

The master of the vessel, terrified and conquered in this contest with Nature, at last dropped his troublesome passenger and Columban was allowed to go free. He turned his steps into Neustria, thence to Austrasia, and finally settled at Bregenz, on Lake Constance, where, with his friend St. Gall, he labored for two years. In 612 Thierry defeated Theodobert and became master of Helvetia, and Columban had to fly from his ancient enemy. Crossing the Alps, he entered Lombardy, where he was well received and where he established a monastery at Bobbio, which he made the citadel of orthodoxy against the Arians and lighted there a focus of knowledge and instruction which was long the light of Northern Italy. Before his death, in 615, Columban could count many monasteries which observed his rule, but before the seventh century closed they had become more numerous and were peopled with more monks than he could ever in life have contemplated even in his wildest dreams.

CHOICE OF BISHOPS IN AMERICA

CHANGE IN MODE OF ELECTION.

In a recent issue of the *Acta Apostolica Sedis* appears a decree of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation which makes an important change in the method of choosing candidates to be put forward for Bishoprics in the United States (writes the Rome correspondent of the *Catholic Times*, under date November 10). The existing—the terna—system does not, it is explained, appear to meet fully the present exigencies of the Church. The Holy Father has therefore sanctioned a new rule after asking for and receiving the advice of the Bishops.

At the beginning of Lent of next year, 1917, and afterwards every two years, at the same time, each and all of the Bishops will indicate to their Metropolitan the name of one or two priests whom they consider worthy and fit for the episcopal ministry. Priests of another diocese or even of another province may be proposed. But before they decide upon whom to propose, both the Archbishops and Bishops are to ask the Diocesan Consultors and irremovable pastors, individually, to indicate some priest whom they deem worthy and fit for the episcopal office. Secrecy is to be observed, *sub gravi*. When the Archbishop has received the names he will arrange an index of all in alphabetical order, suppressing the names of the proposers, and will transmit a note of it to each Suffragan, so that the Suffragans may be able to make opportune investigations about the qualities of those whom they do not know personally and from certain knowledge.

After Easter, on a day and at a place to be fixed by the Archbishop, all the Bishops of the Province will meet with their Metropolitan for the selection of those who are to be proposed to the Holy See for the episcopal ministry. Detailed instructions are given as to how the proceedings, which are to be secret, shall be conducted. After a discussion the names of the candidates found to be deserving of being struck off the list will not be called out. The others will be called out and voted for. The selection will be made by secret voting. Before the Bishops depart the report made by the Right Rev. secretary is to be read. A copy of the records signed by the Archbishop, the episcopal secretary, and the other Bishops is to be sent through the Apostolic Delegate to the Sacred Consistorial Congregation.

Referring to the change in the mode of choosing Bishops in the United States, *Rome* asks: 'Will the new law be made universal with more or less modification? It replies that it thinks not, owing to the existence of concordate and special privileges.'

WHEN BUYING PICKLES

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BELGIUM'S VALIANT CARDINAL

Documents received in England early in December give the text of the reply of General von Bissing, Military Governor of Belgium, to Cardinal Mercier's letter of October 19, and the Cardinal's rejoinder of November 10.

General von Bissing's reply, dated October 26, begins by denying any violation of the assurance the German commanders gave at the beginning of the war that no men would be removed from Belgium, declaring that such removals had been justified by 'the clandestine emigration of large numbers of young men wishing to join the Belgian Army.' He adds:

'The German authorities would have been quite justified in following the example of England and France, but they have not done so.'

Contending that the employment of Belgian unemployed in Germany has nothing to do with the conduct of the war, but is purely a social and economic measure, General von Bissing says:

'Great Britain's merciless economic isolation of Germany bears equally on Belgium; it deprives her of raw materials and prevents the export of manufactures and thus deals a vital blow, leaving masses of the people unemployed and bringing a state of public calamity to Belgium.'

Says Many Went Voluntarily.

General von Bissing then declares that the Belgian people realized the state of affairs and that tens of thousands of them have gone to Germany voluntarily, where they could get better pay. Others would follow, he says, but are deterred by influence systematically brought to bear on them. He concludes by inviting the Cardinal to study the situation from a social and economic viewpoint.

Replying on November 10, Cardinal Mercier recalls the promise made by Baron von Huene, and subsequently confirmed by Baron von der Goltz, and says:

'The undertaking was explicit and entirely without time limit that "young people have nothing to fear that they may be sent to Germany either to be enrolled in the army or employed at forced labor." This engagement has been violated every day a thousand times for fifteen days.'

In answer to General von Bissing's charge that England and France have done such things, Cardinal Mercier reminds him that he should look to those countries for revenge, not toward a peaceful and disarmed population. The Cardinal then denies that Belgian workers menaced public order, saying:

'Five million Belgians and some hundred Americans are wondering witnesses of the dignity and impeccable patience of our working classes.'

Cardinal Mercier then says that if, as von Bissing declares, such labor has nothing to do with the conduct of the war, properly speaking, it has something to do with the war 'improperly speaking. For even if a Belgian does not take up arms, he releases the hands of a German workman who will take them up.'

Tells Him of His Words.

The letter concludes as follows:—

'Monsieur Governor,—At the beginning of my letter I recalled the noble words of your Excellency: "I have come to Belgium to heal the wounds of your country." If your Excellency could, as we priests do, enter the homes of the working people and hear the lamentations of the wives and mothers to whom your decree brings mourning and poverty, you would be better able to see yourself that the wounds of the Belgian people are open and bleeding. Two years ago they say there was death, there was pillage, there was burning. But it was war. To-day it is no longer war. It is cold calculation, desired destruction, the domination of might over right, the humiliation of man in defiance of humanity. It depends on you, your Excellency, to silence the voice, the cries of outraged conscience. May God, on Whom we call with all the ardor of the soul of an oppressed people, inspire you with the pity of the Good Samaritan.'