

## GENERAL NEWS.

On one point only has the Liberal party been obliged to join with the Centre in opposing the Government—namely, the newspaper stamp tax. Even the 'Voikische Zeitung' declares that the Government has sustained a severe defeat on this point, and will not be able long to stand its ground. "A greater defeat," writes this journal, "Bismarck's Ministry has never yet sustained."

In Posen, the new year has been celebrated by the imprisonment of the Vicar of Loga, in the district of Traustadt, who has long been a victim of persecution and annoyance. He entered on his four months' captivity with the resignation of a true confessor, and his departure was solemnized by the tolling of the church bells, and the tears of the people. He will doubtless not have long to wait for companions in misfortune.

A final judicial seizure has been attempted on the Archbishop of Posen; it was impossible to discover anything in the stripped palace. The last fine inflicted upon him was of £300, bringing up the total to £3,300. The arrest of the venerable Prelate is considered to be imminent. It is expected he will be taken off to the prison of Frankfort-on-the-Maine, before he is tried by the ecclesiastical court at Berlin. On application of the tribunal of ecclesiastical affairs, Mgr. Ledochowski has been cited or the 14th January before the Court of Appeal at Posen, to undergo a first examination. His Grace has been since imprisoned.

The Italian Government has at last taken legislative measures to put an end to the odious traffic carried on by certain families in sending children abroad to be turned into ambulating musicians and beggars.

General Kanzler is quite embarrassed by the number of applicants for the honor of a place among the guards of the Vatican. They are all men of rank and wealth who apply, only too anxious to have the honor of lying down their lives in defence of Christendom. The day following the 20th September 1870, the Pope chose 100 men for his guard, and those men are all there still, except those killed two years ago, outside Porta Cavalleggeri, and they have been replaced.

The diocese of Philadelphia has collected and sent in to the Right Rev. Dr. Wood a large sum of money for the Sovereign Pontiff. A few days ago the Very Rev. Dr. Chatard, the worthy rector of the American College here in Rome, presented this sum, which reached the handsome figure of 25,000 dollars in gold, to the Sovereign Pontiff. The happy Christmas season is one of gifts, so the time of sending this offering to the Holy Father is very appropriate.

Mr Jonathan Pim, the member for Dublin is in Rome. The case of the Irish properties in Rome, which are threatened with confiscation, has engaged his attention.

The Pope replying, the other day, to addresses presented by the pupils of the German and North American Colleges at Rome, said, in his address to the Germans, that on returning to their country they would meet with a terrific persecution which would remind them of that under the Emperor Julian. They must therefore arm themselves with patience and strength to undergo the struggle, and imitate the glorious example of the clergy. Addressing the Americans his Holiness said: "In Germany, liberty is oppressed, but in your country it is complete and almost excessive or at least very dangerous. For you, therefore, the easy practice of the laws of Christ and complete victory over yourselves are virtues which are extremely necessary to aid you in vanquishing the temptations of bad example."

The Duchess of Aosta continues in a very precarious state of health. Her malady dates from the day of her departure from Madrid. Obligated to fly in all haste from the capital, and to brave, only a few days after her confinement, the cold of the month of January, she contracted the germ of consumption. The disease has now made such progress that a fatal termination is apprehended.

The Minister of Justice has introduced a Bill to render the ceremony of civil marriage obligatory before the celebration of the religious rite. The commission appointed to carry out the liquidation of the ecclesiastical property continue taking possession of various convents.

On Nov. 22 a large number of students were presented to the Pope. Amongst the youths presented to the Sovereign Pontiff were students of Propaganda from Australia, from Jutland, from Schwerin, from Smyrna, from Zante, from Santorin, and from the Cape of Good Hope—a regular cosmopolitan gathering which could only be produced by the Catholic Church. The Holy Father was surrounded by the Prelates of his Court, and had at his side His Eminence Cardinal Mertel. Addresses were presented to him by the American and German students, and these and their replies to them have attracted much attention.

Upon the 18th December his Holiness received in private audience Dr Lynch, Archbishop of Toronto in Canada, and the Irish Bishops now in Rome, namely, Dr Conroy, Bishop of Ardagh, Dr McDevitt, Bishop of Raphoe, and Dr McCormack, Coadjutor Bishop of Achonry. M. de Courcelles, the French Ambassador to the Holy See, has returned to Rome and has been admitted to audience by Pius IX.

There is a real Irish *souper* at Rome, Mrs Gould, who is earnestly at work endeavoring to draw the poor children of the city from Catholic faith by belly filling.

The Geneva Council of state have dismissed the Abbé Blanc from his office of prison chaplain in consequence of his "improper and persistent attacks upon the institutions of the country."

The Catholics of Switzerland have sent a protest to the Government against the expulsion from the country of the Papal Nuncio. Here is the oldest nunciature disappearing; ever since the 13th century there had been a Nuncio in Switzerland.

The Federal Council has decided to hand the Papal Nuncio his passports, in consequence of the Pope's last Encyclical letter.

On account of the disturbed state of Spain, the Archbishop of Valencia, Mgr. Mariano Barrio y Fernandez, who has been created Cardinal, has gone in person to Rome to receive the Hat. By order of M. Castelar, the Spanish Prime Minister, the finest apartments of the Spanish Embassy at Rome have been placed at the disposal of the Cardinal.

## HISTORY OF OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

By the Abbé J. E. DARRAS.

