

of which all our land legislation should be directed, and we are strongly convinced that the nearer we approach to that ideal the better for the well-being and prosperity of the country. But whether accepting or rejecting Henry George's plan of reform, it is impossible not to admire him for his intense sympathy with the poor and suffering, for the earnestness and sincerity of his convictions, and for the courage and eloquence with which he proclaimed them. As Michael Davitt has well said:—"George was essentially the economic apostle of the poor and disinherited. No man ever united more lovable gifts with brighter talents in unselfish devotion to a world-wide movement for the betterment of labouring mankind than he whose loss will be mourned by millions of sorrowing friends and followers throughout the world."

An important and far-reaching change has been made, by an Apostolical Constitution just issued, in the organisation of the great Franciscan Order. The Order, as everybody knows, was founded by St. Francis of Assisi in the year 1210, and its original rule was very strict. In course of time, from one cause and another, the Order became divided into various branches, the two main branches being the Conventuals and the Observantines—the former living in large convents and following a mitigated rule; the latter living more in the manner of hermits, in rude dwellings, and according to the original rigour of the institute. Still later, another offshoot, the Recollects or Grey Friars, were established in Spain. Although the various branches followed faithfully the main object which St. Francis had in view, and the unity between them was never entirely destroyed, yet the power of the Order for good was necessarily greatly weakened and hampered by this division of its forces. The Holy Father, who has given frequent marks of his love for the Order, has decided that the time is opportune for its complete restoration to the unity of other days, and this is to be effected by the consolidation and amalgamation of the various branches of the Order. In order that this important project might be carried to a successful issue, his Holiness consulted with those best able to give wise counsel on this question, and after the matter had been carefully considered by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, and of the Propaganda, the Holy Father issued an Apostolical Constitution to give effect to their recommendations. By the first regulation of the Constitution the names of the Observants, Reformed, Bare-footed or Alcantarins, and Recollects are abolished. All these, says the regulation, will "extinguish" their several designations and be called "The Order of Friars Minor, without any qualification"—"Ordo Fratrum Minorum, sine ullo appposito." They will be ruled by one Superior; they will obey the same laws; they will be under the same administration. Secondly, with the exception of obligations taken towards third persons, there will be no special statutes, nor any special distinctions. Thirdly, they will wear the same dress. Fourthly, they will have one Minister-General, one Procurator-General, one Secretary-General, one Advocate for Causes of Beatification and Canonization; and fifthly, the acceptance of these unified conditions is obligatory on all postulants. The net result, therefore, of these changes is that the whole Order will be now known as the Order of Friars Minor, it will be under one Minister-General, and will follow the same rule, all privileges attaching to particular communities being withdrawn. If any religious who have already pronounced their solemn vows should desire a stricter rule, each province is empowered to set apart one or two houses for such a purpose, but without going outside the new Constitution. It may be confidently predicted that this important change will be fruitful in results, and that this great Order, which has given to the Church five popes, more than 50 cardinals, and an immense number of patriarchs and bishops, will enter on a career of greatly increased usefulness in the high mission which it was established to fulfil.

WE have already referred at some length to a correspondence which was being carried on in the columns of the *London Tablet* between two Anglican clergymen the Rev. J. R. Lunn and the Rev. R. C. Fillingham on the question as to whether or not there is any teaching authority in the Church of England. The Rev. Fillingham stoutly maintained that there was no such authority and defied his brother clergyman to point out precisely where the "teaching voice" was to be found. Mr. Lunn made various suggestions but after being driven from pillar to post by the persistent logic of his opponent eventually retired, utterly worsted, from the contest. Other Anglican correspondents came to the help of the belated Lunn and the controversy still continues. It has now shifted to the legality or otherwise of the vestments used by the High Church clergymen, and though this subject is in itself of little interest to any but Anglicans some of the statements made by Mr. Fillingham, in his last letter, on the general position of the Anglican Church are most interesting and put the whole question in a nutshell. What could be neater for example, than the way in

