

The Religious Crisis in France

(Count Albert de Mun, in the National Review, London.) (Continued from last week.)

There is another argument in favor of these orders, deductible from the terms of the documents containing the negotiations which preceded the signing of the Concordat. These documents have formed the subject-matter of a most instructive publication by Count Boulay de La Meurthe. Now it is no doubt true and only natural that the Holy See wished that express mention of the re-establishment of the religious orders should be made in the Concordat, and it is equally true that the First Consul refused his assent; but the terms in which that refusal was couched indicate its true meaning. At the last conference of the plenipotentiaries it was expressly declared that the re-establishment of the religious orders should do no more than form the subject-matter of an encyclical, should the Sovereign Pontiff deem it advisable to issue one. It follows, therefore, that the desire of the head of the French Government was to establish the principle that henceforth the Congregations were to be looked upon as purely religious institutions, deriving their existence from the authorization of the Holy See, and receiving no civil sanction at the hands of the general law. As a matter of fact, if one wished to insist on the letter as well as on the spirit of our Concordat, one could logically deduce therefrom the complete liberty of the Congregations, rather than the necessity of an administrative authorization which is far less in conformity with the principles of modern society than with the spirit of the royal ordinances of the old regime.

Further, if the Concordat bears the meaning which some assign to it, how was it that the Government of the First Consul, as well as all succeeding Governments, immediately recognized the existence of so large a number of Congregations? Yet that was what happened, several male orders and a very large number of female institutions received prompt recognition. This fact leads me to define and explain the position occupied by the Congregations in the last century in the eye of the law. Such an explanation is very necessary, as one of the chief complaints made against the majority of these institutions was that they were in a state of rebellion against the law. I have reason to fear that this lunacy, which has been frequently repeated in the French press and which has led and still continues to lead so many of my countrymen astray, has been propagated in neighboring countries also, and has deceived men of good faith as to the true position of affairs. After 1789, though the old regime was abolished in principle and in fact, succeeding Governments, as was natural in the case of a country where traditions of extreme antiquity possessed a powerful influence, continued to be imbued to a very great extent with the spirit, the methods and the mental attitude, if I may use that term, of the ancient monarchy, more especially with respect to all that concerned the exercise of the royal prerogative. It is a remarkable thing, or appears to be so at first sight, if one forgets the extent to which people are unconsciously influenced by the form of the intellectual inheritance bequeathed by their predecessors, that the French Republic, though it was founded more than thirty years ago and was the product of a reaction against former monarchical forms of government in general and the Napoleonic tradition in particular, should, nevertheless, have come to be so thoroughly imbued with these very forms. Throughout the present religious crisis it has been clear, as I shall prove hereafter, that the fundamental idea which animates our adversaries as well as their ultimate aim was, so to speak, inherited from the legislators of the revolutionary period, just as the doctrines which they invoke, and the conceptions of government to which they give their allegiance, closely resemble those entertained by Napoleon, and are, in practically identical with the principles of absolute monarchy. The Jacobins of the first Republic are primarily responsible for this confusion of ideas in that, under the influence of the teachings of J. J. Rousseau, they transferred to a collective body, to the people, the attributes, moral and intellectual as well as political, of supreme sovereignty. The mental attitude of the parliamentary majorities of the third Republic is the same as that of the Jacobins. Napoleon wished to be the embodiment of both the old and the new order, and all the institutions with which he endowed France bear the marks of that besetting aspiration. The monarchical Governments which succeeded him wrought no change in the social organization which his powerful hand had fashioned. When Louis XVIII. was called to the throne, Napoleon remarked, "My bed is a good one, he has only got to change the sheets and lie down." This observation was equally applicable to the Restoration, to the subsequent Government of July, and to all succeeding Governments down to and including the present one. From the administrative point of view, we are still in Napoleon's bed. Mr. J. E. C. Bodley has made the same remark in his excellent book on France, which has had many readers in England, viz., that no matter what the form of government may be, republican or monarchical, autocratic or parliamentary, the civil life of the nation is always regulated by the lasting and forcible mechanism of the Napoleonic machine. In spite, however, of this fidelity to tradition, the great social transformation accomplished in 1789 has lost none of its effects. Though the wielders of supreme power still maintain the pretensions and the theories pertaining to the monarchical Government of the old regime, the manners and customs and the conceptions which are the product of the Revolution tend more and more to develop the feeling for liberty and the need of it. This two-fold influence, which manifests itself in every department of public national life, produced from the very inception of the new society an exceptional state of affairs as regards the position of the religious Congregations. They preserved the character imposed upon them by the Revolution, of associa-

