

a milliard of old stamps, from all parts of the world, passed through the hands of the Seminary Fathers. These, when sorted and sold, netted the tidy sum of £5000, which enabled the missionaries to establish twenty Christian villages in the heart of the Dark Continent.

The French Persecution

M. Combes has recently been telling an interviewer that he has entered upon the war against the Church with a light heart. This was precisely the way in which M. Ollivier entered four-and-thirty years ago, upon the war with Germany, confident that everything was ready down to the last button on the garter of the last soldier, and that the disastrous struggle into which he plunged 'with a light heart' would be merely a grand military picnic and a triumphal march to Berlin. But where the First Napoleon failed, the pigmy Combes is not very likely to succeed. The abrogation of the Concordat may not immediately give back to the Church her proper liberties. The separation of Church and State will, for a time at least, leave the Church still in shackles, it may temporarily paralyse her work here and there, but in the end it may make for good. In the meantime some prominent Catholic leaders are preparing for the future. 'They are trying,' says the 'Catholic Times,' 'to arouse public opinion among Catholics, and to arrange for the time when the Bishops and priests will have recovered liberty enough to take part in public action. The Comte d'Haussonville, in a letter to the "Figaro," says he much prefers to have the Church freed from her slavery to the State. He believes the people will rally round her, and will support any policy the Bishops may adopt. Nor does he fear that the financial trials would be greater than the Church could bear. With her newly-gained freedom she would be more respected, and should her Bishops put themselves at the head of any social or political movement, he believes that the laity would gladly follow. We do not know how far Count d'Haussonville's idea may be practicable in view of the likelihood of the Government fettering the non-Concordatory Church with M. Briand's regulations, but it is at least an encouraging sign to find prominent French Catholics considering how they will act under another state of ecclesiastical arrangements.'

Our esteemed Liverpool contemporary has the following further note on the eagerness of M. Combes and his Radical-Socialist following to extend the purely secular or godless system of public instruction in every part of France. Their fanatical zeal in this matter has excited wonder among many Catholics of the Western side of the Straits of Dover. 'Their wonder,' says the 'Catholic Times,' 'may be dispelled by the testimony of M. Dequaire, a school inspector, who, writing to a newspaper, puts quite frankly the true object which those who demand lay schools have in view. It is not, he says, to teach children to read, write, and cast accounts: that is a superficial conclusion. The true insight into the purpose of the secularists will show that they believe they will find, at a very early period, the best weapon against Catholicism in the lay schools, the aim of which is to train up a generation of free-thinkers. They have no intention whatever of observing a benevolent neutrality in matters of religion. Their one hope is to find in the lay school a mould wherein a child, born a Christian, can be thrown, to emerge a renegade to the Faith of his baptism. We are quite sure M. Dequaire is right. Unless men had such an end in view they would never work with unceasing ferocity against a system of education which, while it brings up good citizens, brings up good Catholics too. And perhaps his opinion has a pertinence even among us here in England.'

THE CATHOLIC CONGRESS

A representative and enthusiastic meeting of the clergy and laity of Melbourne, suburbs, and country, assembled in the Cathedral Hall, Fitzroy, on September 26 (says the 'Advocate') for the purpose of hearing a progress report of the work in connection with the great Congress from the initial stage, when the business was commenced, last December, up to the present time. His Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne presided, and was supported on the platform by the hon. secretaries, Rev. J. McCarthy and Dr. A. L. Kenny, K.S.G.

After an introductory speech by the Archbishop, Dr. Kenny, General Secretary, reviewed the work done by the committee since the inaugural meeting, which was held on December 22, 1903. Of special interest to many of our readers will be his statements regarding the volume containing the transactions of the Congress, which will be forwarded to every person who has paid the membership fee of 10s 6d.

The Congress Volume

(said Dr. Kenny) would absorb the whole of the membership fee. The book would be produced in a superior style to that published in Sydney in 1900. Some difficulty was experienced by the committee in securing a five-inch line, there being few linotypes in Melbourne capable of doing a line of such length. A special class of paper was also made a condition of the tenders which were invited from the leading publishers of Melbourne. It was also stipulated in the contract that the papers be printed before the Congress, which would prove a great convenience to the reader during the sessions. At the first Congress the papers were read in manuscript, and presented much difficulty to those entrusted with their reading. The present arrangement would also afford facilities to the newspapers, the reporters of which would be supplied with copies of the papers to be read. An idea of the outlay incurred in the publication of the volume could be gained from the fact that between two and three tons of metal would be required for the linotypes. The book would be published not later than the 15th December next. It was important that the volume should be given to the public as early as possible after the conclusion of the Congress, as it would then be read with great interest. The committee were delighted to find that Mr. Winter, of the 'Advocate,' was prepared to undertake the contract for publishing the volume in accordance with the conditions laid down. A specimen copy, showing the style and binding, would be shown to the meeting. They would observe that the color of the Sydney volume was red, but the Melbourne edition would be green, in consonance with the genius of the Cathedral dedicated to St. Patrick. Mr. Winter had also introduced an improvement in the form of the Papal arms of the reigning Sovereign Pontiff, Pius X, which would appear on the back of the volume. At this stage the specimen copy was handed around the meeting, and much pleasure and satisfaction were expressed on all sides with the general style and get-up of the volume. All members actually attending the Congress would, on presentation of their receipts at the Cathedral Hall, be supplied with membership badges entitling them to be present at all sessions and social functions of the Congress. No one would be admitted to any session or social in connection with the Congress who had not previously obtained a badge of membership. All would see that that was only right and proper. The heavy outlay incurred rendered it absolutely necessary that the arrangement regarding admission be strictly adhered to, and no departure would be made from that rule. The Abbotsford nuns and the Jesuit Fathers had fallen in with that arrangement in regard to their entertainments.

The Programme.

On Sunday, 23rd October, 1904, there will be a general Communion of the members of the C.Y.M. Societies' Federation of Victoria, in St. Patrick's Cathedral, at the 8 o'clock Mass, after which the annual C.Y.M.S. breakfast will be held in the Cathedral Hall. There will be a Pontifical High Mass at 11 o'clock, in the presence of his Eminence the Cardinal and the visiting prelates and clergy. The choir will be specially augmented, and a full professional orchestra has been engaged for the occasion. At 7 o'clock p.m. there will be Pontifical Vespers in the Cathedral, with special sermon by one of the visiting prelates. The Congress will be opened formally on Monday, 24th October, 1904, at 10 o'clock a.m., in the Cathedral Hall, 20 Brunswick street, Fitzroy, close to St. Patrick's Cathedral, when the inaugural address will be delivered by his Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne, and the first paper will be read by his Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney. The sectional meetings will be held in the men's,