

French pilgrims, or to pronounce the customary allocution.' Consequently, his Holiness declined to grant, even at the request of the French Minister, permission for an interview to a correspondent of the 'Matin.' And this attitude of prudent reserve he has imposed upon his Secretary of State, and on all functionaries of the Holy See. To anyone looking with dispassionate eyes on the present condition of French politics, it seems hard to imagine any beneficial course which the Holy See could possibly adopt. A declaration could not please all parties, and public opinion is so divided that the most probable result of the Pope's intervention at this moment would be to make confusion worse confounded. As we said weeks ago, it is easy to criticise the policy of the Vatican, but extremely hard to propose any reasonable course of action. The Holy See has to consider every side of this question, and, even had it made no declaration at all, loyal Catholics would confidently have accepted its silence as the wisest policy for the hour. Now that Cardinal Rampolla has spoken, we are able to judge, on the highest authority, the wisdom of those who have all along felt the difficulty into which these unfortunate troubles in France have landed the Holy Father and his diplomatic advisers.

A Good Idea.

M. Combes (writes a Paris correspondent), finds in the end that it is easier to suppress nuns and monks by proclamation than to do away with them in reality. Persecution is likely to have in France at the present day the same effect which it has had throughout the ages. The Congregations were hardly expelled than steps were in contemplation to enable their members to continue their work of charity and abnegation, and to save, at the same time, from utter ruin the fruits of their lives. An association which is known as the League of Catholic Defence has been formed, for the purpose of enabling the nuns to continue their apostleship. This League, which has been formed by the most prominent ladies of the French aristocracy, intends to establish, with the approval of the ecclesiastical authorities, a number of Non-Educational Establishments, under the control of the nuns who had been expelled from the schools. The chief idea is to instal in every commune, or parish, in France, one nun, who will be entrusted with visiting the sick and looking after the poor. This nun will also be in charge of a 'Patronage' for young girls, which will be a meeting-place for the young girls of the parish, where they will find opportunities for amusement and instruction and for healthy recreations while being encouraged in the practice of their religious duties. The nun will also be in charge of a small library of good books, which will be lent gratuitously to the parishioners. In places where one nun would not be sufficient to carry on the work, she will be given lay assistants. It is intended that the nun in each parish should wear her religious costume, but should M. Combes or his successors assimilate this one nun to be an unauthorised Congregation, she will then be requested to give up her costume and wear civilian dress. The League will provide especially for country districts. The dioceses in the Western part of France will be the first to be dealt with, and a local committee will be formed in each parish, or at least in each 'arrondissement,' for the organisation, maintenance and supervision of the work

Religious Orders and Education.

The French Government find that in attacking the religious Orders they cannot charge them with giving inferior education to their pupils. On the contrary, it is freely admitted in France, as the Paris correspondent of the 'Daily Chronicle' notes, that the pupils educated by the Jesuits and the other religious Orders take the first places in military and civil examinations. The truth is that a different spirit prevails in the Catholic colleges and the State Lycees. In the Catholic colleges the staff devote themselves to the work of education because they feel it is their vocation to do so. The students catch the spirit of their teachers, and between the authorities and those under their guidance ties are established which last throughout life. In the Lycees the students see that the teaching is largely regulated by the question of salaries, and they often regard the school as something like a prison. They leave it without regret, and it has no appreciable influence on their after life. Now that the Jesuits are gone, University professors are recommending that their system of education should be followed. Strange it is that a nation which claims to be progressive should banish men who are admittedly the ablest teachers it produces.

The Aftermath.

Abbe Salaun has been sentenced to four months' imprisonment at Brest for resisting the authorities closing a school. Several women have been sentenced to three months' imprisonment for participating in a demonstration.

GERMANY.—A Contrast.

In a recent issue The Paris 'Univers' contrasted the treatment meted out to Catholicism in Germany and France. In France Congregational schools are closed and the property confiscated, nor at any future time is there the least chance of the State ever restoring what it has stolen. In Germany the conscience of the Government forbids it to do such wrong. After the seizure of Alsace, at the conclusion of the war of '70, great troubles were caused by legislation in the newly conquered territory. Indeed, as many as 700 parishes were deprived of their pastors. Did the Government keep the revenues? Yes; but on the advent of more peaceful times it restored them to the legal owners, with the result that the State did not benefit by the friction between it and the clergy. Indeed, the clergy are better off now than they were under French rule by an addition to their annual stipend of something like £24. This little fact should be borne in mind by people who think that the Alsatians are thirsting for reunion with France; and it may be fitly considered by those who are determined to regard France as a country eminently distinguished by its possession of Catholic spirit. The Alsatian clergy are not likely to take that view of the situation.

ITALY.—A New Campanile.

The Italian Government has prepared a plan for the construction of a new campanile at Venice, on the site of the old one, at a cost of two million lire, of which one million is already in hand.

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