tions of ordinary citizens whose private obligations are ignored by the civil Government; but in the eye of the law they could have no collective existence save by virtue of the authorization of the supreme power. Such associations as were recognized by the Government became legally existent entities; in their collective capacity they were enabled to acquire, to possess, and to alienate property, and to receive donations and legacies. Those that were not invested with that authorization remained mere associations of citizens, whose collective members constituted, as far as the rights of ownership were concerned, limited companies, for the regulation of which the law provides. Many merely rented the houses, whether schools or hospitals, which provided the field for their activity, from societies composed exclusively of lay members. These "authorized" Congregations were, as a matter of fact, just as lawful as those from which they were thus nominally distinguished. The sole difference was that the latter had a personal civil existence in the eye of the law with all its consequent advantages and liabilities, while the former neither enjoyed those advantages nor were subject to those liabilities. This state of affairs was sanctioned by all forms of government, at all periods, and in the absence of any law defining and regulating the liberty of association its existence was looked upon as the actual justification for the reappearance of the Congregations and their development in the light of day during the whole course of the century. Short of actual abrogation, no clearer proof of the fact that the revolutionary laws had fallen into desuetude could be furnished. Consequently, in spite of any misapprehension to which a deceptive misdescription may give rise, no possible justification can exist for considering the so-called unauthorized Congregations as being in a state of revolt against the laws of the country; and the truth of this statement is proved by the fact that under every form of government the various State departments made formal arrangements with them at one time or another in connection with charitable undertakings and prison administration. Thus the first accusation leveled against the Congregations falls to the ground.

There is another accusation which has been spread broadcast by the press, and which I will at once clear out of the way. An attempt has been made to persuade the people that the associations do not pay taxes like the rest of the community. This allegation cannot be maintained, and any one who is in the least degree acquainted with French legislation is aware that it is mere calumny. The authorized Congregations, in the same way as other civil communities, pay the so-called "mortmain tax," to which the property of all analogous associations is subject, and which has the effect of preventing the accumulation of property in the hands of dead hands whose corporate existence never ceases and whose possessions consequently never become liable to the payment of succession duty. The unauthorized Congregations paid all the direct taxes payable by private citizens and, in addition thereto, a special tax to which they were subjected about twenty years ago in their character of religious associations. It is necessary to go further into details of this fiscal question, these few words have sufficed to prove that the members of the Congregations were neither privileged persons from the point of view of taxation, nor rebels against the general law.

But I should not have exhausted this aspect of the question if I omitted to say a word on the subject of the wealth of the Congregations, that was one of the chief instruments employed in the attempt to arouse popular passions which are always easily awakened in a democratic society by arguments based on the antagonism of poverty and riches. M. Waldeck-Rousseau, President of the Council of Ministers, gave vent in a public speech, the echo of which reached far and wide, to the assertion that the value of the real property belonging to the Congregations amounted to a milliard of francs (\$300,000,000), and drew the conclusion, which afterwards served as the theme of the most violent attacks on the religious orders, that the imminence of that property, which he styled "the Congregational mortmain," constituted a serious economic danger to the nation. No accusation could be fraught with greater danger to its object or to the cause of the Catholic Church which is confounded with that of the Congregations; and none, by reason of its falsity and its perfidiness, could be more unworthy of the head of a Government.

