

electors'); in other words, the complete abstention of Catholics from political life, as a protest against the invasion of Rome by the Piedmontese. This position of '*Non Expedit*' was maintained by Leo XIII., and renewed by the present Holy Father, who, however, in his encyclical letter '*Il fermo proposito*' addressed to the bishops of Italy in June, 1905, conceded that grave reasons of the sovereign good of society might call for an exception, which would be made when the bishops, seeing such need for the salvation of souls and the protection of the property of the churches in their respective dioceses, should ask a dispensation from the general rule. The concession, so far as it has been taken advantage of at all, has been used rather for the purpose of keeping out Anti-clerical candidates than for securing the return of Catholic members; and in a Chamber of 508 members there are less than a score of Catholic Deputies. For all practical purposes it may be said that the principle laid down for Catholics that they should neither vote nor offer themselves as candidates has been universally observed.

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The Suffrage Bill introduced by the Liberal Premier (Signor Giolitti), however, has created an entirely new situation. It not only raises the number of Parliamentary voters from about three millions and a-half to eight millions and a-half, but it abolishes the proviso as to a knowledge of reading and writing, which was formerly attached to the franchise, and puts the power of legislation almost completely into the hands of the proletariat. It is in the country districts of Italy that the increase of voters will be most marked; and as the influence of the Church is undoubtedly greater in such districts than in the cities, the effect of the enlarged franchise will certainly be a large increase in the Catholic vote. The Bill is, however, at least as favorable to the extreme Socialists, who are numerous, active, and well organised. The question is whether, in view of the evils which threaten from the Socialist quarter, the provisions of the '*Non Expedit*' will be modified or withdrawn, and Catholics generally be allowed to vote. On this point, of course, no opinion of value can be formed at this distance; and we can only present the views of authorities nearer home. The Rome correspondent of the London *Tablet* will go no further than to suggest that there may be an increase in the number of Catholic Deputies, while declaring that there is no reason to believe that a 'Catholic Party,' properly so called, will be either encouraged or recognised. A well-informed Rome correspondent of *America* affirms that 'the Catholic organisations are deliberating over a wider and more systematic use of the ballot, while still refraining from candidacy for membership in Parliament': and opines that 'the ethical position of Catholic voters within the limits of the former pontifical states would seem to be to make use for their own protection, under the *de facto* government, of the civil rights allowed them, while awaiting the juridical settlement of the independency of the Holy See.' Finally, no less an authority than Dom Oswald Hunter Blair, O.S.B., declares that 'it is anticipated in well-informed quarters that, without the formal annulment of the "*Non Expedit*," it may, as a matter of fact cease to be generally enforced, and that the franchise will be exercised as a matter of course, except under special circumstances, by Catholics as by others.' The development of the present situation will certainly be awaited with no little interest.

Mr. Jellicoe's Jeremiad

In our criticism of Socialism, as in our attitude on any other question, it is the duty of the Catholic journalist to be scrupulously fair, and to take every care possible, in any specific condemnation of the system, to make sure that we are on absolutely solid ground. In this connection we have to issue a word of warning to some of our American contemporaries who are taking in all seriousness Mr. E. G. Jellicoe's recently published jeremiad against New Zealand 'Socialism,' and who are being gravely misled in consequence. Thus our esteemed Canadian contemporary the *North West Review*, in its issue of April 20, prints lengthy extracts from Mr. Jellicoe's outburst under the headings 'A Severe

Arraignment of Socialist Doctrine,' 'Some Results Which Have Been Obtained Where the Teaching Is Put Into Practice,' 'A Former Follower of The Cult Emphasises His Great Disappointment and Returns to His Former Convictions,' and so on, the impression being conveyed that legislative Socialism reigns in New Zealand, and that its reign has been disastrous. Both of these notions are entirely erroneous. What the future holds in store for us, of course, we do not know; but we have not now, nor have we ever had, Socialism in operation in New Zealand. The official Socialist Party in the Dominion is numerically weak, and—for the present—politically insignificant. We have never had a Socialist Party in our House of Representatives. It is true that the Labor Party—which is distinct from the official Socialist Party—is becoming more and more permeated with Socialistic ideas, and is introducing into its objective, more or less definitely, the ideal of economic Socialism; but in a House of 74 members we have only four such Labor representatives, and prior to the last election we had only one.

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Nor can it be said that Socialism—in any accurate sense of the term—is embodied in our legislation. Our Industrial Arbitration and Conciliation Acts are not Socialism, but rather operate as a preventive to Socialism, in that they tend to give steadiness and stability to industrial and economic conditions. So fully is this now realised that the militant Socialist Party in New Zealand have officially declared that they are out against our arbitration system. Our Shops and Shop Assistants Act, which provides for early closing of shops and for a weekly half-holiday for shop employees is not Socialism, but a purely Christian attempt to give workers a reasonable amount of leisure for rest, recreation, and self-improvement; and it has operated so beneficially that neither employers nor employed would now listen to any suggestion for its repeal. Our State ownership of railways is not Socialism, having been adopted long ago not on any Socialistic theory but on the broad principle that public utilities which by their very nature partake of the character of monopolies are, on the whole, better managed by the State than by an individual or a company, and that it is better that natural monopolies of the sort should be placed in the hands of the people than in the hands of trusts and combines. Our Advances to Settlers system, which has been such a boon to the small farmer in providing him with cheap money and in lowering the rate of interest, is certainly not Socialism, since it presupposes and is based upon the settler's rights of ownership in the land—the very theory which Socialism is out to destroy. And so we might go on, through the whole list of our humanitarian legislation. Our Factory Acts, our Old Age Pensions, our Workmen's Compensation for Accidents Acts, our Land for Settlement Acts, giving the would-be settler such reasonable facilities for obtaining land, on either leasehold or freehold tenure, as human legislation is capable of—all of these might have been taken, as to their essence, and some of them almost in their very terms, from Leo XIII.'s great Encyclical on Labor. As we have said, Socialism is making considerable headway in the ranks of the Labor Party and of the trade unions, and if it should become the dominant factor in our politics there is trouble ahead of New Zealand as of other countries; but in the meantime, and so far, New Zealand stands not for Socialism, properly so called, but merely for an advanced democracy. New Zealand legislation does, indeed, tell against Socialism, but on different grounds from those imagined by our esteemed contemporary. It tells against Socialism because it furnishes a remarkable object-lesson of the extent to which valuable and important social reforms can be effected without in the least acknowledging or adopting the collectivist principle. As to Mr. Jellicoe, he is known here as a man of undoubted ability, but also as hot-headed, impulsive, excitable, and partisan. Not even the most Conservative of our newspapers took his weird utterance seriously.

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