

The Catholic World

AUSTRIA—Resignation of the Nuncio

Monsignor Granito di Belmonte, Nuncio in Vienna, wrote to the Pope some weeks ago asking permission to resign his post. His Holiness has consented, at the same time assuring Monsignor Belmonte of his appreciation of the services rendered by him to the Holy See as Nuncio during the past seven years.

PORTUGAL—Internal Dissensions

The Lisbon correspondent of the *Temps*, in a letter to that journal, says: 'What is occurring at the present moment in Portugal is incomprehensible, for while the provisional Government declares that everything is quiet and all revolutionary danger is at an end, it has just promulgated a decree against insurrectionary movements more rigorous in character than that signed by the dictator, Senhor Franco, in 1908.'

Treatment of Irish Nuns

A few weeks ago the Dublin Corporation passed a resolution condemning the Portuguese Revolutionary Government for the treatment they had meted out to Irish nuns resident in Portugal. A copy of the resolution was forwarded to Sir E. Grey, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who, in his reply, seemed to indicate that every consideration had been shown to the Sisters. During the last week in December the Superioress of the Siena Convent, Drogheda, sent to Alderman McWalter, who proposed the resolution, the following letter. It is an interesting sidelight, both on the justice of the Revolutionaries and also on the letter of Sir Edward Grey:—'In reply to yours of the 26th inst., requesting some particulars concerning the Irish refugee nuns from Portugal, I beg to state as follows: There are now five of these nuns in Ireland, three here in our convent, one in the Mercy Convent of Newry, and one in the Dominican Convent of Galway. Two of the Sisters here (Sister M. Dominic Murphy and Sister M. Catharine Clayton) belonged to the Dominican Convent of Benefica, Lisbon. On the 10th of last October they were compelled, with the other nuns then in the convent, to go, under the escort of naval officers and men to the Naval Arsenal, to remain there until released. They were guarded there, and not allowed to leave until the British Consul interfered in their behalf. They were placed in a large hall or shed, with about 200 other nuns from the different other convents of the city. There were a few benches and tables and about forty mattresses (not at all clean). This was the only accommodation provided for the 200 Sisters. Most of them had to sit on the floor, and, of course, did not sleep at all. The fare consisted of black coffee, without milk or sugar, handed round in tins, and hard sailors' biscuits. For dinner, some very indifferent soup, described as "greasy water." The Irish and other foreigners were ordered to leave the country at once, but the Portuguese Government refused to pay their travelling expenses. This was most kindly done for them by the British Consul, Mr. Somers Cox, of whose courtesy and kindness they cannot say too much. The convent and all its possessions were seized by the Government, so that all the Sisters were left quite penniless. The other three Irish Sisters were expelled from the convent of Aveiro, in the North of Portugal, some time later. They were compelled to leave, but were treated respectfully. However, their passage money was also paid by the English Consul at Oporto. They were also sent home almost penniless. I suppose it would be impossible to recover for these Sisters any money which they brought to their congregation. The property is now in the hands of the Government.'

ROME—The Closing of the Year

One of the most inspiring scenes that are to be witnessed in Rome during the Christmas season is that of the crowds of Romans that throng the churches in which the 'Te Deum' for the blessings of the past year is sung on the evening of December 31 (writes a Rome correspondent). For the grand anthem is not left exclusively to the sanctuary and choir of professionals; the congregation knows the 'Te Deum' by heart, and thus it can chant every alternate verse. In the Church of the Gesù, which is served by the Company of Jesus, many thousands gathered on Christmas Eve to join in the hymn of thanksgiving. As on the same day, the Feast of St. Sylvester, Pope, was observed at San Silvestro in Capite, High Mass, celebrated by Right Rev. Mgr. O'Riordan, Rector of the Irish College, was attended by great numbers of foreigners and Italians. To the usual banquet held in honor of the Saint a large party of ecclesiastics and laymen, chief among whom were Cardinal Vincent Vannutelli and the Archbishop of Westminster, were invited by the Rector. At Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, imparted by his Eminence, the 'Te Deum' was sung by the choir and congregation.

