

mission of Erkenwald he said he must consider the matter for a time, but he simply told Clovis of her request. One day, as Bathilde turned from the palace gate, after distributing some food to beggars, she found the King beside her. She looked at him wistfully. "I was wishing I might see you—there is a favor I would ask of you," she said.

"There is a favor I would ask of you," he answered, smiling, "but you may speak first."

"I wish to go away, my King, back to the country whence I was taken," she pleaded, tears in her eyes.

He leaned over her, his dark thin face close to hers, the glowing eyes, searching—reproaching.

"Is it that you are afraid of me?" he questioned.

"And the favor I came to ask of you is, that you become my wife, and queen."

She cried out in dismay, "You know it can not be—slave as I am."

"Slaves can be freed," he reminded her.

"But your friends, the world, your rank," she cried, tremblingly.

"Good Christians renounce the world," he told her, soberly. "The Church keeps preaching at me that its glory passes."

She smiled at his reasoning. "The Church would not approve such unworldliness as this."

He laughed gaily. "Yet even now I come from Bishop Owen who approves my choice of a wife."

She shook her head. "He is too holy to presume to judge in such matters."

"The King grew suddenly stern. "Surely it is better to follow laws of holiness than worldliness. Well will it be if in one kingdom of the world merit, not rank or riches, be given first place; obeying the Lord Christ's behest, in the exaltation of the humble."

He waited, but apparently she was still unconvinced. He caught her hands in a strong grasp and forced her to look at him. Then:

"I love you and you love me," he said, softly, "it is not enough?"

She answered, "More than enough," and thus she surrendered.

So they were married; and according to the chronicle the court applauded. Possibly the nobles were relieved that no one among them was honored. An increase of power to any of the great houses would inevitably lead to envy and discord; yet with some uneasiness they waited and watched as Bathilde took her place, the highest lady of the realm. But she did not change, she was gentle and humble as ever; more devoted to the poor, whom now she could relieve more lavishly, and Clovis gave them over exclusively to her.

There came a day of great rejoicing in the palace, and in the King's arms was laid a new-born babe, a man-child.

"You have given me an heir," the King said as he knelt beside Bathilde's couch, holding in his arms, most awkwardly his little son. "What may I give you in return? Anything in my realm you may ask."

She smiled: "I am thinking of your realm, Clovis," she answered. "Since I have been Queen many things I have seen that could be improved from the religious standpoint. Monasteries and convents should be founded, but above all, simony should cease in the Church."

"It shall," he announced, "but my time is so taken up with defending my kingdom at present I could not manage these affairs properly; so I give them to you. Bathilde, henceforth religion in this realm is under your care."

"Many things concerning my kingdom I have already given into your hands, beloved wife," he said. "And you only know the other things I meant to do, so now I give the whole realm into your hands. You must be Regent. Guard their inheritance for our sons; guard against the nobles and the mayors of the palace, threatening our power as kings. All the things we planned to do accomplish, Bathilde, if you can, and God be with you always."

Then he was dead. And Bathilde took up the strenuous task laid upon her, with wonderful results, for the nobles did not, as she feared, refuse to acknowledge her regency. She dared give the long delayed order that no Christian should be a slave. The holy Bishop St. Owen was her friend and adviser. In turn, she aided him in his efforts for bettering the Church. Meantime the boy prince was growing, and at last—at last, young Clovis was ready to reign. Then Bathilde told him the secret she had kept in her heart so many years. Vainly her son pleaded against her resolve. She believed he no longer needed her; that prayers might avail now more than her presence. So at Chelles, four leagues from Paris, she entered the convent under the Abbess St. Bertilla, and was distinguished from the other religious only by a greater humility. She died in 680, January 8th, on which day we celebrate her feast as a saint of the Catholic Church.

FRANCE AT VATICAN

Paris, Jan. 12.—Reports from Rome state that at the New Year reception at the Embassy of France to the Holy See, M. Cambon, Charge d'Affaires, in the absence of M. Jonnart, made some important statements on the subject of the rela-

tions between France and the Vatican.

He spoke first of the mutual good will of the two powers, and after remarking that the French government had introduced a bill permitting "the glorious company of Saint Sulpice to return to their traditional home," and another bill granting the authorizations requested by a certain number of religious congregations, he added: "I may affirm, furthermore, that the friendly measures taken by our government are numerous and that they will contribute to the further development of mutual confidence between the Republic and the Holy See."

In closing his address, M. Cambon paid a tribute to the new French Cardinals, Msgr. Charost and Msgr. Touchet, and then offered a toast to the health of the Pope and the President of the Republic.

ORPHANED ARMENIAN GIRLS

NOW UNDER CARE OF POPE IN CASTELGANDOLFO

By Msgr. Enrico Paoletti

Rome, Dec. 27.—On the morrow of their arrival, I went to Castelgandolfo to visit the Armenian orphan girl refugees, now guests of His Holiness, in the magnificent historical palace, once summer resort of the Roman Pontiffs, at present transformed into an abode of love and charity for the desolate survivors of one of the darkest tragedies of a nation that history records.

