. McCarthy, are laboring to break up the friendly union are in reality aiming for this end.

It is interesting to notice that at the very time while Mr. McCarthy is thus laboring for the breaking up of Confederation, the New York Sun is agitating for the annexation of Canada, and more especially of Quebec, to the United States.

It is pointed out in a recent issue that the only way in which Quebec can relieve herself of the constant menaces which Ontario is making against her liberties is by throwing in her lot with the United States. It is now certain that in the United States there are nearly a million French-Canadians, of whom one-half are in the New England States, close by the Province of Quebec.

The Sun advises these French-Canadians to set before their compatriots still living in Canada the advantages of political union with the United States. It points out that under the Federal Constitution each State is at liberty to make its own laws in regard to education and religion; so that Quebec would not, as a State, be subject to that interference in her domestic concerns with which she is constantly threatened from Ontario. Only the Federal Government is prohibited from making laws giving special rights to any particular religious body; and under the Constitution of the United States Quebec could have its Catholic and Protestant school system as at present, and could, if she saw fit, preserve even the tithing system also. We do not for an instant suppose that these inducements will lead the people of Quebec to desire annexation; but it would not be out of

place for the general public to consider whether the real designs of fanatics, who are endeavoring to discord in Canada, are not to such a disgust with the present of affairs in Canada as will first up the Canadian union, and bring it about that some Province will start the movement of annexation, in the hope that pulse thus given, weakening them, nothing else than to save them the debility of isolation, to strength by following the example.

It will be remembered that now the Toronto Mail, under editorial management of Edward Farrer and Goldwin Pursued precisely this course, creating dissension, when it suddenly discovered that ultimate object was beyond exactly what we have indicated. It is not unreasonable to think that similar purpose underlies the no-Popery campaign also. We do not decide whether Mr. McCarthy making a tool of the Mail, or of Mr. McCarthy; but the perhaps the more probable, reasonable to suppose that being now under the same proscript as it was when the designs of its editors were made has the same purpose in view. But perhaps both Mr. M. and his organ are agreed in this object. The public may form judgment as to the real state of case.

THE CANADIAN GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in session at Brantford, Ont.: at the denomination is not so numerous as its sister Churches of the United States, the Assembly denominated a gathering which probably in proportion to its more talent and less tenaciousness of the similitude which met recently in Vancouver representing the Presbyterian of the United States.

We may here remark that bodies, though both called Presbyterian, are entirely distinct from each other: as much so as both from the Church of England and the Methodists. There is no authority having control over and the only thing which species of fellow feeling binds is the fact that up to the present they have both retained the fession of Faith which was the Commissioners from England and Scotland, who at Westminster in 1643 to a common Presbyterian faith held in the three kingdoms.

The Presbyterian Church adhered to this Confession, remarkable tenacity down to day; but it is worthy of note though the English sect Church was the one most presented on the Assembly adopted it, the English Presbyterianism as behind the present adopt a new one which is more lax, and permit members more liberty of English Presbyterians, have adopted a shorter definite creed.

We have before now several times that the necessity of having national churches is a creed; and notwithstanding Presbyterianism has been tenacious to retain one creed in branches, the divergence made considerable advance stated, the English have now a re-Those of the United States vision under consideration of Canada, though not question professedly union, have practically creed, notably by the the ministry of a minister the express doctrine of that such marriages as the law of God, marriage.

The Canadian Assembly with an address by the retiring Moderator.

We have often differ strongly from numerous attacks on but in the present decidedly approve of the of his address, because not approve of Presbyterian whole, we are glad to maintain the funda