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France

Instead of destroying the Church in France, the Briand-Combes plan of persecution has strengthened the Faith in French Catholics and they are fast being welded into a solid phalanx just as the Catholic Journal predicted would happen.

Just read this ringing declaration made before the infidel court by the Cardinal Archbishop of Rheims on trial for sedition in that he persisted in warning his people against the godless schools and worse than godless textbooks introduced by the godless French government.

"We Bishops of God have to teach to the faithful the truths of faith and precepts of morality and to warn them against the perils to which they may be exposed. It was our imperative duty to speak. We could not abstain from pointing out the danger to our children incapable of defending themselves. Should we be the worthy heirs of the Bishops who made France if we remained spectators of the destruction of their work without opposing with all our strength those who flatter themselves they can destroy it? It was, therefore, our right we exercised. We hold that the right not from man, but from Jesus Christ, our God, who gave us the mission to teach all the peoples of the world. No one can deprive us of that right, and no human consideration will prevent us from fulfilling that duty."

Writing in the "Journal des Debats," M. Lods, a Lutheran and distinguished jurist, declares on the other hand, that the "Separation law" has weakened the empire of the Concordat, says the writer, "the representatives of Protestantism lived as one body, no matter what were their dogmatic tendencies. Since the separation and the formation of the associations of worship three different bodies have been formed—one comprises the Evangelicals, the other the Liberals and the third the members of the so-called Third Party."

M. Lods ends his article with reflections on the law "excited to weaken throughout France all religions." And the "Observateur Romano," reviewing the sad situation sketched by him concerning his Church, says: "Now Protestants are taking heed of the results. But Rome, illuminated by the light from on high, had foreseen all this even from the very start, and its stern attitude before the persecuting and spoiling Republic is daily becoming more just in the minds of men."

Social Centers

Whether as the result of absolute conviction upon the subject or from a desire to play shrewd practical politics, Mayor Edger-ton and his associates have acted wisely and are in accord with popular sentiment in cutting down the special appropriation for social centers and playgrounds while the Board of Education has flown in the face of popular sentiment in its decision to close all playgrounds for the present upon the plea that it cannot divert school funds to such a purpose.

for social centers and playgrounds while the Board of Education has flown in the face of popular sentiment in its decision to close all playgrounds for the present upon the plea that it cannot divert school funds to such a purpose.

We incline to the opinion that if any tax payer challenged the matter in the courts, it is quite possible that a decision would be rendered that the Board of Education had no right to use school grounds for playgrounds but the actual plea which the Board puts forth is that it really cannot afford these expenditures as "absurd." The City hands over now to the Board of Education nearly four times what the old Board used to receive and there are not four times as many children in the schools, and this year the City gives the Board 60 cents more per pupil than last year.

If there really were the demand for social centers that the coterie back of them declare, the Board could easily provide funds if it would but lop off useless attacks and reduce salaries of other favorites commensurate with the actual benefit they confer upon schools and pupils. But this will not do apparently.

No matter what the reason, the fact remains that social centers are to go unless their friends provide funds for their maintenance from private sources. This is as it should be. If they are so useful and necessary let them be furnished by private purse just as similar institutions are supported in every Catholic parish in Rochester.

First Asylum

There is an interesting but friendly controversy between "America," the Jesuit review and the "Western Watchman" of St. Louis. In September of last year, "America" claimed New York City as the seat of the first orphan asylum in the United States giving the date as 1869 when Sister Irene Fitzgibbon opened one of our episcopal charge that in the metropolis. In January, 1910, a Baltimorean makes claim to the distinction for New Orleans where the Sisters of Charity opened a foundling asylum in 1855 while the same Sisters started one in Baltimore in 1856. "America" claims these dates are not authentic.

Along comes Father Phelan in the "Western Watchman" with this claim: Both "America" and the Baltimorean are incorrect. The first institution for foundlings in the United States was founded in St. Louis by the great Peter Richard Kenrick, Archbishop, aided by John Mullanphy and his daughter, Anna H. Biddle, in 1853, when, in a rented house on the present site of the Guardian Angel's Home, at Eleventh and Marjorian streets, four Sisters of Charity headed by Sister Felicité Delone, as superioress, received on the opening day thirteen abandoned infants. Five years later, in 1858, the Sisters, with their charges, greatly increased in numbers, took possession of the asylum at Tenth and O'Fallon streets, where for nearly half a century they continued the great work which has now for its scene of action the magnificent building erected by the late and remarkable Sister Ann Frances.

New York may lead in "national prosperity," and Baltimore and New Orleans in stateliness and other prestige, but the "Watchman" claims for the city of the royal saint the sublime distinction of being the first in the land to gather into the arms of organized Catholic charity the helpless forms of a abandoned infancy.

In an article on the "Decadence of France" in the North American Review Mrs. Bellamy Storer says, "She (France) is indeed fallen; Nothing can lift her up again to her place among the great world

powers except a united effort to throw off the bondage of an odious tyranny.

Wise Decision

Bishop Hartley, of Columbus in his Lenten pastoral takes high ground against mixed marriages. In the course of the letter the Bishop says:

"In connection with this matter the Bishop wishes to state he is not disposed to grant a dispensation to a Catholic man to marry a non-Catholic woman. Under our present conditions there is no reason for seeking such a dispensation. In every parish there are always to be found (Catholic) young women who are worthy to be the wives of the best young men in the land, and our Catholic young men ought to try to prove themselves worthy of their affections, and make an effort to win a companion who is in every way suited to preside over a true Christian home.

"With regard to our Catholic young women who oftentimes think that no Catholic young man can be found to meet their ideal of a husband and so go in search for one outside of their own faith, the following regulation is to be observed in the future:

"Before making application for a dispensation in such a case it is required that the non-Catholic party will seek instructions from the parish priest for at least three months, so as to obtain a clear understanding of what the Church requires in permitting such a marriage, as well as to find out what a Catholic wife must do after contracting such a marriage. These instructions impose no obligation upon the man to become a Catholic, but they will make clear the Catholic teachings about marriage and family life, and if he is not prepared to accept or live up to these teachings it is better for the Catholic girl to find out before rather than after marriage."

Unheard Of

An exchange prints this suggestive paragraph which we commend to law-givers, pulpiters, muck-rakers, and business men in general:

On Nov. 30, in a little town in the County Rosecommon, Ireland known as Killumod, a merchant by name Matthew Carthy, was fined a "nominal sum" for a "crime" unknown in the annals of any other country. Mr. Carthy was found to be using a measure which was "a quarter of a gill too large." The presiding magistrate at last accounts was recovering from the shock of the result of the recital of the "crime." We wonder how many "criminals" of the Carthy stripe America could furnish. And it is for the prosecution of such "crimes" that the Irish people are taxed out of all reason.

Says the Catholic Citizen of Milwaukee: "Anything so universal as Death must always be a blessing". It is stated that the late Henry M. Flagler caused this sentence to be engraved over the gate-way of a cemetery. While nature has its pains and its cruelties, the general motive and tendency of nature is kind, curative and constructive. Christians and believers, of course, realize that the Fatherhood of God so determines; but even without the light of faith, the sentence which so appealed to Mr. Flagler has a convincing force.

It is surely very remarkable remarks Rev. Matthew Russell, S. J., in the "Irish Monthly," that on the very day, October 9, 1845, on which Father Dominic, the Passionist, received John Henry Newman into the Church Ernest Renan left St. Sulpice and practically left the Church. Compare the two after careers—which of them was under the guidance of the spirit of God?

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