

THE BARCELONA RISING

SERMON BY HIS LORDSHIP BISHOP GRIMES

Addressing the congregation in the Catholic Cathedral, Christchurch, on Sunday, his Lordship Bishop Grimes spoke as follows:—

You will doubtless be surprised at the unusual course I am about to take in speaking from this pulpit of anything that appears in a secular paper. The nature and the circumstances of the case will, I trust, amply justify me in this unwonted action. An article, entitled 'Spain of To-day,' and 'The Barcelona Rising,' was given pride of place yesterday in one of our local newspapers—one that is much read by our Catholics in this diocese and in other parts of the Dominion. The article is from the pen of a well-known professor, who long held the chair of English Language, Literature, and History in the leading college of Canterbury, and it is for the most part a more travesty of truth.

The writer begins by observing that he had the good fortune to enter Spain as the Barcelona rising began. He did not venture near its zone, because of wrecked railways and shortness of time, but he listened to its echoes in Madrid, Toledo, and other important cities of the centre and south of Spain. To justify the large perspective he meant to give his own and the imagination of prejudiced persons whose views he was copiously to draw from, he picturesquely remarks that there is more perspective in viewing a conflagration at some distance from it. He tells us that the Government in Spain has established a rigorous censorship on all news, and therefore the newspapers are the last places to look for truth. Hence it is not from the press of the country that he obtains his information or receives his impressions. Nay, he tells us that we have only to listen to the echoes that reached him from the regions around, and we shall understand the full significance of the movement from a national point of view. The Spanish Government, he bids us believe on his own ipse dixit, is, with the Queen-mother and the young King, wholly under the thumb of the Jesuits; hence it would have us look upon the recent rising as a purely anarchist movement. He furthermore assures us that the most significant feature of the Barcelona riots is their anti-ecclesiasticism, the revolutionists having set themselves chiefly against the monastic institutions and the churches, whilst the 'women' were the most conspicuous in the rising against the Church, clearly showing, he adds, that it is not the workmen and peasants alone that are getting to hate the Church, but their wives and daughters, though he actually expresses his fears that their efforts in this respect are only sporadic. He gives what he flatters himself will be as amusing to his readers as to himself, a ludicrous example of the widespread superstition of the women of Spain. As to the Spanish men, 'masculine irreverence' is the order of the day, because, forsooth, he did not see them cap in hand before the priests, nor continually on hended knees before them, their churches, or ecclesiastical things—this, he adds, despite the efforts made by the Jesuits to give and get recognition. The ex-professor obviously has a Jesuit bee in his bonnet. Without a word of condemnation of the brutal violence of the rioters towards helpless nuns and monks and priests, the chief victims of the Anarchist rising, he would fain have us take comfort from the significant fact that these being the chief victims, and that the buildings burnt being mostly ecclesiastical and conventual, we can so readily get at the meaning of the revolution; for, he would have us know, large sections of the Spanish people have come to believe that these are hotbeds of secret license and crime.

Like the three tailors of Tooley street, he presumes to warn the King and the Queen and the whole Spanish Government not to remain any longer under the yoke of the crafty and designing Jesuits. He warns them that unless they speedily shake off that galling yoke, the Monarchy will be replaced by a Republic with all the privileges of a Godless education for the soulless masses. Now, I, too, have spent some time in Spain, and, notably, in Barcelona. A few years ago I there held an Ordination, with the permission of the Archbishop of that city. During my stay there I freely mixed with all classes, from the highest to the lowest. I had the advantage to assist at all the offices of Holy Week in that city, and I fearlessly affirm that outside Catholic Ireland I never witnessed more reverence and more seemingly genuine piety in church than in that and the other cities of Spain. The Governor and the Mayor of Barcelona, judges and barristers, journalists, the highest officials in the Army, and men of other professions, were conspicuous by their presence and respectful bearing in that vast cathedral, as well as for their deferential manner towards the priests and religious . . . whom they met in the streets. On Holy Thursday I saw far more men than women—men in their hundreds—in prayer before the altars, and in adoration of the most Blessed Sacrament. I most vehemently and fearlessly protest against the gratuitous and reckless assertion that large sections of the Spanish people have come to believe that the ecclesiastical and conventual buildings in Spain are hotbeds of secret license and crime. I protest, too, against the untruthful assertion that the women of Spain were in the vanguard of

the atrocious riots. If they thought them hotbeds of secret license and crime, would they give their dear daughters and their beloved sons in their thousands to the sanctuary and the cloister? Would the highest and the noblest and the most intellectual of the land, the tradesman and the artisan deem it an honor and a privilege to have priests and monks and nuns from their homes and hearths? Shame on those who wickedly make such base assertions!

