

There is no harm in that. But they went out of their way to lug into their deliberations the religious question, and to throw discredit upon the devoted nuns. Possibly their attack upon Christian and religious nurses was inspired by a secret consciousness of their own inadequacy to compete with them in those qualities which the sick most appreciate. Carrying war into the enemy's camp is a familiar device for diverting attack from one's own. Be that as it may, here is the

Invidious Resolution

passed by the Congress of hospital nurses:—
 'This Congress, considering that an irreconcilable opposition exists between the democratic and the religious spirit;

'Considering that it is possible, though quite as an exception, that religious beliefs may have inspired acts of self-sacrifice, but that the fact of referring everything to the designs of Providence exempts the religious nurse from imparting to their hospital service an intelligent, devoted, and disinterested collaboration for the furtherance of progress and science;

'Considering that the presence in hospitals of a staff composed of religious involves a continuous interference with liberty of conscience, and that a terrible religious influence is exercised upon persons already weakened by sickness;

'Considering that the difference made in salaries, to the advantage of the religious members of the staff, placing its lay portion in subordination to the former, constitutes an injustice;

'Resolved, that an active propaganda be carried on for the laicisation of all hospitals.'

The

Crushing Rejoinder

to this tissue of anti-religious cant and falsehood, given by *La Croix*, deserves full quotation:—

'First of all, we have the usual clap-trap about the "irreconcilable opposition between the democracy and the religious spirit." That is the hackneyed Masonic preface. One asks, what is the relevance of this philosophical and political question? But, then, Messieurs les infirmiers, your Congress sessions were being held on the banks of the Garonne; so it was needful to offer sacrifice to the spirits of the "Bloc," in order to render them propitious.

'Next, you admit that religious beliefs may possibly have inspired acts of self-sacrifice, but to an inconsiderable extent, and quite by way of exception!

Nuns to the Rescue.

'And you dare to say this at Toulouse—at Toulouse, where not long ago certain hospital wards had to be "clericalised" anew, and to re-open their doors to the nuns, because, forsooth, smallpox had broken out, and the "lay" staff feared to catch it! You have also forgotten that similarly in Brittany, they had to recall the nuns for the same reason at the time of the small-pox epidemic! And on the very day that you were insulting religious and those beliefs which nerve them to despise death, a lowly nun—a martyr of charity—was dying at Rotterdam among cholera patients with whom she had shut herself up, thus condemning herself willingly to certain death for the love of Jesus Christ! Gentlemen of the Hospital, take off your hats! Pay your respects to this humble victim of duty!

Verdict of the Faculty.

'You say, further, that religious of either sex, through referring everything to the will of Divine Providence, fail to work together intelligently for progress and science. That is your assertion. But the *Journal de Médecine* of Bordeaux affirms the contrary in giving a report of the examination of thirty-six religious belonging to Saint Andrew's Hospital, and the one for children, before the Medical Board, that professional organ writes: "In anatomy, physiology, elementary hygiene, and minor surgery they have given proof, in the opinion of their examiners, of most thorough knowledge. The Board was even surprised that women, every moment of whose times is devoted to the nursing of our sick, should have been able to acquire such wide information." Pay your respects, gentlemen, to these collaborators in the cause of science; for out of these thirty-six nuns sixteen obtained the mark of "good," and twenty that of "very good," in scientific subjects, and from a jury of doctors!

"Undue Influence"

over consciences, you say? Prove it, substantiate it by facts. Answer Citizen Ringuier, a Socialist, a "Simon Pure," who on his appointment as administrator of the Hospice of Saint-Quentin, designed to "laicise" everything. "But," he wrote in the *Combat*, "I have viewed the devotedness of the Sisters at close quarters, and I have abandoned my plan." "The patients," he added, "be they Catholics, Protestants, Freethinkers, or Freemasons, all receive the same attention, and are objects of equal devotedness. What more do we want? It is true there is the matter of the religious habit. But that is all, and it is, in my judgment, a secondary point. The thing of paramount importance is that the hospital should be "neutral" from the religious standpoint, treating all alike. That, it is. If I guarantee it, I do so because I know it for a certainty."

'Gentlemen, make your bow to this Socialist-citizen, who has the courage to declare the truth!

"People in Glass Houses," etc.

