

Now, is it true that the policy of the Vatican has been steadily hostile to the Third Republic? Is it true that Leo XIII. and his Cardinal Secretary of State were in constant alliance with the home and foreign enemies of the present regime of France? A glance at the letters of the late Pope should supply the answer. From the very day on which he received the congratulations of the French Ambassador on his election to the Papacy, to the day when, amidst the diplomatic arrangements for the reception of the Catholic President of France by the despoiler of the Vatican, he breathed his last, the political policy of the Vatican on the Continent was largely guided by the interests and requirements of the French Republic. Throughout his reign as Pope, he set himself to reconcile the French Catholics, lay and clerical, to the new regime, and to separate the Church from any entanglements with the Royalist or Imperial parties. (1). In spite of rebuffs and disappointments that would have broken the resolution of any ordinary man, Leo continued his work of conciliation, till at last, having gradually prepared the way, (2), on 16th February, 1893, he issued his famous Encyclical to the Bishops, Clergy, and Catholics of France. In this document he pointed out that the Church is not identified with any particular form of Government, Republican or Monarchical, but that she freely acknowledges the established constitution which has shown itself capable of restoring public order; he called upon Catholics, whatever might be their private opinions, to rally round the Republic which was then, de facto, the accepted Government of France, and by their acceptance and loyal support, to purify the legislature from the evils of which they themselves, and the Church, had good reason to complain. Whatever may be said about the wisdom of issuing such a document from the Vatican—and on this question there are good grounds for difference of opinion—of one thing we can be certain, namely, that the Papal pronouncement was of enormous advantage to the Republic, as even the responsible ministers freely admitted. (3)

Did the Republic receive these advances of the Pope in a spirit of friendly co-operation? On the contrary, the anti-Catholic policy, sketched by M. Paul Bert, instead of being modified in the slightest degree, was pushed forward with feverish rapidity. The complete laicisation of the State Schools, the expulsion of the Religious Orders, the suppression of the voluntary schools built by the Catholics themselves, (4) the withdrawal of the traitements of the priests or bishops who raised their voices in protest, were the returns presented to Leo XIII. and his Cardinal Secretary of State by the nation which had been so highly favored. The Catholics, no doubt, protested against such measures, but could their protests in the case be construed as disloyalty to the State? Is it not the inalienable right of free citizens to protest by constitutional methods against legislation hurtful to their interests? and if they exercise their rights can they be reasonably accused of disloyalty to the Government? Why, then, should French Catholics be held up as enemies of republicanism because they protested against unjust republican legislation? or why should the Pope be regarded as the enemy of France because he found it necessary to condemn certain tendencies of some French politicians?

(To be continued next week.)

(1) Hence Leo XIII. could well write to M. Grévy, President of France (1893):—"Ce sentiment de bienveillance empressée pour le peuple Français a réglé toujours l'attitude du Saint Siège Apostolique; et Vous-même, Monsieur le Président, dans votre impartialité et votre haute pénétration, vous en aurez certainement retrouvé les preuves indubitables dans les égards pleins de délicatesse que le Saint Siège a toujours eus pour le Gouvernement de votre patrie."

(2) By inducing Cardinal Lavergne to propose the famous toast of Algiers in 1890, by the letter of Cardinal Secretary of State (Nov., 1890) to Bishop St. Flour, and by inspiring the celebrated letter of the French Cardinals (Feb., 1893).

(3) *Vid.* Speeches of M. Jules Ferry before Senate, 1893; M. Spuller, Minister of Worship, before Chamber of Deputies (March, 1894); M. F. Faure, in his address to the Diplomatic Body (Feb., 1890); M. Waldeck Rousseau, before the Chamber (Dec., 1901).

(4) In his speech at Auxerre (4th Sept., 1904), M. Combes boasted that he had already closed 33,904 out of 16,904 schools, and the very day on which he resigned he procured the suppression of 500 more.