In the Pastoral Letter on the Barcelona riots, the Bishop-Capitular of the Diocese indignantly repudiates the base charges against the priests and monks and nuns. Listen to his soul-stirring words: 'The horrors of the revolution which has burst forth within the last few weeks have elicited from all right-minded persons a strong cry of indignation and protest. In this city of hard toil and progress, which boasted of its culture and Christianity, lawless crowds have delivered up to the flames about forty churches and religious houses, brutally driving forth from their peaceful dwellings inoffensive citizens whose only crime was that, under the protection of Divine and human laws, they consecrated themselves to the care of the orphans and helpless children. . . . After having destroyed with the fury of vandals venerable art treasures . . . they indulged in an unbridled orgie of passions amidst the ruins of the razed convents, eager to secure supposed proofs of torments and crimes that existed only in the imagination of the wicked instigators of the conflagration. . . . We can say with the fullest knowledge that the convents and religious houses have never been, as the public have been given to understand, refuges for criminals, nor dens of mysterious violence. It is only the sectarian spirit that could circulate the vile fiction of crimes and disorders, which has no other object than to root out from the hearts of our people the last remnants of the Christian faith—that faith which is the fountain of heavenly virtues and which never excites furious passions. . . . The religious houses, we repeat, are places of recollection and prayer, always open for works of mercy and peace, ever accessible to the free action of ecclesiastical and civil tribunals, to whom, on every occasion, we have afforded facilities for the investigation of the supposed crimes, our interments not being clandestine, but burials authorised by the laws of the land.'

The writer of the article to which I deem it my painful duty to refer appears to think that all Spain is like Barcelona. Now, we know that Barcelona—conveniently situated on the borders of France, and not too far from Italy and Switzerland—has long been the hotbed of revolution and the home of foreign anarchists, from the neighboring countries. It is well known to be the centre and focus of the secret societies that play so prominent a part in all European revolutions.

All the revolutions which have convulsed Spain during the last century down to the recent anarchist riot in Barcelona may be traced to the secret or open 'orders' which have gone forth from the Lodges. Does the writer of the article—which should never have appeared without a word of comment in a respectable Christchurch paper—wish the Lodges to order a Republic in Spain as they have in unhappy France? In the manifesto for the Grand Orient, issued November 4, 1904, it is said: 'We declare to the whole Freemason body that, in furnishing these documents (spy denunciations), the Grand Orient has accomplished only a strict duty. We have dearly conquered the Republic, and claim the honor of having procured its triumph. Without the Freemasons,' it adds, 'the Republic would not be in existence—Pius X. would be reigning in France.'

Instead of trying to make capital out of the superstitious, though certainly harmless, practices of the women of Spain, the writer would do better to cry down the stupid practices of his own countrywomen who encourage the many lying fortune-tellers whom our laws are powerless to prevent from defrauding so many in every walk of society.

HIBERNIAN SOCIETY, DUNEDIN

The annual general Communion of the members of St. Joseph's branch of the H.A.C.B. Society took place at St. Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin, at the nine o'clock Mass on Sunday, when about 140 members in regalia approached the Holy Table. The members marched in procession from St. Joseph's Hall to the Cathedral, where they occupied the front seats in the nave of the church. His Lordship the Bishop, who was celebrant of the Mass, in the course of his sermon, which was based on the Gospel of the day, referred to the encouragement given by the Church from the earliest ages, and especially in the middle ages, to Catholic societies and guilds, the members of which by their actions gave good example to those around them. There never was a time in which the need of Catholic societies was so pressing as at the present. It was most important that the young men should be gathered into such societies. There was a great propaganda going on regarding benefit societies, and a boy had no sooner left school than he was urged to join one or other of such societies. When the boy comes out of school they should get him to join some Catholic society, where he would have the benefit of the good example and the good advice of those around him, and would be encouraged to practise his religion. It was of the greatest importance that our young men should be induced to join some of our Catholic societies, and he