

than once referred to the manner in which the French Freemason crusade against religion is favored by a great many secular papers in the English-speaking world that are given to somnolent homilies on 'liberty' and 'toleration' and 'equality of treatment before the law.' Alack! There are a good many 'pious editors' besides Russell Lowell's that 'du believe in Freedom's cause ez fur ez Payris is'—or, preferably, further; and who likewise

'Du believe in bein' this
Or thet, ez it may happen,'

so far as principles are concerned. Says the San Francisco 'Monitor' in a recent issue:—

If the churches in France 'subjected to the outrageous invasion by Government officers, were Protestant instead of Catholic, what a howl of indignation would go up from the shocked American press, on the tyranny of the thing! As matters stand, our newspapers apparently see nothing out of the way in the infamous action of the persecuting authorities. Though the present policy of the French Government in pushing its scheme of interference beyond the remotest limits of decency is fatally short-sighted and morally certain to react to the discomfiture of its authors, the fact has nothing to do with the curious indifference displayed by those eminent champions of liberty and justice, the editors of our great dailies, in the presence of an exhibition unparalleled in a half dozen generations.

The New York 'Sun' sees further into the French persecution and speaks with more fairness than the bulk of the secular papers in English-speaking countries that have expressed an opinion upon the matter. It says in a recent issue.—

'The position of Catholicism in France hereafter, will by no means be analogous to that occupied by that religion in the United States, where the national Government exercises no supervision over any form of worship. That liberty which with one hand the French civil power professes to give the Catholic Church while, withholding from it the pecuniary assistance which it bestowed for a century, it takes back with the other hand by subjecting the votaries of that Church to the system of close oversight and restraint elaborated in the laws concerning associations which have been enacted during the last few years. In a word, the treatment of the Catholic Church at the hands of the civil power in France recalls that suffered by Shylock, in the "Merchant of Venice," when, after receiving successive rebuffs at the hands of the law, he begs the Court to "give him his principal and let him go," but is sternly halted with the mandate: "Tarry, Jew; the law hath yet another hold on you." It is patent, in fact, that "a free Church in a free State" is by no means contemplated by the Radicals and Socialists who control the present Chamber of Deputies, though they have taken measures to relieve the treasury of the burden of supporting religion in any guise.'

We should like to see the London 'Times' and its colonial echoes put forth a defence of the plunder and spoliation of the Church and of religious corporations generally in France. And we are curious to know what plea they can advance that would not likewise justify the proscription and plunder of any benefit society, public company, trading association, or private owner in this or any other country.

Mr. Bryce, the Chief Secretary for Ireland (writes the Dublin correspondent of the New York 'Daily News'), is erroneously included by some of the newspapers among the Caledonians. He was born in Belfast, his mother being Irish and his father Scottish.

Messrs. Kirkpatrick and Co., of Nelson, announce to readers of the 'Tablet' that their new season's 'K' jams are now ready. No housewife need have any fear of buying 'K' jam, as the manufacturers guarantee it to be made of pure fruit and pure sugar only, and to be absolutely free from any kind of adulteration. The 'K' factory is situated in the heart of the finest fruit-growing district in the Colony, and the abundance of superfine orchard fruitage at their command enables Messrs. Kirkpatrick and Co. to produce jam and preserves of the highest quality....

THE FRENCH PERSECUTION

'HUMAN STUPIDITY AND FOLLY'

Perhaps no more brilliant example of human stupidity and folly, masquerading under the title of statesmanship, will ever be seen (says the Boston 'Pilot') than the present exhibition of France. Posing as leaders of a people they deliberately began a crusade, unnecessary and harmful, as a policy, however desirable from the standpoint of free thought propaganda, whose only gain so far has been hatred and ill will.

The scenes in the churches, enacted at the beginning of taking the inventories last week were what might have been expected, which were, no doubt, desired by the atheistic hierophants, and which they will use as excuses for fresh attacks. But they serve at least as proofs that the worm will turn, though the Catholics of France have been long-suffering and patient.

First the schools were laicised. That was unnecessary, because the children were all Catholics, and because the people were satisfied. Then the Church built schools of its own, which rapidly became more popular than the State schools. While the school question was simmering the hospitals, prisons, refuges, and asylums were laicised. That again was unnecessary. No one was complaining except the atheistic wolf who shrieked that the Catholic sheep was biting him.

Soon the chaplains were removed from the army and navy. Neither the soldiers nor the sailors asked for that, but the free-thinking feelings were hurt at hearing of any one else practising his religion, and of course

Free-thinking Intolerance

has always managed to awaken a great deal of sympathy.

Then the way was open to crush the Church schools. The people were enjoying them, so the associations law was passed, the schools closed, the property confiscated, and the teachers exiled.

All this time the Catholics had been wonderfully patient. As the Government drew up the voting lists, counted the votes and handed in the returns, it was difficult to beat it. Then came the 'Separation' law, which should be entitled a 'law to control the Church without expense to the State,' for your French atheist is a thrifty person, except when it comes to spending other people's money or taking other people's property. The so-called separation law was never advocated before the people as a policy, the Government never dared to refer it to the people. It was 'jammed through' in the closing days of a Parliament. The avowed object was to free the State, the actual one was to wipe out Christianity.

The first touch of the new law is the taking of inventories of Church plate, sacred vessels and vestments. Just what a non-religious State wants of the vessels and vestments of the churches is not explained. One can imagine the joy of a typical French functionary, a rampant unbeliever, enabled to wound and

Insult the Feelings

of pious Catholics to his heart's content, from behind the secure shield of the law.

Of course the Government would not acknowledge that it intended to persecute people, so in reply to an interpellation in the Chamber of Deputies Rouvier indignantly declared that they would use all tact and moderation possible. In truth tact and moderation were the things least desired. The work has been done so far with the aid of troops.

Much bad feeling has been aroused; men who should be good friends have become estranged, and the worst division which can exist for a people that along religious-political lines has been made. Instead of a united people the French are separating into two hostile camps. The Catholics are being obliged to submit to bitter humiliation, and yet more is in store for them.

The end no man can foresee, because submission on the part of the Catholics is taken as satisfaction, and fresh exactions are made. Resistance through the ballot box is as possible for them as political preferment is possible for the blacks of the South. Resistance through the only way left will be crushed out by police and troops. So the only hope for religious freedom in France seems to be in revolution, and this forcing of a large, stubborn, persistent section of the French people into the ranks of revolt is what some people choose to call statesmanship.

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