Messrs. A. and T. Inglis, George street, Dunedin, announce that their annual summer sale will commence on February 1, when a very large stock of summer goods, including latest shipments, will be offered for sale at extraordinary reductions....

The Commissioner of Crown Lands, Dunedin, notifies that 13 ordinary farms and 5 dairy farms in the Plunkett Settlement, North Otago, will be open for selection on lease-in-perpetuity at the District Lands Office, Dunedin, and at the Courthouse, Oamaru, on February 5.

## CORRESPONDENCE

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for the views expressed by correspondents.]

### A SUGGESTED FORWARD MOVEMENT ON THE EDUCATION QUESTION

To the Editor.

Sir,—As one never knows when the editorial fiat may go forth that this correspondence must cease, it is as well perhaps that I should reply at once to the 'discordant note' blown, a week or two ago, by our anonymous friend 'Tuba.' In order to find matter for criticism, it has been necessary to bring before the public, as mine, a very different set of issues from those actually raised in my original letter, and for my own part I confess to a strong suspicion that the letter under review was written more with the object of provoking further controversy than for the purpose of setting forth 'Tuba's' whole 'credo' on this question. As many of your readers, however, may take 'Tuba' seriously, I propose to treat the letter as being written in sober earnest and to assume—what indeed I honestly believe—that, in spite of his cynicism, my critic is anxious as any man could be to see Catholics get justice on this matter.

1. 'Tuba's' first criticism is that it would be useless to formulate in writing the claims of the Catholic body, as this has been done so often before, and the Protestant answer 'may be presumed.' The suggestion that each of the bodies represented should submit a written statement of its demands was put forward by me as being a sort of preliminary business formality, desirable in order to show each party precisely where the other stood; and was one of those details which—as I repeatedly indicated in my letter—were not essential to my proposal, but might be omitted or modified as might be deemed wise. It is true, as 'Tuba' says, that Protestants have often had the opportunity of reading a written statement of Catholic claims. They have not, however, had the opportunity of hearing the reasons for those claims set forth fully and forcibly by the living voice. Moreover, we are not even asking that our Protestant friends should agree with our principles and views on the Education question. Our views would be stated with as much fulness as the circumstances would allow, with a view to showing the reasonableness of our position, and in the hope of inducing the Protestant bodies to ask as much as we ask ourselves. But what we really want to know is not whether they will accept our views and principles, but whether, if we agree to help them, they will agree to help us in getting what we each want on this question. That is an issue which has never been definitely placed before them, and their answer, therefore, may not be presumed.

2. According to 'Tuba,' 'Mr. Scott thinks it possible to draw up a statement containing pure Catholic doctrine, acceptable to members of the Protestant Synods.' To those who know me, and to those who have read my letter with any care, it will be unnecessary to say that I never for a moment imagined anything so foolish. From start to finish of my letter there is not a word about Catholic doctrine—I am not dealing with doctrine, but with definite concrete demands regarding our schools. If I had ever supposed that it was possible to harmonise Protestant and Catholic doctrine, I would probably never have left my Protestant Church to become a Catholic. Nor do I even suggest that we could frame a statement of demands that would be, in se, acceptable to the Protestant Synods. What I do say is that there is at least a possibility that they might accept our statement in the sense of being willing to help us to obtain our demands, if we agree to aid them in gaining theirs. 'Tuba' may honestly differ from me in my opinion on this matter, but surely nothing can be gained by misunderstanding and mis-stating my position.

3. Still apparently laboring under the delusion that I had suggested some sort of doctrinal agreement, 'Tuba' seeks to draw a parallel between my proposal and the effort towards doctrinal agreement which was made by leading men in France and Germany nearly three centuries ago. On this point I remark: (a) The parallel does not hold, inasmuch as the European movement was purely doctrinal, and my suggestion, as I have already explained, is simply for a practical agreement on a common course of political action. (b) The European movement was inaugurated at a time when Protestant bigotry was at its height, and when