

The True Witness

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If W.L.G.—Matter intended for

publication should reach us NOT

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Correspondence intended for publica-

tion must have name of writer enclosed,

not necessarily for publication but as a

mark of good faith, otherwise it will not

be published.

ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST: IN-

TERESTED.

IN vain will you build churches,

give missions, found schools—

all your works, all your efforts will

be destroyed if you are not able to

wield the defensive and offensive

weapon of a loyal and sincere Ca-

tholic press.

—Pope Pius X.

Episcopal Approbation.

If the English Speaking Catholics of

Montreal and of this Province consulted

their best interests, they would soon

make of the TRUE WITNESS one

of the most prosperous and powerful

Catholic papers in its country.

I heartily bless those who encourage

this excellent work.

PAUL,

Archbishop of Montreal.

THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 1910.

THE EFFECT OF SEPARATION

FOR THE PROTESTANTS OF

FRANCE.

(To a Correspondent.)

Notwithstanding the pious fancies

of Professor Bieler, late of France,

now of Montreal, Protestantism in

France is nearly as dead as an

Orange "doormat." A number

of the preachers there are infidels,

or, to say the least, Rationalists;

so every time Combes, Briand or

Clemenceau scores a point against

the Church and Christianity, those

preachers have abundant reason to

rejoice and be thankful.

As far as Protestantism is consid-

ered from the viewpoint of financial

organization, however, the heretics

of France are in a sad plight, in-

deed. They courted infidelity, smil-

ed with joy upon the deeds of the

infamous "Bloc"; and, in conse-

quence, they are to-day reaping the

tempest, with a cyclone to match.

The correspondence below, which

appeared a while since in "Amer-

ica," is worthy of perusal. We

heartily recommend it to Prof. Bi-

eler, and are sure he will relish its

contents. The admiring friend of

that godly man, the Rev. Merle

d'Aubigné, who came out to Amer-

ica, on a goose-chase, some months

ago, will now, perhaps, better un-

derstand the earnest share he has

taken in spreading Atheism over the

Immortal Republic of Quacks, duel-

list s, nun-hounders, and infamous

mountebanks in general. Follows the

letter:

Nice-Cimiez, March 14, 1910.

A short while before the separation

of the Church and State in France,

the Rev. Merle d'Aubigné, the grand-

son of the notorious writer of the

"History of the Reformation,"

preached in New York a sermon in

which he urged the "separation" as

then their expenses have increased

303,427; and they see bankruptcy

staring them in the face.

The French Protestants now find

it hard to get ministers. The num-

ber of the students for the ministry

has decreased. In 1905 there were

55 students in Paris, now there are

only 22 there; and in Montauban

there are only 20. Parents no longer

encourage their sons to become

ministers, for on account of the de-

ficit no proper salaries can be paid,

and the obligation of the "pastors"

to take up frequent collections di-

minishes their authority and ham-

pers their ministry. As the Briand

bill renders legacies or donations to

churches illegal, there is no hope in

that quarter. Thus the Calvinists

of France and Merle d'Aubigné who

helped the separation, are reaping

what they sowed. This is not the

first time that one has been hoist

by his own petard, or the maker of

a gallows the first to hang from it.

Perhaps this is a typical small

parish in the South of France, and

your readers would like to read how

things are done since the separation.

The church here has one of the pret-

tiest sites in the world, on a hill

overlooking Nice and the Mediter-

ranean Sea, and dates from the days

of Charlemagne. The other morn-

ing, with my cassock slung over my

left arm like a folded overcoat, I

walked the quarter mile that inter-

venes between my hotel and the

church to say Mass. Sauntering

along in the early morning, about

eight o'clock, I was overtaken by a

small crowd of boys and a man. The

boys were going to school. The man

was evidently their teacher. The

boys were good and polite. I can-

not say the same thing for the man.

He was of medium size and slight

build; bearded, dark skinned, almost

as dark as the skin of the mummies

in the Capuchin Convent in Rome;

dull eyes and morose looking. I did

not know the way to the church, so

I said to him: "Can you please tell

me the way to the little Catholic

church here?" His answer was a

sharp look, a scowl, and a small

snarl very like that which a "wo-

man's lap dog makes when you come

near his mistress; the snarl said

"no." Of course he lied, but he

saw I was a priest and I suppose he

feared that some of the boys would

tell that he had been talking with a

curé. After a little tramp they all

entered the "secular school," and I

continued my walk to the miserly

paid, half starved teachers of the

government schools, whose love for

a few francs a year makes cowards

and semi-renegades even of the best

of them.