Twenty-two Armenian nuns of the Immaculate Conception accompanied from Constantinople 280 Armenian orphan girls, whose ages range from eight to eighteen and who come from various localities of Asia Minor. Some of the refugees walked weeks and months to reach Constantinople, often hiding to avoid armed groups or isolated brigands.

Two hundred and eighty of the refugees are Catholics, the others of the Greek and Armenian Churches. The Pope helps all of them, regardless of religious denomination.

TERRIBLE EXPERIENCES

Some of these children saw both father and mother killed. Three of them had to hide beneath the bodies of their parents to save themselves from being tortured and massacred. These three waited three days to escape from the place of destruction and to fly through the burning and deserted countryside until they found their way to Constantinople.

The Nuns had eighteen Mission Houses in Asia Minor, which have all been destroyed. Thirteen Sisters have been martyred. The Superior, now at Castello, had perished praying for her as for a departed soul. Sister Candida walked during three months, or her way to Constantinople, where she arrived quite unrecognizable, her feet swollen and bleeding.

Some of the children now at Castelgandolfo suffered tattooing of their faces by the Turks, the tattooing being sometimes regular and sometimes fanciful. One little girl has three stars on her face, two on the cheeks and one on the chin.

The types of these children are most varied, some are dark with sparkling oriental eyes while others resemble Italian women. Some are well dressed in ample black wraps and white collars, others are dressed with the misfit clothing of charity.

Amongst these unhappy girls, there are former millionaires' daughters and daughters of poor peasants, equalized today by adversity.

Father Iskander, who was Director of the Orphanage at Constantinople, and who has dedicated all his life to the orphans of his country, speaks in appalling terms of their terrible sufferings and of the probable fate of the Christians in the Near East. Should war break out, he adds, there would be, without doubt, in Constantinople and in all Asia Minor a general massacre. The European troops would have to withdraw and then the Turks would give vent to their brutality. The venerable priest does not weep, but the tone of his voice is full of a grief more eloquent than tears.

The journey of the refugees from Constantinople lasted exactly one week. The party embarked on Monday, December 11, and arrived at Castelgandolfo the following Monday night.

Up to Smyrna, the journey was rather a rough one; but after three days rest in that port to allow for the shipping of goods to America, the voyage continued in lovely weather which lasted until the refugee ship docked at Naples.

Apart from enjoying the beauty of the sky and sea, the poor orphans were comforted by the kindness and cordiality of the officers and crew who vied with each other in sympathy and interest towards the poor girls. The officers allowed the refugees the run of the ship. The steamer stopped at Naples on purpose to land the whole party. At Naples the refugees found awaiting them a special train the Italian Railway Company thoughtfully had placed at their disposal with a reduction of 75% on the fare. This train with its passengers arrived at Castelgandolfo Monday evening at 10.30.

The Nuns and orphans were most kindly greeted at the Palace, some of their girl-friends, whose fate was similar to theirs and who had pre-

ceded them a few days before, participating in the welcome.

BUSTLING SCENE AT CASTLE

The next day, when I visited the refugees, was a day of strenuous work and bustling life in the big severe papal palace. Eleven cars from the railway station of Albano conveyed the few belongings each refugee had brought from Constantinople, and three other cars arrived from Rome with the remainder of household goods and furniture necessary for these guests of His Holiness.

When the cars stopped in the big court of the papal residence, all the refugees surrounded them. Very soon parcels, handbags, and other luggage were unloaded. Each girl looked for her own things and hastened to carry and place them near her own bed.

The great hall of the Swiss Guard, the adjoining rooms, the lobbies above the papal apartment are crammed with rows of children's beds. There are five rows in the Hall of the Swiss Guard, the beds numbering over one hundred.

Alone, or in groups, the girls shake down and arrange mattresses and pillows, fixing up their few belongings. They have tidied up their things, and themselves too, and walk about, sedately conversing. Meanwhile the nuns superintend, direct, correct. Each sister is surrounded by a group of chattering children, who unceasingly question and the sister answers with infinite sweetness and unlimited patience.

VISIT OF POPE'S REPRESENTATIVES

So the morning passes, but the afternoon is marked by excitement. Eminent Prelates from the Vatican have come to inspect, they bring from the Pope a message of welcome and a blessing for the orphans who now are the Pope's wards. The chief of the visiting prelates is Monsignor de Samper, who is in charge of the papal palace and who is entrusted with all the organization for the guests of His Holiness.

With him are Msgrs. Borgognini-Duca, Secretary for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, and Msgr. Pizzardo, Substitute of the Secretary of State. His Holiness desired the three Prelates to go that same day to Castello to see personally that all was duly arranged and these Armenian refugees should be well cared for and that nothing should be wanting for their needs.

The Prelates were met by Father Iskander, who accompanied the orphans to Rome, by Sister Olympia, (the Mother Superior) and other Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. The children are all present and bow their thanks. Not a few of them can speak French and Italian. One recites in our language a short address of homage and gratitude for the Holy Father. The Prelates are visibly moved.

Then the girls withdraw returning to their occupations and the Mother Superior remains with the Prelates. Then they go to inspect the rooms allotted for the refugees after which they sit in one of the Halls of the Papal apartment to settle final arrangements concerning the welfare of these four hundred girls.

