

parents and of children, who refused to make use of the condemned books. In order to perpetuate and stereotype the existing gross violations of neutrality, and at the same time to deprive parents of the last shred of protection and redress, the Minister of Public Instruction has drafted two significant and far-reaching Bills. The first Bill imposes a penalty on the parent if he ventures to forbid his child to accept the books placed in his hands by a teacher; and by the second Bill the responsibility of the State is substituted for that of the teacher, who is to be removed from the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts and placed under the university tribunals for nearly all offences committed in the exercise of his duty as a teacher. On the first publication of the text of these two measures the Bishops, in a Joint Pastoral, strenuously protested, declaring that the two Bills meant nothing less than the expropriation of the family and the confiscation of its children by the State. And at a comparatively recent date the Bishops issued another Joint Pastoral, in which the inalienable rights of parents were set forth according to the doctrine of the Church, and in which the use of a number of class-books—the names of which were specified—which contained lying statements regarding the teaching, practices, and history of the Church, was forbidden to Catholic children. The Pastoral has been denounced by the atheists as an 'attack' on the Republican schools, but there can be no doubt that this courageous and timely pronouncement has served to clear the air and has made evident to all interested the seriousness of the issues which are at stake.

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That the Bishops were amply justified in denouncing the new class-books as 'full of pernicious errors' and subversive of all religion a very few extracts will suffice to show. Even in the ordinary school-books, which do not deal specially with moral teaching—such as grammars and reading books—every mention of God or of religion has been carefully and deliberately cut out. A writer in the *Catholic World* gives the following cases in point. In a grammar by Larive and Fleury, in general use in the schools for many years, the following changes and substitutions have been made since 1902:—On page 7, 'God is great' has been changed into 'Paris is great.' Page 9: 'Man excites himself, God leads him,' is now 'The lightning flashes, the thunder roars.' Page 99: In the place of 'God is,' we find, 'I think, therefore I am.' Even ancient history is wiped out. In a list of proper names Adam and Eve have given place to 'Robert' and 'Julie.' Finally, one finds on page 130, in the old editions: 'If you transgress the Commandments of God, you will never fulfill the purpose for which you were put into the world.' In the new editions: 'If you transgress the laws of Nature, as to hygiene, you cannot do so with impunity.' The class-books on 'Morality' go much further. One of these text-books, for example, contains such propositions as the following:—'The Church has always supported ignorance and slavery. The Church has destroyed science. Christian morality is a morality which oppresses. The rights of man are superior to his duties. The civilisation of paganism was more elevated than that of Christianity. Freemasonry is a philanthropic institution. The Church has always been, and still is, the enemy of all progress and civilisation.' A further specimen of the kind of 'neutrality' practised under the present régime is furnished by the following passage:—'Since it is not possible to know what comes after death, men have tried to guess it, and an infinity of superstitious opinions have been broached on the subject. Some have said that after death everything is over; others have believed that after death men return to God, a being eternal, infinite, good, just. They believe that God judges men and rewards or punishes them, and therefore they affirm that men should honor God and pray to Him, and in this way certain ceremonies have been devised for the purpose of rendering honor to God. Thus men have come to form a variety of religions. Religions are many—their number depends on the manner in which everybody imagines his God. All these religions speak of God and of what is to happen after death. Therefore they speak of what nobody knows anything. Hence we have the right to select for ourselves among all these religions the one that pleases us best. If none of them pleases us, we have the right to remain without any of them.' These

Manuals reek with misrepresentations, lies, blasphemy, and irreligion of this sort.

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The Doumergue Bills have not yet been actually before the French Parliament, but in the last week in January, during the general discussion of the Budget for Public Instruction, advantage was taken of the opportunity to ventilate the whole question of the lay schools in the Chamber. After a full-dress debate extending over ten parliamentary days, and marked by several powerful addresses on the Christian and Catholic side, the Government, by their huge mechanical majority, succeeded in carrying the following resolution:—'The Chamber, confident that the Government will defend the lay school and its teachers against all adversaries, and determined before separating to discuss the Bills for the defence of the lay school, and rejecting all additions, passes to the order of the day.' The first part of this resolution, expressive of confidence in the Government, was passed by 395 votes against 95; the second by 421 votes against 147; and the resolution as a whole was carried by 385 votes against 137. In the meantime Cardinal Luçon, Archbishop of Rheims, is being prosecuted for the publication of the Joint Pastoral by the State School Teachers' League—a body which has always worked hand and glove with the atheistic Government authorities, and which professes to regard the Pastoral as an 'attack' and a 'libel.' To sum up: The Chamber has expressed confidence in the Government, and proclaimed its determination to give effect to the Doumergue Bills 'for the defence of the lay school,' thus throwing their sanction over the blasphemous and immoral text-books; the Bishops are being prosecuted for so much as daring to criticise the administration of these schools; and, in addition, the Minister for Public Instruction has threatened to bring down a third Bill, in accordance with which, to quote his own words as used in the debate, 'they would take the offensive and carry the war into the enemy's camp by insisting on obtaining power to inspect the *écoles libres* (free schools), over the curriculum of which Rome presided.'

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Such is the position which the Catholic Church in France is called upon to face. To all appearance she is facing it in the only spirit in which it can be faced—the spirit of 'No surrender.' 'There will be no truce,' said Cardinal Luçon, 'in the battle for the schools.' 'Your obligation to teach,' said M. Pion, a Catholic deputy, in the debate above referred to, 'has become the imposition of free-thought. We will not have it; what we desire is peace through liberty or war to the end.' The next general election in France takes place in May. If French Catholics can only agree to sink their petty political differences of opinion, to work together for their civil and religious liberties, and to vote only for such candidates as are prepared to defend these liberties before the nation, M. Briand may come back a sadder and a wiser man. Like a far greater man, Bismarck, he will probably find that he has under-rated the resisting power of a Church which, after more than 1800 years of life, still carries upon her brow the symbol of everlasting youth, and still bears within her an unconquerable strength whose sources are Divine.

Notes

Newman on St. Patrick

'The glorious St. Patrick,' says Cardinal Newman, 'did a work so great that he could not have a successor in it, the sanctity and learning and zeal and charity which followed on his death being but the result of the one impulse which he gave.' Truly a comprehensive and striking eulogy.

The Three C's

Father Bernard Vaughan, at a meeting in London of the 'Guild of Costers and Working Men,' of which he is president, laid emphasis on the duty of going to the poll and voting for the right man. In the election, he said, the right man would be the man who would go straight when the education question came to the front. The three R's were all very well in their right place, but they should

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