

WAR ON THE CHURCH IN FRANCE

London Tablet.

The close of the present week marks a fresh and most important stage in the application of the Law of Separation in France. Hitherto, such changes as had been brought about under it—the appointment of Bishops solely by the Pope, the resumption by the Bishops of full liberty to gather together in plenary assembly, the application by the clergy for pensions—had made no alteration in the outward aspect of the celebration of public worship. The cathedrals and churches were still open and under the administration of the *fabriques*; the Archbishops and Bishops still resided in their *evêchés*, the curés in their *paroisses*. But now, with the arrival of the appointed day, and in default of the formation by Catholics of the forbidden associations, *cultuelles* to take over the property and duties of the old ecclesiastical establishments, the organization and the holding of public worship pass under a new regime. With the dissolution of the *fabriques* and the *congrégations*, the property which they possessed, or of which they had the disposal, falls into the hands of the *seigneurs*, or reverts to the owners—the State, the departments or the communes. That means the despoiling of the Church: the property entrusted to her for the performance and upkeep of public worship, education and works of charity. She could, indeed, have retained it under the law, but only at a price which she could not pay without a surrender of the fundamental principles of her constitution. The law declared that the Republic proclaimed the liberty of conscience and the equality of liberty of worship. What a sham that profession was is clear from the succeeding clauses, which proceeded to hedge in the celebration of worship with all sorts of difficulties, and even to provide for its maintenance by means which not only had no reference to, but were absolutely subversive of, the rights and duties of the hierarchy. As well might an English Government tell the Congress of the States that they could retain their churches on condition that they organized their worship under the governance of Bishops. The Pope had, therefore, no option but to forbid the formation of the associations *cultuelles* and to instruct Catholics to take their stand upon the common law. At first, this was taken as a defiance of the Government of France and as a call to arms to the Catholics of the country. The reply of the Ministry was that the Law was there and would be enforced in all its completeness. But when it was seen that the Pope was not to be frightened or bullied out of a decision arrived at with so much regret and deliberation, Ministers began to drop their truculent language and to affect a moderation and a desire to ease the situation which, however welcome a change in their former attitude, was not one to inspire Catholics with confidence for the future. It was no longer contended that the organization of worship could only be effected through the associations *cultuelles* provided for by the Law, and M. Clemenceau and M. Briand both declared that the cathedrals and churches should stand open. And only a few days ago, M. Briand, as Minister of War, issued a circular in which he invited the Prefets as to how they were to act in regard to the celebration of worship after the appointed day.

In this circular M. Briand set forth, for the information of the Prefets, the conditions under which it would be necessary to allow the celebration of worship, in spite of the refusal of the Church to avail herself of the advantages of the Law by the formation of associations *cultuelles*. Public meetings were regulated by the Law of 1881, and assemblies for worship had been so far assimilated to ordinary gatherings that, by Article 25 of the Law of Separation, they could only be held after a declaration had been made to the authorities, though a single declaration must be regarded as sufficient to cover the meetings of a year, and must be granted free of charge. Further, more, as the holding of assemblies for worship had been provided for by the new Law, there would be no need for the bureau required to be responsible for the good conduct of the meeting by the Law of 1905. He next proceeded to explain how the cathedrals and churches might be used for these assemblies for worship. Some of these buildings belonged to the State, the departments and the communes, whilst others were the property of the *fabriques*. The former, after the period of grace allowed by the Law, would revert to their owners, whilst the latter would be placed under sequestration along with the other property of the dissolved establishments. But as the buildings in both categories were set apart for worship as their special purpose, they must not be diverted from that purpose. Therefore, they must be left open to the clergy and the people for the celebration of worship. At the same time, as the curés would be henceforth mere occupiers without any legal title, they would not be able to make any charge for the use of the churches or the furnishings belonging to them; all that they would be able to do would be to receive offerings during the performance of the acts of their ministry. And this use of the churches was to be allowed so long as the assemblies for worship should be conducted in conformity with the law. But it was quite otherwise with the Bishop's houses and the presbyteries. These buildings had no such special purpose as the churches, and worship in no way depended on them. Therefore, the five years' free use allowed by the Law of Separation on the understanding that associations *cultuelles* should have been formed, would not be granted. The houses would, therefore, revert to their owners, the State, the department and the communes, which, until the end of the period of grace provided for by the Law, might let them to the curés, and, after that, might dispose of them at their discretion. Different again was the case of the seminaries. Their staff really constituted an illegal association, and in