The Papal Palace of Castelgandolfo served once before as a refuge for the orphans, victims of the Marsican earthquake, at the beginning of the reign of Benedict XV. But then the orphans numbered 180, whereas these fresh guests number nearly 400. The needs are consequently much greater, but all have been provided for, thanks to the activity and good will of the Heads of the Vatican Departments.

"When it was known," Father Iskander told me, "that the Holy Father was going to receive in his own house the orphans from Constantinople, there was a universal cry of admiration and unlimited gratitude. It was in the darkness of misfortune a vivid ray of hope, opening a new horizon for so many young lives which otherwise would have been plunged into an abyss of misery."

DARWIN AND MENDEL

WAR RECORD OF FRENCH CLERGY

DETAILED STATISTICS ARE NOW PUBLISHED

Paris, Dec. 14.—Statistics which have been published giving the number of priests and religious mobilized in France during the great War, together with the number who received decorations and the total of those who laid down their lives, offer an instructive reply to critics of the great part played by the French clergy during the historic struggle.

The figures were published by the Documentation Catholique, and they are given in detail by dioceses. They show the number of clergy mobilized during the whole four years of the conflict, while the number of those decorated and killed makes an imposing array of statistics which abundantly indicates the splendid share taken by the French clergy in the winning of the War.

According to these detailed statistics, 23,413 members of the parochial clergy were mobilized during the struggle. Among these there were 11,856 citations in orders, and 7,759 were the recipients of decorations for their heroic services. It is instructive to record that 667 received the distinction of the Legion of Honor award, which is the highest that is given to officers.

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of such utterances as that of Dr. Herbert Spencer Jennings, director of the biological laboratories of Johns Hopkins University, who, in speaking at the joint celebration in honor of the Catholic scientists, Mendel and Pasteur, this month under the auspices of St. Louis University, pointed out that evolutionary theories of Darwin have been discredited by the findings of the Catholic monk, Mendel and predicted that it will be upon Mendelism, rather than upon Darwinism, that the progress of organic evolution in the future will be based.

The resolution adopted by the Council here declares that the body is convinced that "any legislation attempting to limit the teaching of any scientific doctrine so well established and so widely accepted by specialists as is the doctrine of evolution, would be a profound mistake, which could not fail to injure and retard the advancement of knowledge and of human welfare by denying the freedom of teaching and inquiry which is essential to all progress."

The resolution affirms that "So far as the scientific evidence of the evolution of plants and animals and men are concerned, and there is no ground whatever for the assertion that these evidences constitute a 'mere guess.' No scientific generalization is more thoroughly supported by thoroughly tested evidence than is that of organic evolution."

The evidences in favor of the evolution of men are sufficient to convince every scientist of note in the world. Those evidences are increasing in number and importance every year.

The theory of evolution is one of the most potent of the great influences that have thus far entered into human experience; it has promoted the progress of knowledge, it has fostered unprejudiced inquiry and it has served as an invaluable aid in humanity's search for truth in many fields."

Adversaries of the stand taken by the Council see in the resolution a rather weak attempt to bolster up a cause that is constantly losing ground. Particularly is the resolution regarded as an effort to counteract the influence of the criticism of the inadequacy of the teaching of Darwin's theory of natural selection voiced by Professor William Bateson of England at the meeting of the association held last year in Toronto.

As pointed out by Sir Bertram Windle in the N. C. W. C. Editorial Sheet of last March, the discoveries of Abbot Mendel had changed the mind of Professor Bateson. That these discoveries are assuming an increasing importance in their effect upon scientific thought has been apparent during the past year as pointed out by Professor Jennings.

Professor Jennings explained how Mendel's work, ignored by men of science, had remained buried for thirty years and indicated that by showing that "99% or more of the variations that Darwinism had relied upon as a basis for evolutionary changes, are not such, but are recombinations of enduring genes, Mendelism effected tremendous breach in the structure of Darwinism; at times it seemed to have brought the entire edifice quite to the ground. Certainly it has left the problem of evolution and its method in a far different position from that which it occupied before; a position, which, superficially at least, is much weaker, a defensive rather than an aggressive position."

Justification of Dr. Jennings' characterization of the defensive position of scientists who still hold to an absolute teaching of evolution as a fact is claimed by the opponents of such teaching as a result of the resolution passed by the Cambridge scientists.

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priests who served as army nurses during the War, and 115 priests won foreign decorations.

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In addition to this record of the clergy considered above, splendid records were made among the members of religious orders. It is now recorded that 9,218 members of religious orders and societies were mobilized. Participants in this division won 4,237 citations, and 2,555 were decorated for remarkable services. Of them 228 received the award of the Legion of Honor, 398 the Military Medal, and 85 the Medal of Epidemics. In this department the number of those who died on the field of honor was 1,517.

The statistics give the grand total mobilized as 82,590, with 16,093 citations, 10,414 decorations, and 4,618 dead.

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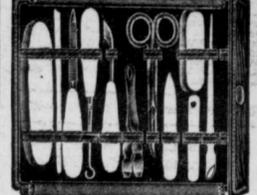
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