

lation Spain has fewer religious than Belgium, France, England, Germany, or Ireland. As a matter of fact, in proportion to its Catholic population, even New Zealand has more than twice as many members of religious Orders as Spain has. The Catholic population of Spain may be taken in round numbers as 20,000,000, and in the latest volume of the *Statesman's Year-Book* the number of religious Orders is stated at about 3253, and the total number of the members of these Orders is given as 50,670. In New Zealand the Catholic population is about 140,000, and the number of members of religious Orders is a little over 900. If our able editors will take these figures, and do a little arithmetic, they will find that in proportion to its Catholic population New Zealand has, as we have said, more than twice as many members of religious Orders as Spain—the proportions being, roughly, New Zealand, 1 to every 160 of the Catholic population; Spain, 1 to every 400 of Catholic population. Nor can any great weight be attached to the so-called 'economic argument' advanced by the *Church Star*—which paper, we are glad to note, has adopted a much more reasonable and moderate tone since being brought to book by a Catholic correspondent—seeing that, according to the authority already mentioned, of the Orders for men one half are engaged in the work of teaching, and of the Orders for women two-thirds are devoted to teaching and to the management of hospitals and charitable institutions. Equally untenable is the contention that it is the maintenance of the religious Orders which is 'keeping the country poor.' As a matter of fact, the country is not poor, the soundness of its financial condition being evidenced by the fact that for several years past it has shown nearly as substantial, and certainly as genuine, an annual surplus as our own New Zealand. According to the *Year-Book* already quoted, the amount expended annually to support the whole of the clergy, buildings, etc., of the Church is a little over £1,500,000. This works out at the modest sum of 1s 6d per head of the population per year. In view of the fact that, as we have already stated, the religious Orders are the teachers of the country and the managers of its hospitals, etc., the greater part of this annual expenditure represents simple payment for work done.

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According to the best Catholic Continental authorities, the true causes of the present agitation are the growing and now almost dominant influence of French ideas amongst a certain section of the politicians, and the present Premier's strong animus and bitter personal hostility to the Church. Regarding the former, a writer in the *Historisch-Politische Blätter* (April, 1910), in a careful analysis of the present condition of Spain, brings out some facts that will explain much to the thoughtful Catholic. According to this writer, Spain's development, political as well as economic, is looked at by all Europe through the eyes of Masonic and Republican France. France is in the closest connection with Spain, whose foreign debt is mainly floated in Paris. Parts of Southern France belong to the hinterland of Spanish Barcelona, while the whole middle of Northern Spain, as far as Madrid, exports its merchandise by the Biscayan ports of France. The railroads now building across the Pyrenees will further facilitate French investments in Spain. 'The outcropping relation goes a long way to strengthen the hold of atheistic and radical ideas on the Spanish peninsula. French interests demand an industrial development of the invaded country, while they tend to denationalise and dechristianise it.'

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That the present anti-clerical outbreak is part of an organised atheistic and Masonic campaign against the Church, we have the weighty testimony of the whole of the French episcopate. His Eminence Cardinal Aguirre, Primate of Spain, in the name of the entire Spanish hierarchy, some time since addressed a letter to his Eminence Cardinal Luçon, Archbishop of Rheims, and to the Bishops of France, encouraging them to continue their brave stand in defence of the Church. In replying to this message the French Bishops took occasion to warn the Bishops south of the Pyrenees that the French hierarchy is but bearing the first attack of a religious war planned to invade Spain and other nations strong in Catholic faith. 'It is no political battle we are sustaining in France; it is a religious war which is being waged against us, not by means of bloody violence as in the revolution at the end of the eighteenth century, but it is war carried on with violence concealed under a false legality. Back of it all, what is sought is the annihilation of the Church, of religion, and of God Himself.' As to Sr. Canalejas, he showed his anti-clerical spirit in a very marked way in the crisis of 1906 by resigning from the Ministry rather than acquiesce in an arrangement with the Holy See; and in spite of his suave professions of respect for the Vatican, Catholic authorities on Spain unite in describing him as a violent exponent of Waldeck-Rousseau legislation. That the advanced French anti-Catholic legislation is his model and ideal has been admitted by Canalejas himself. In a recent interview, re-