At the church I met two round

faced pleasant abbés, the rector and

his vicar; and as we had mutual ac-

quaintances, one of them knew the

Sulpician Vigouroux, the great

Scripture scholar, we became im-

mediately friends. I have said Mass

there often since. I saw the chil-

dren gathered in the church for in-

struction in catechism; and I read

the Bishop's rule, printed and post-

ed on the door of the building, re-

quiring on the part of the children

faithful attendance at the catechism

instructions for two years before

receiving first Communion. On Sun-

day, after nine o'clock Mass, the

children were gathered around the

Crib, which is kept in the church at

Christmas time much longer than

with us in America, and one of the

priests was teaching the boys and

girls the meaning of the Crib and

ended his instruction by reciting

prayers. Were all the children there

that should be there? No! The at-

tendance depends on the good will

of the parents; and many of the pa-

rents are lukewarm, while some of

them have little religion.

There is no better clergy in the

world than the French clergy of to-

day; and while in the sixteenth, se-

venteenth and eighteenth centuries

there were reasons in France for not

respecting many of the clergy, there

is no such reason now. The clergy

of the nineteenth and twentieth

centuries in France in zeal, self-sac-

rifice and intelligence are not sur-

passed and hardly equalled by any

clergy in the world.

"How do you get along here, Mon-

sieur le Curé?" "Ah," said he, with

a shrug of the shoulders, "we do

our best and trust in Divine Pro-

vidence. The people are beginning

to be more generous, and sympathy

for us is growing." "But how is it

that I see so many pictures of St.

Francis of Assisi around here; and

it is stated that this is a Franciscan

monastery?" "So it is," he replied.

"We are Franciscans, but as the

government will not permit us to

wear our dress we have to appear

as secular abbés." And there I

was, before the brown-robed frati

of Assisi dressed as secular. Pardon

me, reader, but I very nearly ex-

ploded when I spoke to them of

their miserably petty government

that violated, by so-called laws, all

the elementary principles of honor

and justice when religion is in ques-

tion; a government that prates of

liberty and yet imitates Nero in

despotism; that puts notices on the

lamp-posts of Paris to be gentle and

kind to horses, while it uses the

lash on priests and nuns! They are

scourged at the pillar like their Mas-

ters.

St. Sulpice.

THE JUST STEWARD.

To give an account of our steward-

ship is what the Almighty will de-

mand of each one of us when He's

probation is over, and, knowing

that human justice is based on the

divine, he who occupies the highest

position this earth affords, has just

permitted to be made public a de-

tailed account of the fulfillment by

him of a public trust,—an account

which must more than repay with

satisfaction those whose confidence

had supplied that trust, and fill

with admiration even those who

have not yet the good fortune to

know what that confidence means.

In a neat volume of 77 pages is-

sued last month from the Vatican

press, an authentic description is

briefly given of the terrible disaster

of earthquake, fire and tidal wave

that wrecked both sides of the

Straits of Messina a year ago on

the 28th of December last; the aw-

ful effects in loss of life and prop-

erty; the work of rescue, succor

and reconstruction accomplished by

His Holiness Pius X.; the housing

of refugees and provision for the

care of orphans; and finally, an item-

ized exposition of the manner of dis-

posing of the millions of francs en-

trusted to him for distribution by

the faithful throughout the world.

This report reflects admirably the

pure and tender charity of the pa-

ternal heart of Pius X., and at the

same time his spirit of justice and

rectitude in the administration of

this world-wide beneficence. His own

slender purse had been emptied out

to furnish first aid to his stricken

children, even before the demoralized

telegraph and telephone system could

let the world know all the appalling

truth of the disaster. And after-

wards, when the Holy Father was

made the whole world's treasurer in

the providing of relief for the sore-

ly distressed survivors, so well did

he fulfil the trust, that not only is

every cent accounted for, but beyond

it his own meagre resources were

drawn upon to supplement it. The

document just issued gives abundant

proof of this, and moreover shows

that there was no waste either in

the shape of expenses entailed by the

distribution of these relief funds,

such as are generally recorded in si-

milar cases, or in want of business-

like methods in the administration

of these funds. A few thousand

francs cover the entire expense,

which in many cases absorb thirty

or forty per cent. of the contribu-

tions; and thoroughly up to date,

practical, prompt and efficient mea-

sures were taken so that the most

good possible should be realized with

the means at hand. The report in

question will make pleasant reading

to the many—some not of the house-

hold of the faith—who chose the

common Father of Christendom as

the best distributor of their whole-

souled charity to their afflicted bre-

thren of Southern Italy; and his

permission to make these accounts

public was given both for the sake

of affording this pleasure to those

generous souls, and of making per-

manent acknowledgment before the

world of the magnanimous charity

of whose application they had made

him the trusted and faithful in-