

babel and pandemonium combined, and the proceedings closed with a complete schism in the ranks of the Free-thinkers.

AND CEASE TO BE PETTED.
Something of the same kind happened throughout the remaining two days of the Congress. The Government, which began by patting the Congress on the back, ended by putting it under restraint, and by refusing permission to the rowdies to march in procession to the statues of Giordano Bruno and Garibaldi. No wonder, for the Congress, instead of being a purely anti-clerical manifestation, proved to be violently revolutionary. To-night's papers contain a telegram from Milan, which forms a curious commentary on the incoherent policy of the Government. A number of Christian Democrats were to have unveiled solemnly this afternoon a monument to the priest-journalist, Don David Albertario. At the last moment they were informed by the prefect of police that no such demonstration would be allowed.

THE RED AUTOCRACY.
It is highly improbable that a really adequate idea has reached England of the character and extent of the universal strike which took place last week in Italy, for the telegraphic news was either suppressed or carefully doctored at the time; but what really happened in many of the great towns is admirably condensed in a letter of protest sent by the mayor of Venice to Prieme Minister Giolitti. Venice was by no means the worst example of the effects of the strike, but this is what occurred there: "All communication with the mainland, both by land and water suspended throughout Sunday; the illumination of the streets suspended for two whole nights; the service of both steamboats and gondolas suspended for two days; the city police violently prevented from taking the place of the striking lamplighters; the transport of the sick to the hospitals hindered, and the hospital itself left without meat and milk; the water supply threatened, and the fire-brigade rendered powerless; the buildings dedicated to public worship closed by force; the shops, even those for the sale of food, prevented from being opened; the telephone wires broken in some parts of the city; the distribution of the mails rendered impossible; injuries done to the lamps and clocks of the city; the cleansing of the streets forbidden, and the whole city left a prey to disorder and tyranny—such is the spectacle which has been presented in these days to the grieved and mortified citizens, and to thousands of deeply scandalised strangers." It is universally admitted here that the strike has been the most significant instance of its kind in history—even if it does not possess the special significance attached to it by a thoughtful

Italian writer. He has pointed out that the focus of the movement was the triangle comprised between Milan, Turin, and Genoa—that is to say a district in the heart of which is situated the Royal Palace of Raconigi, where the King and Queen are at present living, and where the heir to the Italian throne has just been born. He points out that if the strike were really a protest against the affair at Buggerru, it should have taken place a fortnight earlier, whereas the orders for putting it into effect were only given on the very day after the birth of the heir; and he shows with terrible logic how completely isolated the Royal Family were left while the disorders were at their height. For even railway communication with the castle was either cut off or seriously threatened. All this may have been a mere coincidence, of course, but it was a coincidence filled with tragic possibilities.



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