ferring to his anti-clerical policy, as published in France by *L'Humanité*, the President of the Ministry stated that the report in *L'Humanité* of his plan to introduce the French anti-clerical programme into Spain was correct, but that the plan must be taken as his 'ideal' and not as his 'immediate policy,' for, he added, 'to introduce the ideal policy into Spain would require fifty years of government.'

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There are three grounds for anticipating that the present attack on the Church—bitter and determined though it is—in the end be successfully resisted. (1) Within recent years the Church has passed through two precisely similar crises, and in each case emerged victorious. The first occurred in 1901, when the Minister of the Interior, Señor Gonzalez, on the plea of giving effect to public opinion, signed a decree ordering all the religious associations which had not been formally approved by the Government, within six months, to apply for Government authorisation, and to furnish all information required by the law of 1887. The Holy See protested; the Bishops at once took action; the country was aroused; and Gonzalez was obliged to resign. A still more serious blow at the rights and liberties of the Church was struck on October 25, 1906, when a new Associations Bill—which would practically have had the effect of completely suppressing the Religious Orders—was presented and read in the House of Deputies. Señor Maura, leader of the Conservatives, in an important speech in the Cortes on November 9, made it abundantly clear that the measure ran counter to the feelings of the whole country; and once again the Liberals were obliged to relinquish office. (2) A formidable obstacle to the machinations of the anti-clericals is the unwavering loyalty and devotion of the great mass of the people to the Catholic faith, and their unalterable attachment to the Holy See. The immense meetings which have been held throughout Spain during the present year to protest against the re-opening of the atheistic lay schools have drawn Catholics closer together, and have taught them practical methods of union and organisation. 'For a guarantee of future Catholic action in Spain,' says one writing on the spot, 'one could not ask for a more encouraging sign than the universality and enthusiasm of the present Catholic movement against the lay schools.' Already, as we learn from the cables, elaborate demonstrations against the Government have been organised, and although, out of regard to considerations of law and order, these appear to have been abandoned, the dimensions and spontaneity of the movement furnish significant evidence of the feeling of the country, and indicate that there is ample material for a successful Catholic resistance. (3) A third ground for hope in the present unsettled state of things is the fact that the King himself is a Catholic, not in principle only, but also in practice. It would of course be a great mistake to suppose that because he is sometimes called upon to sign repressive decrees, that he is therefore in favor of such measures. King Alfonso has intervened before now—as in the case of the sudden downfall of Señor Moret—when the cherished traditions of his Catholic realm were at stake; and it is quite within the bounds of possibility that he should step to the front again should a suitable opportunity present itself. Assuredly there is a stern battle ahead for the Church; but if the experience of the past affords any clue to the future, the odds are that, though the forces of repression and irreligion may triumph for a time, they are not likely to achieve any measure of permanent success.

Notes

Rival Attractions

Our contemporary the San Francisco *Monitor* mentions that in a California daily paper besides the old notice 'Births, Marriages, and Deaths,' there now appears the added heading 'Divorces.' The whole thing is coming to be looked upon as quite a matter of course. Under the heading 'Rival Attractions,' the following story appeared in the jokers' column of an American paper the other day: 'First Child—"We've got a new baby at our house." Second Child (contemptuously)—"We've got a new pa at ours."'

Something Like

The other day, in a North Island district, half a dozen Catholic young fellows tired of seeing so many tirades against their Church in the columns of the local papers banded themselves together for the purpose of replying to such attacks. Already one bigoted journal has had such a warm time of it that it was glad to close down the controversy which it had itself originated; and in the columns of another paper, a rash Rationalist who had uttered some rhodomontade about the Accession Oath received such a

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