'But the subordination of the lay to the religious element on the staff is—you declare in conclusion—a violation of justice. Pray be cautious, gentlemen! or you may awaken in us grave suspicions. In hospitals where there are nuns, the latter hold the keys, keep count of disbursements, and have an eye upon waste. It was this kind of "subordination" of which one of your fellows at Romans complained: "What can you expect! I am with religious. Their surveillance is excessive. One cannot enjoy life here, so I'm off!" How many more avowals and reports we might produce concerning such delicate matters! But we shall, no doubt, return to the subject later.

'Meanwhile, gentlemen, one more bow. Here you have the verdict given by science. I read in the *Reveil Medical*, No 125, 26th year, the following

Medical Testimony.

given by Dr. Casset from his own personal experience:

1. The laicisation of hospitals has been introduced for political ends, and not for the benefit of hospital service.

2. Doctors almost to a man, advocated the retention of the religious.

3. The patients—who, albeit the parties most concerned, have not been consulted in the matter—are of the same opinion.

4. The Sisters, who are virtuous, self-sacrificing, and disinterested; nurse better and cost less than grasping, wasteful nurses, eager to extort tips from the patients—the young nurses, for embellishing their toilette, and the older ones for domestic purposes.

'That's what he says, gentlemen of the hospitals assembled in Congress at Toulouse. Well, then, *verbum sap.*'

Our readers will no doubt remember our calling attention to an interview had by the editor of the *Figaro* with a rationalist hospital doctor, who spoke openly of the abuses and neglect that followed upon the substitution by a Socialist municipality of a lay staff in the place of Sisters of Charity in a large French hospital. The hospital at once fell into debt, the lay staff collected at random, and comprising both sexes, had to be dismissed after a fortnight's trial in the interests of public morality. The subsequent engagement of a Swiss Protestant Deaconess as matron, and of a lay staff chosen by her, if it improved the moral tone of the establishment, did not prevent a plentiful dispensation of champagne, which never reached the patient, the gross neglect of the doctors' prescriptions, or nurses going to bed instead of watching agonised patients on the night immediately following an operation.

'But Sisters,' said the house surgeon, 'used to sit up with them all night.' Similar testimony to the superior efficiency of nuns in managing Houses of Correction in Italy, from an honest Italian lady journalist, attached though she was to the Masonic 'Vita,' was not long since recorded at length in these columns.

MEMORIAL TO THE VICTIMS OF THE IRISH FAMINE

One of the many great tragedies which mark the history of Ireland was commemorated in an appropriate manner on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, when a noble Celtic cross, erected on Grosse Isle, in the St. Lawrence River, Canada, by the Ancient Order of Hibernians of America, was solemnly unveiled and dedicated. The cross, pointing to the sky from the summit of Telegraph Hill, marks the graves of thousands who died unknown in a condition of horror and suffering only paralleled by the tragedy of Calcutta.

Men, women, and children left homes where people were dying of famine and pestilence, only to perish in pestilential passenger ships, or in hopelessly inadequate cots, fetid hospitals, or bare sun-baked rocks of a quarantine station in a strange country. The misery might have been mitigated, the mortality prevented. It is hard to believe now that such things could have happened within the memory of people still living. A voyage which can now be accomplished in a week, then often took two or three months. The dead bodies were dragged out of the filth from among the living with boat hooks, and were cast into the sea without form or ceremony of any kind. That of the voyage, but what of the landing? Canada was ill-prepared, and did not heed the warnings of what was coming. It was before the days of ocean cables. When ship load after ship load of sick and dying human beings put in an appearance in the St. Lawrence, all too late Canada realised what was happening. The attempts were then more directed to keeping the fever from the ships contaminating the country than to alleviate the sufferings of those landed at Grosse Isle from the floating pest holes.

Nurses, doctors, and clergy did heroic work in many cases, but they were hopelessly unprovided with even the commonest necessaries. Hence the sufferings on land were not less than those at sea. That even the effort to sepa-

'If it isn't HONDAI-LANKA, it isn't the best.' We intend our Tea to be always "the best"—xxxx first award Paris Exhibition.

You can't buy genuine HONDAI-LANKA TEA loose or in bulk. It's only sold in 1lb and 1lb packets, and 5 and 10lb boxes.