

French Government the Pope is standing for that principle and should have the sympathy of every American citizen of whatever denomination. That principle is so vital that the Pope will see the French Government take all the Church property, prohibit public worship and imprison the bishops and priests rather than yield.

This objection is so vital that there is no necessity for considering the others. The bill is full of unjust and vexatious provisions, which have been pointed out by others.

## CATHOLIC SPAIN

Among all the nations of the world (says a writer in the 'Catholic Magazine' for South Africa) Spain stands out in the front line of Catholicity, if she does not occupy the premier position. Persecution has been vehement everywhere against our holy religion, but not so severely in Catholic Spain. True it is that some years ago she banished the religious Orders, but she seems to have repented of her folly to some extent, as a few of the Orders are re-established. Satan has been, and is, at work there in the Cortes or Parliament, but his machinations have been thwarted by that august and noble lady, Queen Christina, the mother of the present King Alfonso. Hailing from that other grand old Catholic nation, Austria-Hungary, she is a second Queen Elizabeth of Hungary. Many a time the Cortes threatened to propose attacks against the Church, but the presence of the Queen in Council has stopped them. How? By heated harangues? No, by a steadfast and serene look, by silence and by prayer. We all know with what loving care she has nursed from the cradle the posthumous child of Alfonso the Twelfth. Like a hot-house plant in a conservatory, she has watched day and night his advancing years, until quite recently he ascended the Throne of Spain. And how has the boy King behaved since his accession? Like a good son, he is devoted to his mother, though he be King and she no longer Queen Regent. It may be in the recollection of all that, when Alfonso was in Paris prior to his visit to England, he was accosted with the remark: 'I presume your Majesty will be soon having a Queen of Spain?' His reply was: 'There is a Queen of Spain, my mother.'

Since then, it appears, that he has verified the wish of the Frenchman, and has taken unto himself as consort her Royal Highness Princess Ena of Battenberg, niece to King Edward VII. Let us hope and trust that the union will be a happy one; that he will always cherish the prayers and good advice he received at the knees of his august mother, and prove himself to be a good Catholic sovereign, and a blessing to our Holy Catholic Faith; and that the lady of his choice will prove herself a good Queen, and help her husband to rule that nation that has given so many saints to the Church; that nation that is overflowing with Catholicity in the villages, if not in the cities; and that nation that prides herself, and justly too, on being the most loyal to the Holy See.

So much for a general preamble of Catholicity in Spain. We will now proceed to a description of Holy Week, Corpus Christi, All Souls' Day, and The Passing Bell.

The speaker has never had the blessing of witnessing Holy Week in any other Continental country but Spain, but he questions if the observance of Holy Week and the other great feasts of the Church is maintained with greater solemnity in any other country than in the land of the Cid. Hundreds may flock to Italy, to France as she used to be, and as she ought to be, to Austria, to Portugal, and to other places, and return with feelings of great joy and gladness, begotten of the grand scenes they have had the good fortune of being present at. And these same hundreds might go to sunny Spain, and there fill their souls with the piety exhibited by the Spaniard.

La Semana Santa, or Holy Week,

commences on El Domingo de las Palmas, or Palm Sunday, the day of processions of palms, in all the principal churches. The ritual prescribed by Holy Church is minutely carried out in all its grandeur, but without any instrumental music, as during Lent the strict law of no organ on Sundays at Holy Mass is rigidly adhered to. The following Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday call not for any particular notice save that, from Wednesday evening all business is suspended until midday on Holy Saturday. On Wednesday evening hundreds of people are to be seen flocking to the

churches, to be present at 'Tenebrae'; and what a rendering is given to all the sublime parts of that Holy Office on the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings! On Holy Thursday morning the people are up betimes, and are present at the Masses in the different parish churches, which Masses are invariably in time for the worshippers to be present at the grand function in the cathedral. One very remarkable item must be mentioned here, and that is that all, save the military, are dressed in black. A lady or a gentleman who ventured into a Spanish church on Holy Thursday or Good Friday, in any other color than black, would run a great risk of being an occupant of a bed in the nearest hospital. The Mass in the cathedral commences, and at the 'Gloria in excelsis' the bells are rung. At the end of the 'Gloria' a signal is communicated to the Artillery barracks, and presently is heard the booming of a cannon. This is the signal to all sentries in the city to dress mourning. All musketry corps reverse carbines and Lancers sheathe their lances. It is a touching sight to see this transformation, this military salute to Our Lord in His Week of Sorrows. Pass from one barrack to another, there you will see the sentry with arms reversed as if he were going to a funeral. And this will last continuously, until another boom of the cannon on Holy Saturday morning gives the signal to cease mourning. How is the afternoon of Holy Thursday observed? The whole city is thronged with thousands of people, good, pious Spaniards; who are going here, there, and everywhere, all making for the sepulchres in the various churches. You get to the door of a church, you go in with the throng, and you are fortunate if you get within thirty feet of the Holy Sepulchre, surrounded by hundreds of candles. In the cathedral, as many as one thousand candles were kept burning. While at your devotions you hear the measured tread of military, and then a body of troops enters, halts, and at a given signal from the commanding officer, kneels to adore the King, its Sovereign, the Sovereign before Whom all earthly Kings give way and submit obedience. After about seven minutes' prayer, a signal brings the men to their feet, a wheel round, and the soldiers march off to another church. Seven Sepulchres at least must be visited to gain the Indulgences. Some people start at the Cathedral and finish at a parish church, and others vice versa. On one occasion the Captain General with his full staff of officers, entered the Cathedral, and knelt right in front of the Sepulchre. It was most edifying to see these men of the world, these men of the sword, these men of blood and iron, kneel to pay homage to the King of Heaven.

### Good Friday

dawns on a city of the dead. A morning of silence so to speak, indicative of the prevailing sadness, for is this not Our Lord's dying day? The Holy Mass of the Presanctined is offered early in the parish churches for the same reason as on Maundy Thursday. The Cathedral is packed; and let it here be added that in the generality of Spanish churches, there are no seats. The men stand in the side aisles and the women sit on the floor in the nave. Rich and poor, the grandee and the plebeian, all mixed together in the House of God. It is no uncommon thing for men to stand for four hours in the Cathedral with barely room to kneel at the most solemn parts of the Mass. The Mass commences, the Plain Chant singing by the choir is superb, the rendering of the Passion is angelic, and the sermon by the 'Magistral' or premier preacher of the Chapter, is listened to with rapturous attention. The procession from the Altar of Repose to the High Altar is attended with difficulty, owing to the vast assemblage of worshippers. What can be said of the Adoration of the Cross? Simply that about a dozen of the clergy will be kept busy for about an hour. No rushing to the altar rails, no unseemly behaviour. Marshals are there to see that a proper line is kept. The women from the centre march first to the rails and after their Adoration flank off to the sides and out into the streets—by the side doors. The men glide into the space made vacant by the women and follow by the same course. Thus, no confusion, no haste, and no panic. And so some eight thousand persons will move in a quiet and orderly manner. Good Friday afternoon is taken up with

The Customary Procession of the Passion.

The line of route is guarded by the military with, as before remarked, arms reversed. Looking from balcony down a long street you will observe the soldiers leaning on the butt ends of their rifles. At three o'clock the procession starts from the Cathedral. Headed by a mounted body of 'Guardia Civil,' or gendarmes, come the various confraternities, sodalities,

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