default of a regular association *cultuelle* to take them over, they must therefore revert to their owners, who would have full and immediate powers of disposal over the *petits séminaires*, and, after the expiration of the period of grace over the *grands séminaires*. Such are the instructions of the famous circular which has been hailed in certain quarters as liberal in tone and as going far in the way of concession. But if those who were in haste to praise it had considered the matter a little more closely they could scarcely have failed to note the discrepancy between its sentiments and its provisions. For what is the use of saying that the churches shall be open for the curés to celebrate worship, and for the faithful to attend, if the future supply of the clergy is to be thus ruthlessly galled? M. Briand has two sides and two voices, one the Brand of the Palais Bourbon and the other of the rue Cadet; and this fact explains how, in his circular, he has professed to give with one hand what he certainly takes away with the other. As the Journal des Débats points out: "We will not trouble to try to discover what his real intentions may be; we take his circular as it stands, and we repeat that it is inspired by two opposite spirits."

The next question was, would Catholics fall in with the course thus marked out for them by M. Briand? Would they be content to allow assemblies of congregations for worship to be placed on the footing of political meetings or worse? To that question an answer was quickly forthcoming. The Bishops asked what they should do, and, in reply, the Holy See told them that worship was to be continued, but with out any declaration being made. Immediately the old cry was raised in the journals of the *Bloc* that the Pope was again exceeding his powers and, arbitrarily or under the inspiration of political motives, preventing an accommodation which would have saved the situation, at any rate for the moment. But the truth is, that once again the Pope has shown to the world that he is standing out for religious freedom. It was all very well for M. Briand to pretend to manipulate the common law, but the mere circular of a Minister can guarantee nothing, and pledges nobody, not even the man who signed it, and certainly not his successors; whilst the demand for the declaration has the appearance of an adroit device to enable the Minister to say that the Law of Separation had been accepted. It is true that the Separation Law in Article 25 provides that "a single declaration is sufficient for the whole series of regular, periodical, or occasional assemblies which take place during a year," but it would seem that this relaxation of the Law of 1881 is only available in case associations *cultuelles* shall have been established. Thus the condition has not and will not be fulfilled; and M. Briand has certainly no power to dispense with it, or to prevent a hostile functionary from demanding his full pound of flesh under the common law in the form of a declaration for every meeting, and in default proceeding to a prosecution. There need be no surprise, then, that the Holy See directed that no such declaration should be offered. Again, the Law of Separation has admitted in this very circular that assemblies for worship could not be assimilated to ordinary public meetings inasmuch as they were, by their very nature, repugnant to any such identification. How, then, can Pius X. be blamed for declining to allow congregational meetings for worship to be placed on a footing with public gatherings at which pillage and blasphemy may be preached or with the vulgarities and worse of public-house concerts? That the Pope's decision is grave, or that it is highly inconvenient to a Government that wishes to have its cake and eat it, no one will be prepared to deny, especially as the clergy and faithful will follow the instructions given in a *Bloc* more united than that which forces such action upon the Church. And the steepest sign of the Cabinet in the action which Ministers in their indignation have determined upon in response. Legal proceedings have been ordered to be taken against the curés who say Mass or give Benediction, and all who take part in organising assemblies for worship with out a previous declaration, in addition to other proceedings for contraventions of the Law of Separation. It has been determined to determine the positions of the priests convicted are to be suppressed. The house of Mgr. Montagnoli, the First Secretary of the former Nunciature, has been searched, as well as the houses of prominent Catholics like the Comte de Mun, and Mgr. Montagnoli himself been expelled from the country! It is now no longer a case of masked but of open persecution.

