

The Work of the Propaganda

That Congregation in the Curia which is known as the Propaganda presides, as its name implies, over the diffusion of the Catholic faith throughout the whole world (says an American exchange). In all probability, it is the most perfectly organised body on earth and, notwithstanding the stupendous masses of work with which it has necessarily to deal, is far more remarkable for the masterly expedition and mobility of its action than any bureaucratic government in existence.

Its creation, at first owing to defective organisation, did not survive its founder; Gregory XV. re-established it, however, in 1622, issuing in regard to it on June 22 of that year the bull 'Inscrutabili.'

Once a month the Cardinal members were to meet in the presence of the Pope; twice a month they were to meet under the presidency of one of the elder Cardinals among them. This rule practically remains even to the present day, and on the first Monday of each month the Cardinals of Propaganda meet in council to the number of fifteen. Discussions and decisions are referred to the Pope after going through investigation and examination at the hands of some twenty-five experts in Canon Law.

A prothonotary apostolic holds a 'watching-brief' at the council on behalf of the Pope and duly makes his private report to the Pontiff.

Rome Divides the Universe

into two parts, which are very unequal in extent. In the less of the two, that is, in point of territorial extent, Christianity under an ecclesiastical hierarchy is regularly organised; the larger is the land of heathens and schismatics, the territory of the missions. The decisions of Propaganda are, therefore, of vast moment in their application, since every one of them must at once assert the spirit of the Church, and at the same time reconcile the temporal interests of the country in which it is promulgated. Thus if a Catholic university is to be created at Washington or at Ottawa, Propaganda decides on the statutes of the new foundation, a necessarily delicate operation.

A glance at the extent of the territory over which Propaganda works, will convey some idea of the nature of its responsibilities in the world. With the exception of the bishopric of Goa, a Portuguese possession in India, Asia comes within the scope of Propaganda. Oceanica depends entirely for its ecclesiastical administration upon Propaganda. Propaganda reigns in the New World over the British possessions of North America, the United States, the Antilles, Guyana, Patagonia; it possesses no rights over Mexico or the South American republics. Great Britain, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Luxemburg, Bosnia, Servia, Roumania, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Turkey, Greece, a part of North Germany, and some parts of Switzerland, come under the jurisdiction of this imperial congregation. Here are, approximately, the number of Catholics in the various countries with which the congregation deals.

England, 2,000,000, or one-eighteenth of the population; Scotland, 500,000, or one-seventh of the population; Ireland, 3,000,000, three-fifths; Norway and Sweden, 3500 Catholics out of a population of 7,000,000; Denmark, 5000 out of 2,300,000; Holland, nearly 2,000,000, nearly half of the entire population; Luxemburg, 211,000, nearly the whole population; Mecklenburg Schwerin and Strelitz with Hanseatic towns, 50,000, or one-twentieth of the population; Saxony, 60,000, or one-fortieth of the people; Servia, 10,000 of 1,600,000; Roumania, 120,000 of 5,000,000; Bulgaria, 25,000; Montenegro, 5000 of 290,000; Turkey in Europe, 175,000 out of 9,000,000.

The Method

which Propaganda employs in conducting its spiritual conquests is worthy of notice. In an unexplored region a few missionaries found a little Christian 'outpost.' It has hardly sprung into existence but it has already come within the cognizance of the argus-eyed congregation; it is given a constitution as a mission and all due powers consistent with its work. It has not been long in existence, just long enough to get what fox-hunters call a 'sense' of the country, when the little mission receives orders to extend its line of operations, the original little outpost becoming then a 'base' and other members leaving it to form other outposts. This has been the method by which the Church has conquered Central Africa, that seemingly most impenetrable of all lands. In 1836, it was almost untrampled by the feet of missionaries; to-day it is cut up and divided almost as a chess-board, no area being without its settler for the cause of Christianity. The same methods have been applied to the

Christian conquest of Oceanica and China, and, indeed, for the practical purposes of its work, the world may be said to be divided into a certain number of circumscriptions, which bring the entire universe in touch with the Roman Curia.

Life in the Arctic Regions

Some idea of the conditions under which the members of the Antarctic expedition have to live may be inferred from the vivid account of the daily life experienced in the Arctic regions by Mr. F. G. Jackson, who brought Nansen back to civilisation. Mr. Jackson and his six companions spent three years in a hut twenty feet long by twenty feet wide, and only seven feet high, never seeing any other being nor hearing a scrap of news. The worst enemies they had to contend with were this want of fresh companionship and the perpetual darkness in winter. Four months of solid night every year has a depressing effect, not only on the spirits but on the appetite, and it also interferes with one's sleep. Morning, noon, and night become unrecognisable, merged into one endless gloom, and but for the welcome monthly advent of the moon, they lived in a darkness the dreariness of which is indescribable. To keep themselves in health during this time of darkness the explorers always took a regular daily walk. This, unless there was a moon, was taken round and round a circle on the ice floe, marked with small flags, where they stumbled over the rough, hummocky ice, through the mist and driving snow, two or three hours each day. Occasionally a bear hunt gave a little diversion. Two or three dogs, which showed some aptitude for bear-hunting, were allowed to run loose during the winter, and one dog, 'Nimrod,' was tied to a rough kennel just outside the hut. These dogs would get on the track of a bear on the floe and set up a tremendous barking, 'Nimrod' taking up the chorus, thus letting the men know what was going on. Mr. Jackson and a companion then turned out with their rifles, and, guided by the incessant barking of the dogs, stumbled through the mist and darkness till Mr. Bruin was located with his attendant yelping dogs. Getting to within about ten yards of their quarry, the hunters shot together while the attention of the bear was taken up by the dogs, and poor Mr. Bear rolled over dead. One of the men then returned to the hut to bring out a sledge party to haul him in, and bear steaks would appear on the dinner table for the next week or so.

Scientific Achievements in the Past Year

The question has been asked whether 1907 is to go down to posterity as the year of wireless telegraphy, or as that of the aeroplane. Certainly its advances as applied to present-day uses and conveniences have been most marked in these two directions, though there are several other things (says an American paper) worthy of mentioning in outlining the marvels of the year. The accomplishments in wireless telegraphy, the least understood field of invention, have been greater than the most sanguine had anticipated. It all culminated toward the close of October. On the 23rd of that month, at the Marconi station in Glace Bay, N.B., a message was sparked over to Clifden, Ireland, the reply coming back in a few seconds under an even five minutes. Four days later no less than 14,000 words were thus transmitted in the course of usual commercial business. It is a fact that

Wireless Telegraphy

has been made the actual, practical, easily available servant of everyday life. Count Arco, of Berlin, electrical expert, predicts that the wireless 'phone is next to arrive. With pole 30 feet high he has demonstrated the possibilities of talking through the air at distances of from two to three miles, and the newest ships of the German navy are to be equipped with his instruments. The British home fleet is hard at work along the same line, and report has it that American vessels on their trip round the Horn are similarly fitted out.

Lyons, France, announces that electrical energy may be transported without wire. Naturally the secret of this is closely guarded, but that there is more in it than mere gossip is certain. Actual patents were registered in August, and a syndicate of French capitalists formed to finance the work, Auguste Villy standing at its head. During the experiments at the Chat-eau du Creb, near Lyons, a full-sized trolley car was propelled some 200 yards along the rails by the 'wireless' method. Telephotography, by which accurate like-

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