There is a great deal of so-called "mortmain" real property in France, i.e., property belonging to a body with a continuous existence; the departments, the communes, the hospitals for example, hold a very considerable amount, far more considerable in fact, than that possessed by the Congregations. This is proved by the simple fact, which is established by official statistics, that the real property belonging to the Communes alone represents an area of 4,510,000 hectares (11,375,000 acres); whereas that of all types of Congregations taken together hardly extends to 48,000 (120,000 acres) as for the figure of a milliard, the Government tried to prove the correctness of the estimate by means of a Government inquiry, which was conducted, I may mention, in such a way that it was absolutely impossible to verify its conclusions. In any case, judging from such figures as the Commission produced, it is impossible, with good faith, to arrive at a total of more than 455,000,000 francs (\$87,000,000), as representing the value of the real property owned by the Congregations; and, as a matter of fact, that is the figure adopted by those responsible for the Budget. So much for the only too notorious "milliard" of the Congregations. But apart from the question of figures, how is it possible to maintain that collective ownership constitutes a public danger? The great feature of the economic development of the nineteenth century was the creation of collective enterprises. Every kind of industrial and commercial undertaking tends to take that form; every kind of social activity, and philanthropic activity tends more and more to have recourse to the establishment of permanent societies. How is it possible for the principle of association,

which has been encouraged everywhere to such an extent by the authorities in particular and by the masses and nations in general, to constitute a public danger, more especially in the case of charitable institutions or religious schools, for the establishment of which the greater part of the real property owned by the Congregations was intended to be utilized? M. Leon Say, whose name has been rendered famous in England as well as elsewhere by his numerous works on economic and financial subjects, and who occupied one of the most important ministerial offices in the Republic, wrote ten years ago, "Possibly the clerical 'mortmain' will hereafter become a triling matter in comparison with that of lay society." All careful minds appreciate the truth of this remark. The reaction against the individualistic doctrine of the eighteenth century is universal; the principle of association, of organized co-operation and collective enterprise invades, in every country, the fields in which the most varied types of national activity are exercised. Workmen's associations, more particularly, daily increase in number, in strength, and in influence, and by degrees, as an when their right to acquire property is more freely recognized, as must inevitably be the case, the "mortmain" of the working classes will attain more considerable proportions and will exercise an influence of incalculable magnitude on the economic destiny of nations. How, then, can it be pretended in good faith that the existence of real property to the value of a few hundred million francs in the hands of a few thousand monks or humble nuns is becoming a public danger?

It would be difficult to abuse the public credulity in a more cruel manner, and the bait was rendered all the more alluring and deceptive by the fact that the people were induced to hope that the proposed confiscation and sale of the possessions which were denounced and thus made the object of popular cupidity would be utilized to the common profit—for that was M. Waldeck-Rousseau's view—for the establishment of a new school for the benefit of the working classes. The very fact that nearly all the real property belonging to the Congregations was not of a revenue-producing character, but comprised establishments arranged with a view to special objects such as the education of children or the care of the sick, and consisted of colleges, hospitals and orphan asylums, made it perfectly obvious that it was of comparatively little value for selling purposes and that it would be extremely difficult to find a purchaser. Such, however, were the sophistries and such were the calumnies on which the entire campaign directed against the Congregations was based.

In order to maintain the campaign in Parliament and to convince the thinking public of its justice, other and more serious considerations had to be discovered. I will make a brief reference to them; but before doing so I must say a word as to the circumstances which gave rise to the attacks directed against the religious orders, and which seemed to explain the passing of the proscriptive laws of which they were the object. I believe that those particular circumstances produced, thanks to the intense activity of the press, an exceptionally strong impression on the minds of foreigners in general and of Englishmen in particular. I speak of the unfortunate Dreyfus affair, which so profoundly stirred the passions of mankind and was, in France, the cause of such lamentable estrangements.

When at the close of 1899 M. Waldeck-Rousseau introduced the bill which nominally dealt with associations, but which was in reality particularly directed against the Congregations, he justified it not only by presenting the clerical "mortmain," of which I have spoken, in the light of an economic danger, but also by pointing to the national peril involved by the education of a section of the youth of the nation in the colleges directed by members of the Congregations. It was of this argument that the press, the orators, the writers belonging to the Ministerial party made the most persistent use. It was directed more especially against the Jesuits, whose colleges and preparatory schools were in a flourishing condition prior to the passing of the new laws. A relatively large number of officers came from those establishments, and naturally, all of them were animated by Christian sentiments, the fruit of the special education rather than of the special character impressed upon them by school influences. The campaign initiated at the end of 1897 in favor of Dreyfus attained in 1898 and 1899 its maximum of intensity, and was deliberately—this was both obvious and instructive—mixed up with and made part of the campaign against the Congregations. It was affirmed and reaffirmed that it was printed in all the newspapers of Europe, that the Jesuits, a generic name under which all the Congregations were lumped together, had their hand upon the French army, and that the Dreyfus affair was the outward and visible sign of their teaching.

