

# The Catholic World

## BELGIUM—Missionaries in the Congo

The missionaries of the Belgian Congo, in a letter which has been made public, state that 325 missionaries and 130 Sisters are devoting themselves to the work in the Congo, where, at present, there are 35,270 Christians and 74,080 catechumens.

## CANADA—The Eucharistic Congress

The finance committee of the Montreal Eucharistic Congress, of which Sir Thomas Shaughnessy and Mr. Rodolphe Forget are joint chairmen, at a meeting in the Archbishop's palace appointed a sub-committee for subscriptions to defray the expenses of the Congress. About seventy leading Catholic laymen were present. It was agreed that one hundred thousand dollars would be the outside limit of the estimated expenses. Of this sum about two-thirds has already been subscribed. The Sulpicians have given 25,000 dollars, Lord Strathcona 5000 dollars, his Grace the Archbishop of Montreal 5000 dollars, the Congregation of Notre Dame 5000 dollars, and other direct contributions to his Grace amount to 25,000 dollars.

## A New Diocese

His Holiness Pius X. has ratified the decision of the Consistorial Congregation, which, on the recommendation of the Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of St. Boniface, Canada, has created a new diocese at Regina, and also an Apostolic Vicariate at Keewatin.

## ENGLAND—Invitation Accepted

The Archbishop of Westminster has accepted an invitation to attend the coming Eucharistic Congress in Montreal. His Grace will travel out in the same ship as Cardinal Vannutelli, who will again be Papal Legate at the ceremony.

## Catholic Successes

As a result of the L.C.C. election, London Catholics have secured three representatives on that body: Baron de Forest and the Hon. C. Russell gaining seats in the South of London, while Mr. Mathew secured election in St. George's in the East, in which division another Catholic candidate—Mr. J. W. Gilbert—was defeated.

## Westminster Cathedral

His Grace Archbishop Bourne has received a communication containing a promise of £1000 towards the extinction of the debt of £6000 on Westminster Cathedral, on condition that the remaining £5000 is provided by the end of April.

## FRANCE—Liquidation Scandals

In Paris early in March took place the arrest of M. Duez, the judicial liquidator who had charge, among other affairs, of the liquidation of several large religious associations. He is accused of misappropriating large sums (says the *Catholic Times*). M. Duez was brought before M. Albanel, the examining magistrate, and charged with grave embezzlement. M. Lemarquis, another judicial liquidator, has been entrusted provisionally with M. Duez's duties. M. Duez was succeeded in March, 1909, by two other liquidators for the winding up of several religious congregations, but he still held the post of judicial liquidator to the Seine Court. He had asked for several delays in presenting his accounts. The *Temps* declares that the common law liquidations laid before M. Lemarquis on Monday night showed a deficit of £50,000, and that in the matter of the religious congregations, which M. Lemarquis had not yet had time to examine, M. Duez had admitted a deficit of £200,000. An order of the court replacing M. Duez in his post as liquidator of religious congregations was preceded by a letter from M. Duez asking to be relieved of his duties owing to ill-health. M. Duez was asked for explanations, and he declared that within twenty-four hours he would produce the money he was charged with embezzling. He did not keep his promise, and was subsequently arrested. It is now conclusively proved that M. Duez's deficit amounts to five million francs. He attributes his defalcations to unlucky speculations on the Bourse.

## Anti-Catholic Tactics

It might be imagined (remarks the *Catholic Times*) that having succeeded in imposing a fine on Cardinal Luçon for having signed the joint Pastoral Letter against the 'neutral' schools, the supporters of the French Government would not fear a discussion in the Chamber on the education question. The Paris correspondents of the daily papers, however, inform us that it is a subject which they are anxious, at almost any cost, to avoid. When the House, having passed the Budget, decided to devote two days to the discussion of the school laws, many members of the Ministerialist party indulged in violent protests. Scuffles took place on the floor of the Chamber, and one member broke his desk to use the pieces as drum-sticks. Cardinal Luçon has addressed to the French public a

message to the effect that neither penalties nor trials will deter the bishops from the discharge of their duty; for they feel they must obey God rather than man. It is pretty apparent that his Eminence, who, had he consented, would have received ten times the amount of the fine from generous fellow-countrymen, has inspired his opponents with fear by his indomitable spirit. The Catholics of France will, it is to be hoped, not only defend their prelates with vigor, but will also during the approaching elections carry the war into the enemies' camp.