LEANS TOWARD CATHOLICISM.

The well known Catholic proclivities of the Emperor William appear to be exciting the alarm of the Evangelical party in Germany. The Berlin correspondent of Le Temps telegraphs as follows to his paper: "The National Liberals and also the Evangelical Union compared with bitterness the reply of William II. to the note of felicitation sent by their Congress with the telegrams addressed by the Emperor to the Catholic Congress of Essen. To the latter William II. himself despatched his warm thanks, but to the National Liberals and the Evangelicals he simply transmitted his thanks through his chief of Cabinet, M. de Loozen. This has irritated the Leipzig Tagblatt profoundly. It says: 'There is nothing more distressing or significant to Evangelicals than the hope entertained by the members of the Catholic Church that they will one day count the Emperor William amongst the faithful. We profess ourselves ignorant of the private religious sentiments of the Emperor, but nobody who has eyes to see and ears to hear can deny that the Imperial attitude denotes a strong bias toward Catholicism. We do not forget the warm protest of adherence to the Evangelical faith proclaimed on the heights of

Warburg, but we cannot fail to see that the Catholic clergy are treated with more consideration by the Emperor than the Protestant clergy. His predilections are for monasteries, and those who occupy them. The Imperial desire is to revive the ideal of the Middle Ages, and we see in this mental attitude a strong approach to Catholicism. The Emperor perhaps aims at a practical end, and hopes that the Catholic and Mediaeval ideal will aid him in realizing his own romantic ideal; but this personal ideal of the Emperor has much of analogy with the Catholic ideal."

MINISTERS ATTEND MISSION.

PRIZE WORK OF THE REDEMPTORIST FATHERS.

The Rev. M. Sheehan, C. SS. R., T. Galvin, C. SS. R., and F. X. Bader, C. SS. R., gave a mission recently in St. Raphael's Church, Springfield, O., which aroused interest among Protestants as well as Catholics. During the women's week 1,500 attended the exercises, and 1,000 men participated in the exercises. The presence of a number of ministers at the church while the mission was in progress was the subject of favorable comment among the townspeople and was pointed out in the editorial columns of the Springfield Daily News, established nearly a century ago, as an evidence that "the sects are growing more liberal."

The friendly attitude of the non-Catholic community toward the missionaries is reflected pretty accurately in the comments of the editor in question. His inferences were rather more sweeping than the Catholic mind can sanction, yet his observations were made in a spirit that was manifestly kind. Among other things he said:

"The Redemptorist Fathers at St. Raphael's Church, in their plain talk to men and women, did much for the community. The fact that ministers of other denominations attended the meeting shows to what extent the sects are growing more liberal."

"These Catholic Fathers, perhaps more than any other people in the world, understand the present human needs. They hear, more than the ministers of other denominations, the weaknesses of the race. They listen to the outpourings of the contrite heart. They face daily the poverty of the mental distress. They know."

"And these Catholic Fathers, acquainted with the needs of the world as they are, undertake to right things—not in the old-fashioned way of preaching excommunication to all who do not follow the canonical law, but by inviting men and women to the Church and talking to them in the plainest possible way. They did not attempt to proselyte, they simply and kindly showed that there is nothing in life unless one lives morally and cleanly."

—Providence Visitor.

CONCERNING THE JESUITS.

Felicien Pascal, the well known French publicist, devotes an article in Le Monde Moderne, Paris, to a description of the Society of Jesus, apropos of the recent election of Father Wernz to the commandship in chief of that illustrious order. Gravity, he says, is one of the exterior virtues which characterizes the religious of this famous Order, yet it would be absurd to suppose that they were deprived of the pleasure of laughing at great emotion provoked in France by the election of their new General in September last. It was said that as the "White Pope" owed in some way his election to William II., so, too, the "Black Pope" had really been chosen for his great office by the Emperor. All these suppositions were founded, says M. Pascal, on a series of coincidences, mainly among which was the fact that the General had a German name which, however, has been shown to be of not remote Bulgarian origin.