This two-fold assuasion is familiar to my readers, for it filled the columns of the press during all these years of heated polemics. I have no intention of reviving old discussions or of touching on the essential features of an affair the mention of which is, in spite of the efforts of a few individuals, intolerable to all Frenchmen, whether they be partisans of the condemned man or not. I had to admit, I will keep my reply to that subject strictly within the limits of the article, and will use only facts for arguments; more especially as I have, since 1899, treated the same question at greater length in two documents with which a good many Englishmen are acquainted, viz., in a communication addressed to the editor of the London Times, and in a letter written in answer to one received from Lord Russell the other day in which he had taken the trouble to interrogate me on this very subject. If the Dreyfus affair was in fact, as some have pretended, the result of the practical application of the teaching of the Jesuits, their pupils must have been responsible for all that was done in 1894 and since that date, in connection with the arraignment, the trial, and the condemnation of the accused man. If that is not proved the whole argument falls to the ground. And how can it be proved? Not one of the generals or superior officers who were

President Loubet's Visit to Rome

Rome, April 28.—The visit of President Loubet is ended. This morning, in the midst of heavy rain, the guest of official Italy left the Eternal City for Naples. Rome has not yet returned to its normal silence. The sound of the "Marsellaise" is still heard; young enthusiasts thump it out on the piano, and it is whistled even yet by the idle boys on the street. The individual who has followed the busy succession of shows and pageants and feasts since Sunday last must feel like him

"Who treads alone Some banquet hall deserted, Whose lights are fled, Whose garlands dead, And all but he departed!"

This display made by the Italian Government and the governmental majority of the Municipality of Rome on the occasion of the visit of M. Loubet was on a grander scale and a greater cost than has been prepared for any sovereign. The restitution of the visit of President Loubet to the King of Italy in Rome, said the Radical Clemenceau a few days ago, had a much greater significance than that of Victor Emmanuel III. To Paris could have. And, as a Government organ of Milan notes, the essential thing is that the chief of the French nation should make an official visit to the chief of the Italian nation in "the capital, Rome."

This it is which has the value to the anti-Papal party and Governmental parties in Italy. That was never achieved before since the Pope was confined to the Vatican and the great Catholic nation, France, had become a Republic. This was, according to the Italian wishes and convictions, the great triumph. It indicates as they with apparent justice declare, the profound change in the opinions of the French ruling classes which has been effectually obtained by President Loubet and his Ministers, Combes and Delcasse. "We cannot judge," says the "Illustrazione Italiana," whether there is an advantage to the internal cause of the Republic Government in the clerical policy at all costs which Combes is applying in France without regard, striking at the Religious Congregations and the sacred pictures and crucifixes; but, unless he assumed a very resolute attitude towards clericalism, the visit to the King of Italy at Rome by the President of the Republic would never have been possible.

When there is money to spend it is easy to make a demonstration. For weeks past people have been at work refurbishing old street decorations, and inventing and fitting up new ones. Flags cost very little, and when plentifully employed adorn a street. The streets through which the Republican guests were to pass most frequently, the Nazionale and the Corso, were abundantly flagged and decorated. The other streets of the city, where flags might have been hung out, were conspicuous from the lack of these cheap adornments. The Roman people dearly love a show; it was so in the days when they were fed and entertained with Panem et Circenses, it is so to-day, when they have to work hard for their bread, and when their chief circus is the military and royal display made for the coming of a King or a Ruler. "R. F." on each side of the old Roman fasces adorned blue shields gilded with Dutch metal frames, and these alternated with others bearing the white cross of Savoy on a red ground. The Corso was spanned by great rings, artistically ugly—of gaslights. At the Piazza Colonna a garden was constructed on the shortest notice, and palms, cypresses, laurels, and century plants were aweighing and blowing. In the centre of this hastily made garden stood an antique pedestal, and on it rose an antique statue of the Emperor Nero! Why this figure of the arch-persecutor of the early Christians should be chosen to adorn the street through which M. Loubet passes, who is the representative of the Government which has distinguished itself for its persecution of Christians in later days, is one of these peculiar coincidences that cannot readily be explained. It is almost an outrage on the memory of that choice scoundrel, Nero, to think of him in the same line as the foolish little persecutor, Combes. Yet the conjunction was brought to mind in seeing the statue of the Emperor Nero set up in honor of President Loubet.

