

The Catholic World

AFRICA—The Congo Free State

A Home paper states that a convention has been signed between the Vatican and the Congo Free State with the object of regulating the status of Catholic missions in the Congo.

BELGIUM—The New Parliament

The late Belgian Chamber was composed of 93 Catholics, 43 Liberals, 28 Socialists, and one Christian Democrat. The new Chamber, has 89 Catholics, 47 Liberals, 28 Socialists, and one Christian Democrat.

The Recent Elections

Whilst in nearly every other country (says the 'Catholic Times') where parliaments have to appeal to the people Ministers and Cabinets are changed, Belgium remains faithful to the Catholic leaders who form its Government. True, the Liberals gained four seats from the Catholics at the elections, but it must be remembered that the Catholics, who still have a majority of twelve, have been in power for an unbroken period of twenty-two years, and that at each election the tendency known as the swing of 'the pendulum' is unfavorable to the Government. The Catholics must, therefore, have very strongly entrenched themselves to be able to resist all attacks for close upon a quarter of a century. They have in fact done so by meeting the wishes of the people for progressive measures. Belgium is probably the best-governed country in the world. It continues to increase in population and wealth, and all its legislation is framed in a progressive spirit. We do not think, therefore, that the Catholics need seriously fear the defeat which the Liberals threaten to inflict on them in 1908. The Belgian electors are shrewd, appreciate a good administration, and have no anxiety to take the risk of getting a bad one.

ENGLAND—Golden Jubilee

The Training College of Notre Dame, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, founded in 1856, kept recently its 50th birthday. It was the first, and for many years the only, institution of the kind open to Catholic schoolmistresses, and it has sent, during its existence of half a century, over 2500 teachers into the elementary schools of Great Britain. The Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame, was founded by the humble Julie Billiart, the decree of whose Beatification was solemnly pronounced at St. Peter's on May 13. It now possesses 114 houses, 18 of which are in England. In Liverpool alone the Sisters have under their charge 20 elementary schools, besides secondary schools both in the north and south end of the city.

A Good Example

Nothing (says the 'Catholic Times') could be more amusing or instructive than the manner in which the press of England has calmed down over the conversion of Queen Ena, who is now declared to be a noted Englishwoman and the hope of Spain. The 'Times' somewhat tones its expression of delight, however, by reminding her that, as she has left 'the Church of her ancestors,' it would be as well, if ever she returns to England as Queen of Spain, 'not to make too ostentatious a display of her religion.' Shades of Delane! Does the 'Times' really imagine that the Queen of Spain will deviate by a fraction from the etiquette usually observed by exalted personages, or smother her Faith to please the Cliffords of this country? The religious sincerity of the Queen, which has been manifest during the ceremonies connected with the marriage, was admirably illustrated on the day of her departure for Spain, which was Ascension Day. She was up at six o'clock in the morning in order to hear Mass and receive Holy Communion at the Carmelite Church at Kensington, before starting on her journey, whereby Her Royal Highness set a good example to those Catholics who neglect this solemn duty before undertaking a voyage.

The Education Bill

The London 'Tablet' give some rather startling figures as showing the effect which will be produced upon Catholic schools in England if the Education Bill in its present form receives the sanction of Parliament. It appears that in the rural areas there are 243 schools now in Catholic hands, from which, under the new state of things, Catholic teaching would be entirely excluded. As regards urban districts the situation is more serious still, despite the provisions of Clause 4, which, we are told, have been specially designed to meet the case of the Catholics and the Jews in these centres. The clause lays it down that

wherever four-fifths of the parents of children attending a school in any urban area demand specific denominational teaching, the local authority may afford facilities to have such teaching given. But the 'Tablet' points out that owing to circumstances, over which the Catholic managers have no control, many of the Catholic schools have more than twenty per cent. of Protestant children in attendance, and so ipso facto are shut out from the operation of the extended facilities clause. In the Diocese of Westminster there are 25 such schools, in Southwark there are 36, in Birmingham at least 49, in Hexham 10, in Leeds 27, in Middlesbrough 2, in Nottingham 2, in Plymouth 9, in Shrewsbury 10, in Portsmouth about 15. Altogether the 'Tablet' calculates that taking the Bill as it stands, and even assuming Clause 4 to be made compulsory on the local authorities, instead of permissive, as at present, the Catholics stand to lose nearly half their schools.

FRANCE—Pensions to Ecclesiastics

The demands made to the French Ministry of Public Worship for the pensions to ecclesiastics provided for by the Separation Law number in the case of the Catholic ecclesiastics 11,480 out of a total of 13,095.

A Prize-Winner

According to a dispatch of May 17, from Paris, the Stanislaus Julien prize of 1500 francs, offered for the best work dealing with China and Japan, has been awarded by the French Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres to the Rev. Emile Raguet, of the Paris Society of Foreign Missions. Father Raguet is doing mission work at Nagasaki, Japan.

GERMANY—Working in Harmony

The German Centre works in harmony with many Evangelical Protestants, and at a banquet given by the Centre Party the other day the toast of 'The Evangelical Guests' was proposed by Herr Fehrenbach, leader of the Centre members at the Baden Landtag, and was responded to by Count Bernstorff, a Lutheran.

ROME—Beatification

The Beatification of the sixteen Carmelite Sisters of Compiegne who were martyred during the French Revolution, being decapitated on July 17, 1794, at Paris, took place recently at the Vatican amidst most solemn ceremonies.

The Irish College

For some time past (writes a Rome correspondent) the Irish College has developed at a quick and steady pace into one of the foremost centres in the Eternal City. Under a rector with a national reputation like the Very Rev. Dr. O'Riordan—now perfectly recovered from his illness of the late winter—it is most fittingly to reach a further development still. A college journal is to appear in June, as the organ of the Oliver Plunket Literary and Debating Society, which has been a principal focus of intellectual life for the college. The 'Seven Hills'—this is the designation chosen, simply enough and rightly also, for the new publication. It will publish the papers read before the society, and an account of the proceedings; and as strangers are frequently invited to deliver lectures on special subjects, very interesting papers and reports may be expected. Besides these features, the 'Seven Hills' will also have literary reviews and notices, and that the Very Rev. Dr. O'Riordan is a contributor of these to the first number is a high and sufficient recommendation. Among the contributors of articles to the same number will be Cardinal Moran, Archbishop of Sydney; Rev. Dr. P. C. Yorke, of San Francisco; the Rev. Réginald Walsh, O.P., Master of Studies at San Clemente; the Rev. Professor Bonajuti, Editor of the 'La Rivista'; and others. A biography of his Holiness will be given.

SCOTLAND—Golden Jubilee

Mother Abbess of the Poor Clares Convent, Liberton, Edinburgh, recently celebrated her golden jubilee. The revered religious is a member of the Clifford family, Earnham, and is related to many of the oldest members of the English nobility, including the Duke of Norfolk.

The Bute Family

The name given the youngest member of the Bute family is Mary Crichton Stuart. The baptismal ceremony was performed by Archbishop Smith, assisted by Father John Gray.

Death of a Prominent Catholic

By the death of Mr. William Mackintosh, of Oxford street, Edinburgh, the Catholic community of the Scottish capital has lost one of its oldest and most respected citizens. Mr. Mackintosh, who was in his 74th year, became a convert to the Faith more than fifty years ago, and immediately afterwards devoted himself eagerly and energetically in Edinburgh for many years to lay work in connection with the St. Vincent de Paul