(Translated from the French for the 'New Zealand Tablet.')

## 25.—A SEDITION IN THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM DURING THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER.

THE multitude accepted, as the happy augury of a just reign, this discourse of Archelaus. Some among them demanded that he would ease them of their annual tributes; others desired the immediate release of the prisoners who languished in the dungeons of the deceased king; others required that he would abolish certain heavy taxes collected at the custom-houses. All these favors were granted. Archelaus stood in need of the public favor, as a weight in the balance which was to determine the imperial ratification. He bought, by the sacrifices made at Jerusalem—and for which he intended fully to indemnify himself hereafter—the all-powerful suffrage of Rome. But this self-interested condescension served only to embolden the pretensions of his new subjects. The flames of the funeral-pile, whilst consuming, a short time previously, the illustrious doctors Judas of Sepphoris and Matthias, with a considerable number of youths of the first rank, had kindled in all hearts an ardent desire of vengeance. The public mind grew every day more excited. The approaching feast of the Passover, and the presence of an innumerable multitude of Jews from all quarters, assembled to solemnize the feast, added to the importance of the situation. A deputation waited on Archelaus to beg that he would repair the past injustices, by putting to death the counsellors of Herod, whom public animadversion pointed out as the authors of the condemnation of Judas of Sepphoris. The young prince used all his efforts to calm the seditious; he represented to them that such a measure was beyond his power; that until Caesar should have confirmed him in the possession of the throne of Judea, he could not take upon himself the responsibility of so important a decision. Later on, when the sceptre should be conferred on him by Caesar, he promised that he would consult with them as to the most prudent manner of judging this affair.—This answer was received with seditious clamours. The Pharisees, secret instigators of the riot, had set all in readiness for an insurrection. The days preceding the feast, several among them had kept together in the Temple, even during the night, begging a bit of bread from the passers to and fro, in order not to interrupt their furious declamations. An immense crowd was assembled within the sacred precincts; Archelaus, frightened, sent one of his generals, at the head of a band of soldiers, to repress the insolence of the factious. The mob rushed on the soldiers, massacring all they could lay hold on, and the offi er, covered with wounds, was forced to fly, in order to escape certain death. Archelaus now deemed it necessary to take active measures. He sent out the whole army to surround the Temple, and gave orders to the cavalry to prevent those who were within from quitting it, and to repulse all those who from without should manifest an intention of entering the sacred precinct to bring succour to the rebels. This measure converted the fury of the Jews into consternation. At the sight of the horsemen, who quickly took possession of every egress, the multitude rushed out of the Temple in disordered masses. Three thousand were cut to pieces by the soldiery, while the rest found a retreat in the neighbouring mountains. A proclamation was issued putting a stop to the celebration of the Passover for that year, and obliging all strangers and visitors to withdraw to their own homes, and the decree of Archelaus, notifying this decision was published that same night (1).

## 26.—RETURN OF THE HOLY FAMILY TO NAZARETH.

Such was the situation of Jerusalem, when the Holy Family, quitting the hospitable soil of Egypt, reached the frontiers of Judea. We can understand, therefore, why it was that St. Joseph "feared to pursue his journey thither." (2) Profane history, placed side by side with the evangelical text, forms to this latter, a luminous commentary. It was not because the new King Archelaus was son of Herod, that St. Joseph dared not enter into his territory. Antipas, (3) tetrarch of Galilee, was also the son of Herod, nevertheless Joseph did not fear to take up his abode at Nazareth. "Those who sought the child, to put him to death, are dead," (4) had said the angel. This celestial message completely re-assured Mary with regard to the intentions of the new princes. In effect, Archelaus and Antipas were not thinking of recommencing the bloody scenes of Bethlehem. These two brothers, secretly rivals, thought only of supplanting each other. Archelaus wanted to gain the imperial ratification for the will which called him to the throne. Antipas, following the counsels of Salome, his aunt, hoped to turn the tide of popular opinion in his own favour, at the court of Augustus, thereby to cause himself to be substituted King of Jerusalem, in the place of Archelaus. A former testament of Herod gave him this right. In order to secure the success of his pretensions, each competitor found it necessary to court the popular favor. This necessity inclined the two young princes, for the moment, to acts of mildness and clemency. Nothing short of open and determined rebellion on the part of the factious, could have provoked the repression which had just stained the Temple of Jerusalem with blood. But this incident which Archelaus would have wished to prevent, and whose unforeseen explosion was so detrimental to his designs, proved to the Holy Family, a real danger. The strangers gathered together for the feast of the Passover, thus abruptly driven away, and flying from the Holy City, conveyed the news of the massacre to all the frontiers. We can conceive then, how St. Joseph, being himself on the road to Jerusalem, must have shared in the general apprehension. Private fears, besides, were awakened in him, arising from the feeling of his responsibility with regard to the divine deposit entrusted to his care. The illustrious travellers, therefore, passing along the marini ne coast of Palestine, arrived at Galilee, and the Virgin Mary beheld once more her abode in Nazareth, to whose humble roof was reserved the glory of sheltering the childhood and the youth of the Man-God.

(1) Joseph, Antiq. Jud., lib. xvi.

(2) Matth., ii, 22.

(3) This prince, called Herod Antipas, to distinguish him from Herod the Idumean, his father, is the same that figures in the history of the Passion of Our Saviour.

(4) Matth., ii, 20.