It has been noticed in the more vigorous of the Catholic papers of Rome, the "Voce della Verita," that it is necessary to go back over four centuries to find an event corresponding to this coming of M. Loubet to Rome—that is, when Charles VIII., King of France, came to Rome. But long before that the predecessors of this King entered the Eternal City in very different circumstances. Amongst these was Charlemagne, who came here in 774 to celebrate Easter, and seven years afterwards Pope Adrian I. baptized Pepin Charlemagne's son, in St. Peter's. And in 800 the same Charlemagne, having totally defeated the enemies of the Church, entered into Rome in triumph, together with the Pontiff St. Leo III., and was solemnly crowned Emperor by this Pontiff in the Vatican Basilica. Over a thousand years have passed since then, and in its earlier course this millennium has been lightened up by the presence in Rome of other French monarchs. In 823 St. Paschal I. crowned in Rome the Emperor Lothar-

mixed up in the case, neither the Generals Mercier, Billot and Gosselin, nor the Colonels du Paty le Clain and Henry, nor yet Major Esterhazy, came from Jesuit schools. General Boisdeffre, who spent two years of his childhood in one of these institutions, was the sole exception. Not one single pupil of the Jesuits was on his staff, and among the roughly speaking, 1,600 members of the general staff there were but nine or ten such pupils. Among the members of the court marshal of 1894 there was not one of those who sat in 1899 there was only one who had been educated by the Jesuits, and he was generally supposed to have voted in favor of an acquittal. Of the six witnesses six were ex-pupils of the Jesuits and three of them gave evidence in favor of the accused. These are the facts.

(To be continued.)

J. E. SEAGRAM DISTILLER AND DIRECT IMPORTER OF WINES, LIQUORS AND MALT AND FAMILY PROOF WHISKIES, OLD RYE, ETC. W. WATERLOO, ONTARIO

ius I.; in 844 Pope Sergius II. crowned the son of Lotharius, Lodovicus II., King of the Longobards; and this same King returned to Rome in 858 to the consecration of Pope Nicholas I., and held the stirrup of the horse which the Pope rode. And so in the early ages the history of the Popes is lightened up by the record of the friendship and devotion of the Kings of France towards the Holy See.

Yet the history of later years is eloquent with touching events in which the devotion of the people of France led them to make heroic sacrifices for the sake of the Pontiff. In the National French Church in Rome, St. Louis des Français, there are many memorials of this heroic devotion to the cause of the Roman Pontiff. There is the tomb of General George Pimodan, who fell at the battle of Castelfidardo defending the rights of the Apostolic See. There also is the monument that covers the bones of the French officers and soldiers who fell during the siege of Rome, when the Eternal City was ruled by Mazzini and his colleagues. Yes, there are memories in Rome of French devotedness to the Church and the Pontiff that can never be forgotten, even in such sad days as the present, when the people seem to be helpless in the hands of their enemies.

All the officials of State, with King Victor Emmanuel III. and the Count of Turin and Prince Thomas of Savoy, went to the station on Sunday afternoon to receive the President of the Republic. The soldiers of the best regiments—cavalry and infantry—were on duty, and a group of red-shirted Garibaldians, some of them old enough and maimed enough to be genuine veterans of wars which ceased 31 years ago, were also waiting within the space allotted to celebrities and worthy representatives of the State. No one who knows the shady history of the making of modern Italy would exclude their claims—and irregularity was turned to account for that object.

