

other matters. They maintained that the privilege of personal immunity was really of civil origin, and that consequently without any violation of natural right or equity, it could be abrogated by the State. This, of course, is the present position of French atheists. For Catholics, however, the question was definitely closed by the express condemnation of these doctrines by Pius IX. Anyone wishing to verify this may do so by referring to the condemned propositions, 30 and 32, contained in the Syllabus of Errors. In issuing these condemnations, Pius IX. was not making a new departure, or insisting on a doctrine that had not been all along definitely accepted by trustworthy canonists and theologians. Boniface VIII. declared the privilege of personal immunity of ecclesiastics to be not merely of human, but of divine right. Leo X. promulgated the same doctrine at the Lateran Council, and renewed all the constitutions in favor of ecclesiastical liberty. At the Council of Trent the right of personal immunity was said to be an arrangement of God, and princes were exhorted to see that it was duly observed.

If, then, this privilege of ecclesiastics be of divine origin as so great an authority as Suarez has held, or if it is contained in the powers entrusted by Christ to the Church for the purpose of fulfilling her mission as is more generally accepted, it follows that no State can arrogate to itself the power of subjecting the priests of the Church to the service of arms. The State, just as well as the Church, derives whatever powers it possesses from God: and in the case of the State, as well as in that of the individual, God will not allow spiritual interests to be injured, even for the gaining of problematical temporal advantage. It follows, too, that no one who has the interests of religion at heart can view with complacency the formation in the public of a condition of mind that endures with indifference the gross violation of the Church's rights, or, what is more serious still, is disposed to accept this violation as a blessing in disguise.

Great Loss to the Church.

Apart altogether from the divine insight that the Church enjoys in matters seriously affecting the fulfilment of her mission, centuries of experience have taught her that long, careful, and uninterrupted training under the supervision of competent spiritual guides is essential if her ministers are to be fitted for the duties they will have to discharge: and even when all that is humanly possible has been done, the result attained will oftentimes fall far short of what is desirable. The heresies and schisms that have been caused by ministers of the Gospel, the corruption and abuses that have broken out at times in monastic Orders and among the secular clergy, give proof enough of this. But what is to be expected, considering the common frailty of human nature and the strong and invidious temptations of the world, if the helps for the formation of habits of probity that are secured in the system of preparation for the ministry have to be dispensed with.

With all due allowance for the high standard of morality that is said to prevail among soldiery, especially in war time, I think no one will venture to assert that the moral atmosphere of a military barracks, of a military camp, or even of the field of battle, is ideal for the training of aspirants to the priesthood. It is from this direction as well as from the slaughter and incapacitating of the priests, who are already too few for the work that is to be accomplished, that the peril exists for the Church, and her enemies know this as well as herself.

Pere Dudon, who has made an exhaustive study of the question of the supply of priests in France, computed that as far back as 1906, there was a deficiency of 3109, and predicted that, on account of the position of the Church before the law, vocations would go on decreasing in frequency. His forebodings have unfortunately been fully justified.

Trying Position of the French Bishops.

We can readily understand that the very trying position in which the French episcopacy is placed makes a free and candid expression of their views on this

question practically impossible. Nevertheless, it is abundantly clear that the situation has not been presented in this paper in darker colors than they see it. This may be gathered from the following grave words of the illustrious Cardinal Billot, addressed to the French Catholics of Rome at the French Seminary on March 25 of this year: "To guard ourselves from all exaggerated enthusiasm it is sufficient to give ear to the cries of anguish that reach us from the chaplains at the front, and, above all, from those attached to ambulances and hospitals, placed in the presence of reality, in the presence of those sacerdotal souls that are enervated and deformed in a place and in a profession that does not belong to them; of those poor seminarists, above all, abandoned to themselves, separated from their superiors and directors, deprived of the spiritual aids of which now, more than ever, they have need, so as to be maintained in the spirit of their vocation. It is sufficient to have received the confidences of our worthy bishops tortured (the word is not too strong) by the anguish that the prospect of the future occasions them, of the future of the Church of France, three-fourths of whose clergy (according to the figures of the Minister of War) is at this moment under military service: of our bishops who seek, with little success (above all, if the present condition should happen to be prolonged) for suitable remedies, I shall not say to arrest, but, even to diminish the appalling evils."

Protest Against Conscription.

Referring to the threat of conscripting Ireland, the writer says: It is better to say at once what we shall certainly say if we are faced with conscription, and that is that we won't have it in any shape or form; and it is well to take the necessary steps to ensure that our determination will not be overborne. In this matter the priest is bound with the layman, and we have it on the authority of the illustrious prince of the Church already referred to that conscription as applied to the priest is impious, sacrilegious, revolutionary, and atheistical, that it is a profanation of the sacerdotal character, a transgression of the most sacred laws of the Church, and leads naturally to a debasing of the priestly character and destruction of the priestly influence. Irishmen, priests and people, have fought many a good cause in common before. They have never been confronted with a more righteous one than that which has for its object the safeguarding of their country from the most appalling spiritual dangers by which it has ever been threatened.

COUGHS AND COLDS.

GOOD HOME-MADE REMEDY.

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