

THE CHURCH'S NATURAL ALLIES

IT is right and proper, according to an old Latin proverb, to take a lesson from the enemy, and, while it is true of the Church to-day, as it has always been, that no weapon formed against her shall prosper, this must, humanly speaking, be due, in the future, as in the past, to her policy, using the word in its legitimate sense, of turning such weapons against her enemies. It has been her invariable and God-guided wisdom, that is to say, to employ whatever means might rightly tend towards ensuring her victory over her assailants, even when those means have been originally devised by her assailants themselves. Her whole history, from the Upper Room in Jerusalem to the present time, is one long record of her triumphs, even in apparent defeat and humiliation.

Again, her enemies, since the Day of Pentecost, have been of two kinds, open and secret; the "ravening wolves", spoken of by Saint Paul to the elders of Miletus and Ephesus, and the men from among her authorized rulers and teachers, "speaking perverse things", against whom he was no less careful to warn. Concerning both something will be said in this article, since those whom I shall venture to refer to as the Church's natural allies are the same against open and secret enemies alike. And, if it be objected that, in the past, the Church has never looked for human allies but to her bitter cost, I answer that never have conditions, spiritual as well as temporal, been quite the same as they are to-day. Further, and as I shall hope to show, it is no mere human alliance that is here to be considered, but one in matters of vital import to Christianity only. Concerning this, moreover, I would suggest, that some foreshadowings of it, so to speak, are to be found in Holy Scripture. For if