M. Loubet and King Victor sat together in a grand royal carriage. The latter, who returned the salutes of the people in going up to the station, gave to his guest, Loubet, the whole honors on the return journey. M. Loubet wore the usual chimney-pot hat of the day, and had to lift it constantly on his way down to the Quirinal. He was dressed in black evening dress, and was in that way distinguished conspicuously from his surroundings—the royal guard in silver helmets and polished steel corselets, and shining swords; the coachman and footman, in powdered hair and scarlet coats; the officers in gold lace and sparkling decorations; in fact, M. Loubet, in his plain black clothes and indistinguishable air, seen in this gay company, reminded one of a Daniel in a den of lions—very notable lions, too.

The President went through the regular forms followed by the usual royal visitors. He came out on the balcony of the Quirinal Palace, which is flanked on either side by the great recumbent statues of St. Peter and St. Paul—and there, where of old the Sovereign Pontiff was accustomed to appear and bless the people of Rome, this representative of the enemies of the Pontiff saluted the acclaiming crowds that stood below. Everyone who has lived much in Rome knows how much those cheers cost the country, and how the reduced railroad fares flood the city with thoughtless folks from the country places, who are good for any demonstration. It is to be hoped that M. Loubet was not troubled by the historic imagination; otherwise he might be embarrassed by the thoughts that his position would naturally engender in the mind of one who was a Catholic, at least by baptism. Over against him, across the Tiber, rose the great dome of St. Peter's, and near it the buildings of the Vatican. It was part of his policy to shut his eyes to the fact that there was the residence of the Head of the Church, of which he, the President, was still a member, and, by duty bound, an obedient son.

Undoubtedly, M. Loubet remembered the words issued from the Vatican a few days before: "That which certainly is not ignored by anyone is the very serious offence which is about to be done to the Pope by the visit to Rome, in the present conditions, by the Head of a Catholic State." Perhaps M. Loubet did not think at all, but drowned his recollection in the rush and movement of the fetes that Italian Rome prepared for him. At the grand dinner given by the King, when the formal toasts were interchanged, the royal host spoke in his native Italian, and M. Loubet replied in his native French. Neither said anything noticeable, beyond phrases of the usual "good will." M. Loubet has been taught how to say nothing, and say it very well. A review of the army, a visit to the desolate widowed Queen Margaret, visits to the Breach of Porta Pia—where, doubtless, he shed a tear over the Frenchman who died here defending the Rome of the Popes!—to the French Academy, and other places, were all accomplished according to the programme. The Vatican was ignored in the programme of visits. One does not see how it could be visited. A French Catholic paper, commenting on the President's journey, notes that M. Loubet said in a note:

"I do not wish that my visit may have an anti-clerical character." The head of the Freemasons in Rome put forth a proclamation welcoming him with a triple battery of joy. "I am not committing an act of hostility. I am content to ignore the Pope." And, as the French paper put it, "The Chief of the French State cannot ignore! His ignoring is in injury." He gives no offence, he says; he does not visit; he simply ignores the Pope. Is not this ignoring the most serious of wrongs?

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The Head of a State of fourteen centuries old, which was always the support of the Holy See, the heir of the fairest tradition of the world, representing a protectorate which supposes the effective protection of Catholic interests, bound to the Pope by the bonds of a Concordat, maintaining an Ambassador to him, ignoring him? It is needless to pursue the consequences of this ignoring. Perhaps it is well for M. Loubet that he does not think of it, and that he stifles his conscience for the moment in the delight of his journey. Mr. John Dillon, M.P., and Mrs. Dillon arrived in Rome on Sunday afternoon, a couple of hours after the arrival of President Loubet. They came from Naples in the same train that brought Wilhelmina, Queen of Holland, to Rome. She waited for some minutes at the station, where she was visited by King Victor Emanuel, and after a brief conversation with him she proceeded northward. Mr. Dillon is considerably better in health than when he left Ireland. He contemplates remaining in Rome for a couple of weeks. It is nine years ago since he and Mrs. Dillon made their last visit to the Eternal City.

P. L. CONNELLAN. His Power Grows With Age.—How many medicines loudly blazoned as panaceas for all human ills have come and gone since Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil was first put upon the market? Yet it remains doing more good to humanity than any preparation more highly vaunted and extending its virtues wider and wider and in a larger circle every year. It is the medicine of the masses.