Municipal Muddling

Our Communal Administration, with Nathan at its head, the Mayor who has received world-wide notoriety since his bitter attacks on the Catholic religion in his speech of September 20, has had at last to confess failure (says the Rome correspondent of the *Catholic Times*). The words of the Mayor speak for themselves: 'We cannot pro-

ceed any further; it is useless to deny it. But the State must decide, because if it does not give us within two months the millions which we want, we shall go away and leave the Campidoglio open.' The bitter truth has come out at last. Couldn't he have withheld such an announcement at least until after the celebration of the so-called glorious event that made Rome the capital of united Italy? Such was the reasoning of his many friends. It was not opportune at present for the Communal Administration of the city to come to blows with the Government, just at a time when all concentrated energy was necessary for the success of the exhibition that will open its portals within a few short months. However, the dictatorial power of the Mayor must have its way in spite of the protestations of some of his friends. What will the people think? Well, the people have thought long before this. They have seen for themselves, and their thoughts have naturally been in accordance with that which they saw. The promises of the Mayor and his supporters have been unfulfilled. The prices of provisions have increased enormously, and also the rents. In the latter respect the Mayor himself was one of the first to set the example. The people have realised long ago that it is so easy for Republicans and Socialists to make promises and so difficult to realise them. The very newspapers themselves, which have for the last thirty-six months supported through thick and thin the exponents of their ideas in Campidoglio, have at last, even they, confessed failure. Signor Nathan wants money, but declaims at length against any Governmental inquisition which insists on an account as to how the money is to be spent. His old domineering spirit is breaking out again—that spirit which moved him to write that unjustifiable attack upon the Mayor of Montreal.

SPAIN—The Eucharistic Congress

The Cardinal-Archbishop of Toledo, Primate of Spain, has addressed to the members of the Spanish episcopate a letter in which he suggests that they should do what lies in their power to prove that the Catholics of Spain are worthy of the honor of having the next Eucharistic Congress at Madrid. 'It is,' he says, 'a great honor for our country, and we should show our appreciation by proving that it is not in vain it has been paid to us.' His Eminence adds that the King and Queen will actively support the holy undertaking, and that the Prime Minister has also promised his aid and co-operation. An excellent occasion, observes the Cardinal, presents itself to the Catholics of Spain for uniting before the Blessed Sacrament and putting aside every cause of discord.

GENERAL

The Generosity of the Poor

The Archbishop of Boston is generally conceded to be a wise and learned man, yet, speaking the other day at a benefit given in aid of the St. Mary Infant Asylum of Dorchester, his Grace openly admitted that there was one problem he could not solve, one question he could not answer, although dealing with a very common-place occurrence. This mystery that puzzles the Archbishop is the niggardliness of the rich and the charity of the poor. 'Why is it,' he asked, 'and how is it, that the poor, the really poor, are constantly giving to others, and yet never miss it once, and the rich, the really rich, give so little and miss it all the time? Why is it that generally only the poor Catholics, the men and women, who have just enough to get along, give so generously, and our rich Catholics have not, as a rule, measured up with the generosity of the poor Catholics? These institutions thus far have been supported by the generous alms-giving of our poor people.'

The Materialistic Spirit

The *Catholic Herald of India* quotes the following from a secular paper, the *Indian Mirror*, which was led to make these reflections on reading the protest addressed to the Portuguese people by the Very Rev. Father Cabral, S.J., Provincial of the Portuguese Jesuits, on behalf of his expelled brethren:—Many a time in these columns have we deplored the growth of the materialistic spirit among Western nations, and given expression to our humble conviction that nothing short of a cataclysm will overwhelm Christendom unless it overcomes the forces which are blinding its spiritual perception. Instance after instance of the blighting effect of materialism is flashed from the pages of contemporary history. The most sorrowful spectacle at this moment is the cruel persecution of the religious in Portugal. Anyone who knows anything about the religious Orders of the Church of Rome need not be told how much they have benefited the human race by their saintly living and by their unremitting labors in every field of humanitarian service. Here, in Bengal, we have the great religious Order of the Society of Jesus, who are held in the veneration of all classes of the population. Verily, the true heroes of the human race are these sons and daughters of God, who, by daily self-conquest and by uncomplaining, hidden self-sacrifice, stand as beacon-lights across the ocean of humanity. They are worthy of the special veneration of the Hindus, because they are so much akin to their own sages of ancient times.

Those who have not tried Amber Tip-Teas should not fail to do so immediately, as they are reputed to give general satisfaction....