

THE FIGHT FOR THE FAITH IN FRANCE

The Association for the Defence of Primary Catholic Schools in France has a brilliant record to show for its nine years of existence: 7600 schools have been aided, 10,000 teachers of both sexes have got appointments, and members of disbanded communities have been provided with a means of livelihood.

This is but one of numerous manifestations of practical belief among French Catholics since the nefariously planned separation of Church and State. The Archaeological Society for the care of historical monuments will, through the intermediary of the deputy, Maurice Barres, call on the Government to regulate the question of the confiscated churches by providing for their preservation; and whatever the answer to this natural demand, the question will be treated at length in the French Chamber.

A new organisation for the promotion of Christian education and instruction, which has branches in every diocese of the land, held its general assembly recently under the presidency of Cardinal Amette. The report shows that one-third of the schools tyrannically closed by the Government have been re-opened through the activity of the society. Such a splendid record of faith and sacrifice is the best refutation of the pessimistic legend that religion is dying out in France. Upwards of a million sterling has been voluntarily contributed in ten years by the French laity desirous of safeguarding their children's heritage of faith and patriotism. The movement was indispensable to the development in the desired direction of souls exposed to the deteriorating influence of atheism and materialism.

The promised neutrality of public schools in matters of morals and creed has proved illusory. The children of Christian parents are daily exposed to the loss of all that has made France great and good in past ages. The Bishops are so convinced of the danger that they are prepared to sacrifice their churches, rather than the schools, now inaugurated and flourishing, for the preservation of the right atmosphere.

Fresh struggles and temptations, however, await the student when he leaves the primary schools, and Freemasonry is busy drafting new projects of law in order to regain, through the intermediate colleges, what has been lost through the Catholicity of the primary schools. Redoubled efforts are therefore necessary to combat new evils, and the Catholics of France are arming to the task with a vigor and determination that may well serve as an example to the rest of the Christian world.

BRITISH CATHOLICS AT LOURDES

There was a remarkable scene at Victoria Station, London, on May 30, when 850 Catholics left London on the national pilgrimage to Lourdes, which was undertaken under the personal direction of Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster.

The pilgrims, the vast majority of whom were ladies, came from all parts of the United Kingdom, and a large percentage were visiting the famous shrine in the hope that their physical infirmities may be cured. To accommodate this large party two special trains were run to Folkestone, with an extra number of luggage vans for the use of the invalids. These suffered from almost every kind of disease which is commonly regarded as incurable. There were 36 stretcher cases, while about 200 were suffering from some more or less serious ailments. One little lad, who has never known what it is to stand upright, was brought to the station from the Catholic Hospital of St. John and St. Elizabeth at St. John's Wood on a stretcher under the care of two nurses. There was also a lady who is without the use of her feet, and she was carried through the streets from her home in Belgravia by two luggage porters, and an elderly man, who was blind, was led to the train by a priest.

One well-dressed gentleman arrived on the platform in a bath chair, which he propelled himself, and many brought crutches which they devoutly hoped they

would be able to do without on their return from the other side of the Channel.

A detachment of the Catholic Ambulance Brigade was in attendance at the station to assist in the removal of the invalids upon their chairs, but the corps did not travel with the pilgrims.

The first pilgrimage Mass was celebrated by his Eminence Cardinal Bourne at the Grotto on June 1. On Sunday Solemn High Mass was celebrated in the Rosary Chapel, with sermon by the Bishop of Clifton, after which the pilgrims proceeded in procession to the Grotto for the re-dedication of England to our Blessed Lady.

THE STATE OF PORTUGAL

'Awaiting the revolution' is the attitude ascribed to about 90 per cent. of the people of Portugal (writes the London correspondent of the *Melbourne Age*). There seems to be general agreement among foreigners who are studying the situation that the new republic is a failure. Many faults were attributed by the people to monarchical rule when they had it. Democratic rule has produced corruption, a tyrannous form of political 'bossism,' industrial stagnation, high taxation, a consequent increase in the cost of living, and bitter sectional antagonisms. Safety is assured neither to life nor property, although the country is to a large extent under military rule. We are told that during a trial at Oporto the judges and jury were armed with revolvers and escorted by a military detachment, that outrages are frequent in rural districts, and that Dr. Jose d'Almeda, one of the republican leaders, has received notice that he will be 'assassinated at the earliest opportunity' because he dared to criticise the actions of Affonso Costa, the reputed chief of the secret organisation known as the Carbonaria, which exercises a strong political influence and is said to have adopted terrorist methods. Costa, who is a lawyer by profession, is described as 'the most powerful man in Portugal,' though he holds no public office at present. The Government party, following a plan not uncommon in other democratic countries, has chosen as its Prime Minister a weak man, lacking both nerve and experience in statesmanship. Chafing under dictation and wearied by his rule as figure-head, Dr. Vasconcellos has twice or thrice offered to resign, but he has been persuaded to remain in his position, chiefly because no sufficiently pliant substitute can be found. A large proportion of the Portuguese people—an overwhelming majority, according to some reports—would welcome a restoration of the monarchy. Whether their desire will be realised within the next few months depends upon the extent to which disaffection has grown among the republican troops.

Nails that are brittle are the despair of many women, but if a little vaseline is used every night the trouble may be overcome. Or a very good paste to rub in at night after the hands are washed and the nails cleaned is composed of an ounce of white vaseline mixed with one dram of powdered Castile soap.

COUGHS AND COLDS

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