The life of the Jesuit, in its beginnings, would not appear to be an easy one and the passing through the early grades from novice and scholastic to professed priest has its own tribulations, if it also possesses particular glories that make it worth the trial. The novitiate lasts two years, scholars, six years, and even after these six years of preparation, the candidate is not regularly admitted to the Order. In any case, the Jesuit must have attained the age of thirty-three, while in other Orders the age of twenty-five is considered sufficiently far advanced. The fact that a certain vow of obedience is taken by some Jesuits, to the Pope, has probably, says M. Pascal, given rise to the very childish notion that there exists a rivalry between the order of Jesuits and the Papacy. It is to be remembered that the scholars before their profession, receive for some time the title of spiritual or temporal coadjutors. Many Jesuits before entering the priesthood are employed as professors or in the direction of their colleges. It is only when they are professed that they receive administrative charges in the Order. Above the rectors and superiors are Provincials, who have authority over all the religious of any province of the Order. These Provincials are governed by four Assistants residing at Rome. Besides the General, there are also two important dignitaries attached to the mother house, namely, the Admonitor and the General Secretary of the Society. The former, though as much a subordinate as the humblest novice, has the delicate task of "warning" or "admonishing" the General when the latter undertakes anything contrary to the interests of the Order.

The General is, however, the absolute master. In other Orders, the authority of the Superior General is limited and subordinates can "invoke the rule," or have recourse to the constitution of the Order, in case of disputed command. The "Black Pope" is above the rule; he can dispossess them of their particular employment or dignities without gaining. Thus the brightest ornament in the pulpit, professional chair or chapter, may be sent to convert negroes at the order of his

chiefest chief. If, however, the General were to violate the constitution of the Society, the Assistants have the right to convene a general assembly which would take the form of a tribunal with full powers, competent to depose the chief, if this course seemed warranted. The deposition of a General has never as yet taken place.

Much has been written at various periods in their history, of the "secrets" of the Jesuits; but, says M. Pascal, the great secret of their strength would seem to lie in their submission to the rules of the "Spiritual Exercises" of St. Ignatius of Loyola, their founder. That book explains the Jesuit and the military, or quasi military spirit that pervades the Order, is to be referred to the fact that Ignatius Loyola had himself been a soldier. Modern criticism, which respects nothing, has even gone the length of alleging that St. Ignatius borrowed the constitution of his Order from one of the Moslem confraternities. A close study of purely positive results in their work in the world, will show, however, that it is to their sublime discipline that the Jesuits have always owed their marvelous power and their accept ability, a chosen body of highly trained specialists, among the ruling classes.

Banished from all the Catholic States in the second half of the 18th century, the Jesuits found a refuge in the territories of Frederick the Great, an avowed unbeliever. It is no ordinary coincidence that a descendant of that great warrior should today give the Society its firmest support. In the eighteenth century, they numbered some 20,000 members, but were reduced, in 1814, to 3,000. At the present day, they number about 15,000 and it is with this little army that the host of modern free-thinkers is to be fought.

THE HOLY FATHER'S ALLOCUTION

The Holy Father's Allocution on Dec. 29th was as follows: "Venerable Brethren—Among the grave thoughts which occupy us and which we would communicate to you in this illustrious gathering, the chief one is certainly the consideration that every day sees an increase in the most alluring temptations of various vicissitudes by which Holy Church is so sorely buffeted. With more justice than ever she may be compared in these days to a little bark beaten by the waves in the midst of the sea. But not on that account does our faith weaken—nay, rather is it more strongly buoyed up by a firm conviction in the efficacious help of Christ, who, when the time for success arrives, will deign to arise and command the winds and the seas so that the complete calm so eagerly desired may smile on us again. Meanwhile, Venerable Brethren, straitened though we are by deep affliction, we rejoice in a great and wonderful source of consolation which astonishes the very enemies of Catholicism. This consists in the singular harmony which flourishes throughout the entire episcopate, which is united with us in the very fullest measure. All the members of the hierarchy, in one mind and one heart united with the Supreme pastor, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, show clearly how gladly each of them rejoices to repeat the celebrated phrase of St. Augustine: *Roma locuta est causa finita est*. And when the Bishops in some regions are harassed with unusual violence by the turbulent assaults of their enemies, the eyes and hearts of the other Bishops are at once turned towards them to relieve with brotherly affection their brothers' griefs, to encourage them not to yield in the face of bitter trial but to hold out manfully, and to defy torment to self. O Heavenly Father, Who hast placed them to rule Thy Church, maintain them in firm and constant these sentiments!"