## Secularising the Churches

The destruction of the parish church at Grisy-Suisnes, in the Brie district of the Department of Seine-et-Marne, France, through the action of the municipality, elicited from M. Maurice Barrès a few months ago a public protest in the form of an open letter to the Premier, by means of which attention was called to the danger that in many parts of the country Catholic congregations may be deprived of places of worship and churches may be demolished by municipal bodies hostile to Christianity. M. Barrès, at the same time, gave notice of an interpellation on the subject in the Chamber (says the *Catholic Times*). As the interpellation cannot come up during the present legislative period M. Briand has sent M. Barrès a long communication in reply to his letter. The elections being close at hand, M. Briand uses soft words. The churches, he argues, are in no danger, because now, as under the Concordat, they cannot be secularised unless public worship has ceased to be celebrated in them for a period of at least six months. Yes, but the uncertainty of the congregations as to whether they shall be permitted to retain possession of the churches effectually checks the flow of subscriptions for the purposes of repair. Fabrics are accordingly falling gradually into decay, to the delight of secularising municipalities, who in this fact discover their opportunity. Despite M. Briand's plausible phrases, there is good reason to suspect that their sentiment is shared by the Government.

## ITALY—Centenary of the Late Pope's Birth

Though the centenary of Pope Leo XIII. was observed on March 2 in Milan and Rome, the celebrations were naturally more enthusiastic in Carpineto, the family seat of the Peccis, for Italians never forget an illustrious fellow-townsmen. For an hour the bells of Carpineto rang out, prior to the assembling of the people in the largest church to listen to an account of the childhood of Leo XIII. Beneath the statue erected to that Pontiff the members of the Pecci family were seated. So moved were the audience by the discourse on the Pope that they finally found it too difficult to restrain applause, with the result that the entire body rose to their feet with the cry of 'Viva Leone XIII!' at the conclusion of the lecture. In the evening the people marched in processional order through the town, which was brilliantly illuminated and decorated with banners, carrying torches, amid the strains of music and scenes of intense enthusiasm. In addition to the telegrams received from several Cardinals, bishops, and other notabilities throughout Italy, a message came from the Holy Father, through the medium of Cardinal Merry del Val. It ran as follows: 'The Holy Father, pleased with the filial gratitude shown to-day by the people of Carpineto to their illustrious fellow-citizen and munificent benefactor, Leo XIII., cordially blesses them and the clergy who in the occasion will find a new reason for devotion to the Vicar of Christ.'

## ROME—The Sultan and the Secretary of State

His Majesty the Sultan of Turkey has conferred upon the Papal Secretary of State the Grand Cross of the Imperial Order of Osman. On several occasions Mahomet V. has been heard to express admiration for the business capacity and diplomatic skill of Cardinal Merry del Val.

## Sicily's Verdict on Vatican Work

Much has been said and written on the work done by the Holy Father for the benefit of the orphans and survivors of the Calabrian and Sicilian earthquake of 1908 that made two cities things of the past, but it is to Sicily itself many have looked for an adequate idea of what Pius X. has done for that region and its people (says the Rome correspondent of the *Catholic Times*). The *Giornale di Sicilia* gives us the verdict of the southern journals and people. Speaking of the aid afforded by the Vatican in the first hour of trial, the Sicilian paper says: 'Perhaps never has a work been done with such rapidity and so unceasingly, and never has succor been given in such silence. While at Rome Government, municipal, and private committees contended in miserable fussiness about the survivors and wounded; while the means of help were being discussed, arguments raised, and plans confused, the Vatican hospices noiselessly opened their gates. We saw this with our own eyes, just as others have seen arise in Sicily and Calabria, as if by magic, numberless refugees for the wounded, the orphans and religious persons charged with their care. And all was done without clamor. Thanks to the order and silence observed, the work of succor performed by the Vatican has been executed with such celerity and efficacy.' In reference to the action of the Pope in publishing a balance sheet, the Palermo journal goes on to say that nobody ever expected his Holiness to go to such trouble, but as the step has been taken, the example might be opportunely followed in other quarters.