which he disposes of the "branch theory," i.e., the theory that the Catholic, the Greek, and the English Churches are all branches of the one true Church. After referring to the logical inconsistency and ignorance of the subject shown by one of his opponents, he remarks:—"This is not surprising, as no one could be a High Churchman who has a logical mind—what logical mind could hold the "Branch theory" of the Church, the delightful corollary of which is that the Blessed Virgin Mary is immaculate at Boulogne, but stained with original sin at Dover?" After dealing with the question of the vestments Mr. Fillingham continues:—"After this I will leave your readers to decide who is ignorant of his subject—myself or your correspondent, and whether he is an authority as to the learning of the judges in these cases. He has made one delightful statement, which gives away his own case altogether. He accuses me of falsehood in saying that the Church of England says nothing about General Councils except that they may err, and triumphantly quotes a reference to an Act of Parliament which refers to General Councils. So, according to him, an Act of Parliament and the voice of the Church are synonymous. I want no better admission. I have not gone so far as to say that the Church and an Act of Parliament are the same thing, as your correspondent maintains; but I have always contended that Parliament alone is an ultimate authority in doctrine and ritual." The concluding words of the letter are specially weighty:—"The fact is, sir, loyal members of the Protestant Establishment and honest men are weary of seeing a number of persons trying to make our communion sail under false colours. For my part, it is my indignation at this which makes me speak out. I am a State official—I am no sacrificing priest, and I am not going to pretend to be. My Church is a department of the State—State-created and State-governed. And I will not be silent when some of its members pretend that it is a teaching Communion in the same sense that the Catholic Church is." After the tortuous sophisms to which one is accustomed from Anglican controversialists there is a candour and outspokenness about this utterance that is very refreshing. Mr. Fillingham's conclusions are most just and true, and his plain and pointed way of expressing them ought to bring home to all honest and educated Anglicans of the High Church variety the absurdity and inconsistency of their position.

THE judgment in the Le Mesurier case, which has ODDS AND ENDS, excited so much interest in Ceylon, seems to us (says the *London Tablet*) to be marked by both sound legal acumen and sound common sense. Mr. Le Mesurier a few years ago professed himself a convert to Islam, adopted an Arabic name, and although married to an English lady at the time, promptly asserted his polygamic privilege as a Moslem by taking to himself a second wife in the person of Miss Alice Rivett-Carnac, who also professed to be, like himself, a convert to the religion of the Koran. His first wife very naturally sued for a separation from her unfaithful husband. The new Moslem (whom the Ceylon Government had meanwhile dismissed from the Civil Service, of which he was a member) protested that as a Mohammedan he had a right to four, let alone two wives. But the law and common sense have been too much for him. Said the Colombo judge in his judgment, after an elaborate review of both the old Dutch and British law: "The defendant's *status* in this country is a Christian. *status*, and it is governed by all the laws universally recognised in Christendom, which have been adopted by our Courts as regards Christians. The obligation of monogamy is certainly one of them, irrespective of whether the man be a Christian, Jew, Agnostic, Buddhist, Mormon or Moor-man, so long as he is affected by his English domicile, and even the laws of common sense seem sufficiently to indicate that the defendant is no more entitled to cast off the obligation which he had previously contracted and which, at the time of the contract, was indissoluble by any one-sided act of his own, than his wife, the plaintiff, would be to acquire a Kandyan domicile and claim the privileges of polyandry." It is interesting to learn that Mr. Le Mesurier is "unable to say whether he is an Englishman or not," for though the son of an English army officer whose family has long been settled in England, he himself "was born in the Ionian Islands, his father's father in Algiers, and his mother was of Cretan origin with Mohammedan relatives."

The turbulent election times, which are again upon us, are a favourite season for the revival of the venerable calumny that American Catholics take their politics, as well as their religion, from Rome. They are having an important election in New York just now; and when the ridiculous charge popped up again, Archbishop Corrigan wisely took advantage of it to make a public explanation of the real office of the Holy Father. He then said: "The Catholic hierarchy has now been established in this country over a hundred years. In all that period can a single syllable be adduced emanating from the Roman Pontiff for the purpose of directing our ballots? In these hundred years has a single Pontifical utterance *ex cathedra* been made bearing in the remotest degree on the ques-

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