

pudiated any attempt to amend the creeds of Christendom, or to seek for union upon any church basis whatever. They renounced the speculative for the practical, the ecclesiastical for the spiritual. And it will be seen that attempts upon any other basis must, sooner or later, prove utterly abortive.

SPAIN.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN PERIL.

From this sentinel-like station, opposite Spain, and in contact with thousands of Spaniards, I have been watching closely and anxiously the course of events in that long-distracted land, so far as they affect the interests of religious liberty; and it is with deepest concern I have now to report that the worst apprehensions appear likely to be transformed into deplorable realities.

In May last those who placed young Alfonso on the throne of Spain by a military "pronunciamiento," succeeded in persuading the notabilities of the several political parties, such as ex-Ministers of State, ex-Senators, and the like, to assemble together, accepting the accomplished fact of the restored monarchy, in order to nominate a Commission, representing the various shades of politics, for the purpose of concocting a new Constitution. It need scarcely be stated that the "Ultras"—the Carlist, Republican, and Federal factions—were, of course, excluded from the assemblage which purported to combine all the wisdom in the land. Senor Castelar, whose glowingly eloquent oratory, depicting the thunders and lightning of Sinai and the marvellous scene of Calvary, turned the scale in favour of religious liberty in the Constituent Cortes of 1860, was not among them, nor many other alike enlightened Liberals. This Assembly elected a Commission

of thirty-nine of its members, who, in turn, named a Sub-Commission of nine to prepare the basis of the new Constitution, or, to put it in Spanish phraseology, "to prepare the basis of a common legality which might be acceptable to the 'Moderados,' the 'Unionistas,' and the Constitutionals." The Sub-Commission, after warm discussions, agreed, by a vote of eight against one, on the following formula on the religious question, which I translate verbatim:—

"The nation binds itself to support the worship and the ministers of the Catholic religion, which is that of the State. Nobody will be molested in the Spanish territory for his religious opinions, or for the exercise of their respective religions (*cultos*), saving the respect due to Christian morality. Nevertheless, no other ceremonies or public manifestations will be permitted than those of the religion of the State."

The basis containing this clause on the religious question was submitted to the Commission of thirty-nine, in which many stormy debates occurred on this most important matter, with the following practical result: Out of the thirty-nine, twenty-three voted for religious toleration, eight against it, and the rest were either absent or abstained from voting. The eight belong to the faction known as the "historical Moderados," who want to carry matters back to the condition they were in under the Constitution of 1845. In other words, they are the most reactionary, and as intolerant as the Carlists themselves. They have since, it is reported, met several times in consultation, and have decided to withdraw from the Commission, not to sign the basis, and to put forth a "manifesto" to the nation, stating their reasons of dissent on the religious question, and pleading the cause of religious unity. They are backed by all the influence and power