"God grant that the Catholic people everywhere may act in harmony with the brilliant example set by their pastors. It is our most ardent desire, our most earnest desire, that the faithful may be in entire union with their Bishops, and deign to their first care to follow in all things their Bishops' words and directions. The Christian profession requires of this as a sacred duty—the interests of religion require that no one should ever act in hostility to the Church becomes more intense, solid strength should be put forth to meet it, and that wherever hostility to the Church is threatened Catholics should generously set aside all animosity and dissension, and neglect no means allowed by the law and by Christian conscience, to avert misfortune."

"This we were anxious to say to you today for your common peace and comfort; it is our duty to provide for the widowhood of a number of churches and especially for the illustrious Patriarchal Latin See of Jerusalem, rendered vacant by the death of our Venerable Brother Louis Pavi. To this See we have, after mature reflection, decided to appoint our Venerable Brother Philip Camassei, Archbishop of Naxos. It is needless to speak of this prelate's devotion to the Holy See and to describe the virtues that adorn him. He began by giving his services in the Curia of Our Vicariate, where he superintended the canonical processes in matrimonial cases; then he governed in a praiseworthy manner the Urban College, and was justly appointed to be among our domestic prelates. Finally he was, two years ago, elevated by ourselves to the Archiepiscopal See of Naxos. Now that he has given an excellent proof of himself in the government of that archdiocese, we have decided to promote him to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Wherefore, by the authority of God Almighty, of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul and by our own, we declare the aforesaid Philip Camassei released from the oath which bound him to the Church of Naxos, and we transfer him to the Patriarchal Latin Church of Jerusalem, seating him as Patriarch and pastor of the said Patriarchal Latin Church of the Latins, as shall be expressed in the Consistorial decree and schola all things to the contrary notwithstanding. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITUATION.

