

power is only invoked because we have demonstrated our power of opposition and resistance in this country by means of our organization to the existing tyranny that prevailed in the land. In the same way looking within the last ten years at the play of Vatican diplomacy in its intervention in the affairs of the people of Europe, one must be struck by the fact that the rulers of any country never asked aid or counsel from his Holiness until they found themselves in a position of extreme embarrassment with the National Catholic parties in their own land. Now, what occurred in Ireland in 1883 at the time of the Errington mission under a Liberal Government, and what has occurred now with the mission of the Duke of Norfolk under a Tory Government, resemble to a large extent what has taken place in Belgium and Germany, and to some extent in Spain, since the opening of the present pontificate of his Holiness Leo XIII., and I think myself that we must be largely guided in our judgment as to the way in which we should receive any extraordinary intervention in our domestic and municipal affairs by reference to the manner in which other countries have received such interventions. Now, let us first

LOOK AT WHAT TOOK PLACE IN BELGIUM.

It will be remembered that before his elevation to the exalted position of Sovereign Pontiff his Holiness had been Minister or Nuncio to Brussels, and, therefore, he must have had a large acquaintance with Belgian politics. Well, Belgium is we know in majority a Catholic country, but it was ruled just as France is ruled at this moment, to a large extent by Jews, Freemasons, and Protestants. I say this without the least offence to any class or creed, and I merely state a fact. It was under the Premiership of Frere Orban, who was one of the leading Freemasons in the country, and as the result his Ministry suppressed the Papal Embassy at Rome, which had been sent there by the Government of Belgium. Indignant at this conduct and at the general policy of the Freethinking Cabinet, the Catholics of Belgium, for the first time I may say, rallied together as one man. An agitation of extraordinary strength was organized, and at its head were the archbishops, bishops, and clergy of Belgium. What happened? No sooner had the Catholic party become strong, no sooner had they begun to make themselves formidable to the atheistic Government, which had outraged the Holy See, than we find Frere Orban intriguing with the Vatican, and opening negotiations with the Pope for the re-establishment of Belgian Embassy at the Vatican, and, as a price for that re-establishment of diplomatic relations, he proposed that the Pope should intervene to mitigate the agitation of his Catholic subjects in the kingdom of Belgium. Had the Catholics of Belgium been let alone they would have done what absolutely happened within the next three or four years—they would have established a Catholic Government in that country, but some diplomatists were anxious to pluck the apple before it was ripe, and remonstrances were addressed to the Archbishop of Malines and other Catholic dignitaries from Rome.

This gave rise to high debates in the chamber, and finally, the high contracting parties being unable to come to terms, Frere Orban coolly read the whole of his correspondence with the Pope in the Belgium Chamber, creating panic, alarm, and indignation on the part of the Catholic people in Belgium, and such was the resentment thereat aroused that if anyone wants to see the way in which exterior intervention in domestic affairs should be treated I would advise him to read the pastoral upon the subject by the Archbishop of Malines on the intrigues of the Atheistic Government of Belgium and his Holiness. I say that if the terms used in that pastoral by the Archbishop of Malines towards the authorities of the Church in Rome had been employed by any of the Catholic dignitaries in this country, his position would not be worth ten minutes' purchase, and it is only that the people of Belgium are a people with their own government and their own Parliament and their own laws, that their Archbishop and the Catholics of that country were enabled to take up this important and independent stand. We in this country are accustomed to being kicked. We in this country are like the toad under the stone. A kind of callousness has come over us, our skin has become thickened, and so we don't treat with the same spirit of indignation the intervention by an exterior power which other people, like the people of Belgium, would display; and the position of the Belgian Catholics was the position of the Irish Catholic Nationalists, which is that if the Curia would be good enough to

leave us alone, we should settle our contest with the British Government in double-quick time. I am not saying for one moment but that the Circular does display courage from a Catholic point of view; and we as Catholics must take some pride in the fact that, in a situation certainly of great doubt, the Holy Office should have the courage to run the risk, in their view, in the interests of religion, of alienating a large body of the Irish nation here and in America and Australia.

NOW TAKE THE CASE OF GERMANY;

and no more fatal instance could be quoted than the effect of the intervention of the Holy See with the Centre or Catholic party in the Reichstag of the German Empire. What was the case in Germany? After the war with France a federated Parliament was created in the German Empire. At that time, 1871, no religious question had arisen, and there was no Catholic party to safeguard the interests of the Catholic population; but owing to causes into which I will not now enter, the May Laws or Falk Laws, as they were called, were passed, by which the Church in Prussia was put as much under the dominion of the Emperor as a regiment of his own hussars. Well, the Catholic people of Germany, who were inert and inactive, as were the people of Belgium, had for the first time to consider their strength, and, under the lead of the ablest parliamentarians of the time, the ex Prime Minister of Hanover, Windhorst, in a short time Catholic unions, and Catholic clubs, and Catholic newspapers were studded like daisies all over Germany, and at the next general election a Catholic party strong in numbers was created. Well, we all know that Bismarck has used the celebrated phrase that "he would never go to Canossa," as a German Emperor had done in the days of Hildebrand. No sooner, however, was the Catholic party formed than Bismarck changed his tune, and one of the most remarkable things in Continental history was the manner in which, by action of that party, bit by bit the May Laws were gradually relaxed, and at every fresh election the party achieved fresh victories, until they numbered 80, and, I believe, ultimately 90. What happened then? The Catholics being strong, Bismarck went with his petition to the Pope. They were interfering with the German Empire, and had become a cause of offence to the Government. Bismarck, just about this time, seized an island belonging to Spain, apparently with the object of asking the Pope to negotiate as an intermediary in the matter between himself and the King of Spain. The Pope, of course, was highly flattered that a man who passed the May Laws should now "go to Canossa," and the result of the Pope's intervention was that he gave back the island to Spain.

What happened then? Bismarck made one of the most unconstitutional proposals from a British point of view that could possibly be imagined. He asked that in view of the apprehension of war the Reichstag should vote the war taxes seven years ahead. Well, the Centre Party were willing to give the taxes three years ahead; but they would not give them seven years. They defeated the Government, and Parliament was dissolved. To counteract their action, in a purely domestic matter, taken probably to prevent bloodshed with France, Bismarck went to the Pope, and, yielding to his persuasions and in view of getting further concessions under the Falk Laws which the Centre Party would in any case have achieved, for they are winning, as we are winning our fight, the Pope intervened and issued practically what amounted to a mandate to the German Catholics to vote for the Septennial proposal. The prestige of the fighting Catholics, whose *raison d'être*, whose possible reason for existence was that they were fighting the cause of the Church, was weakened. They found themselves, so to speak, attacked in the flank from Rome, and at the present time, to a large extent, division exists in the Catholic party in Germany. Windhorst did not remain silent, and in his speech in Cologne he laid down what in his opinion was the limit of just intervention from the Vatican with their affairs. He took a stern, bold, respectful, but uncompromising attitude, and I say his attitude and the attitude of the Archbishop of Malines, firm, calm, and unflinching, are very proper models for the Irish Catholics to adopt (hear, hear). Now, I may be told that there is no proposition in the recent Papal Circular which might not be assented to as a matter of faith, and which should not have the cheerful assent of every Catholic and Irishman, once you grant the premises upon which it is founded