Paris Correspondence of the London Tablet. The situation has gone from bad to worse since I wrote last week. M. Briand had professed to show himself willing to go far towards conciliation, but no one who considered his circular carefully could fail to see that it offered no guarantee beyond his own, and did not secure even that. Then, affecting to secure liberty of worship, he was doing all he could to prevent the recruitment of the clergy by whom worship is celebrated by doing away with the *grands* and *petits séminaires*. Again, though he admitted that congregational gatherings for worship could not be assimilated to public meetings for ordinary purposes, he went out of his way to force a previous declaration by requiring a previous declaration. However, he was satisfied with his work, and the *claque* of the *Bloc* juries immediately burst out into a chorus of praise of his conciliatory and conciliatory attitude. But, again both he and they had reckoned without the Pope, who, estimating the words of the circular at what they were worth, and declining to allow assemblies for worship to be reduced to the footing of ordinary meetings for political or other purposes, has instructed the clergy to continue their ministrations in the churches, but without making the annual declaration which M. Briand says is sufficient. In consequence of this Cardinal Richelieu issued a letter of instructions to the curés of Paris on December 7, in which his Eminence bids them "to abstain from any new formalities" in the continuation of the celebration of public worship. The celebration of marriages and funerals is to be reduced to a uniform type, not needing the apparatus belonging to the churches which have now passed out of the hands of the *fabriques*, and the use of which is forbidden by the Briand circular. The payment for chairs is also no longer to be taken. Meanwhile the Government has not been slow to resent the upsetting of its latest plans for the quiet extinction of the Church. Both M. Briand and M. Clemenceau have voiced their indignation to representatives of the faithful. M. Briand, if said they, the clergy and people obey the Pope's directions, there will be a war between the Church and the State in which the Government will not hesitate to use all the resources placed in its hands by the law. "The Church desires war, and she shall have it," said M. Clemenceau. And already measures have been taken, though the Premier says there is still room and time for conciliation even after the Government have fired the first gun. Circulars have been issued both by the Minister of Worship and by the Minister of Justice, giving the pretexts and public prosecutors instructions how to act under the altered circumstances brought about by the refusal to give the requisite declaration. In his letter to the prelates, M. Briand says: "The Government means that these laws liberally interpreted shall be obeyed in their essentials. It is important that at the end of the period of grace (December 12) public worship be practised without a proper declaration being made beforehand, or on the strength of declaration which does not satisfy the conditions put forward in my circular of December 1, all infringing by the priests or other organisers of cultual meetings must be reported on." Similarly M. Guyot-Dessaigne, in his circular to the public prosecutors, says: "Since the Church of its own will and after reflection put itself under the common law, it is natural and necessary that it should be enforced. He orders the public prosecutors to take legal action in all cases where the law is broken, and directs that the cases shall be tried on their own merits and without prejudice to proceedings which may be taken for breaches of the law of 1905, or in connection with breaches of the public peace at religious meetings. M. Guyot-Dessaigne also asks for a report on all proceedings taken. Nor is this all. The Cabinet have determined to suppress the pension of priests who are guilty of celebrating worship without a declaration having previously been made, and the seminarians are to be compelled to furnish certificates endorsed by the recruiting officers under penalty of being recalled to the colors next month. There has also been a search of the houses of prominent Catholics in Paris, including that of the Comte de Mun. Another of those houses was that of Mgr. Montagnoli, who was first secretary in the Papal nunciature when a large number of letters and visiting cards was seized, whilst Mgr. Montagnoli himself was conducted to the frontier and expelled from the country. Such, up to the time of writing, are the stages in the development of a situation of which no man can see the end."

NO PROSELYTIZING AGENT.

CATHOLIC CHURCH PRAISED BY GLASGOW OBSERVER.

"While non-Catholics are prone to think that the Catholic Church is a proselytizing agency, those within the Church and those who join it know that the fact is quite the other way," remarks the Glasgow Observer.

"The aspirant convert who wishes to join the Church is never allowed to act impulsively. No Catholic priest will grasp at a convert and baptize him or her into the Church at first asking. The aspirant must give sincere, unfettered and reasoned assent to Catholic belief before admission to the Catholic Church. "In the case of parents, like Lord Ripon, becoming Catholics, their children do not follow them into the Catholic Church unless where it may happen that the young people are still in a state of pupillage and unable to decide for themselves the question of re-

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ligion. Where they are able to make such a decision, the matter must be left to them; and so it comes to pass that Lord Ripon's son, Earl de Grey and his family are Protestants, and that the Ripon title, in the ordinary course of matters, will pass again into Protestant hands."

DRIFTING.

Reviewing Canon Sheehan's "Early Essays and Lectures" the Spectator notes the fact that twenty four years ago the author predicted that "with the advance of education most of the Protestant sects will disappear, or, merging with each other, descend to the dead level of Unitarianism," and ironically asks: "Does he see the world moving to this event?" We would venture to answer that he does. He sees the steadily growing movement in the Church of England to get rid of the Athanasian Creed. He hears the Unitarians of the United States boasting that not only Emerson, to whom he made the predictions, but all the other great names of American literature as disciples of theirs. Only the other day a Baptist minister in a convention at St. Louis disowned all belief in the Trinity without one word of protest from his brethren. Dr. Sheehan was perfectly right; nearly all the Protestantism in the world to-day is Unitarianism.—The Casket.

The old friendships, safe, genuine and firmly built, for which we take a little thought, and which always avail us, are like those good, thick walls of by-gone days, which need no repair, and are ever ready for shelter or defence.

Let us fear to be unjust. Sooner or later we must reap as we sow. As a very good and learned man has said: "Injustice is a gun that does extraordinary execution at the breach."—L. W. Wright.

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