

'Yes. Besides that, 900,000 means about one in thirty-six of the population, which means that one family in every seven is concerned. French genius has not yet learned that the Government should not be absolute. The French are governed by officials; they have not been trained to an independent course of action, and a great many of the people think nothing of politics. The difficulty of bringing in a Catholic Government is directed by foreign considerations. The monarchy would have been restored under Comte de Chambord as Henry V, but for such reasons, and many people fear that if a Catholic Government were to come in it would mean complications. The one

Real Passion of the French

at the present time is for peace. There is nothing that the French as a nation will not do sooner than go to war, and that is the most extraordinary transformation of a people we have seen. They have a feeling that so long as the Republic stands, and is powerful, peace is secured. To secure this, the Freemasons have it in their programme to reduce the regular Army to a minimum, and to have as little regular training as possible. They also seek to do away with officers wearing uniform when off duty, to abolish the officers' mess, and get rid of barracks; local militia trained by their own officers, so that to have no military surgeons; to have practically they shall have no common spirit, and to do away with all military emblems, from flag to drum. After the Dreyfus case had been started, hundreds of lectures were given up and down the country, with lantern slides, showing the cruelty of officers towards the rank-and-file. Many of these lectures were given by Freemasons who themselves were officers, but who professed to show how officers—but not they—treated their men in the Army. In every barrack-room the Government orders that the "Declaration of the Rights of Man" shall be posted up, so that the common soldier shall "recognise that he is as good as his officer."

"The Freemason wants

An Anti-Christian Republic

which will stand for industry and peace—and occasionally he adds Socialism. The Freemason likes, of course, to have control in any body in which there is power, and would like to control Socialism; so that while he springs from the middle classes, and prefers the older form of individualism, he coquets with the Socialist idea. Catholics, however, are more or less committed, by the nature of the case, to a Republic which would have more respect for its Army and Navy, and which would take a certain military character. They have no political cohesion, however, because they are distracted between what is left of the monarchical spirit and the difficulty of accepting the Republic. Leo XIII. did his best to recommend a basis of agreement between the two parties, but Leo XIII. supposed that the Republic would be fair. From all this, Dr. Barry thinks, one can understand the Law of Separation and the suppression of the Budget. A Republic of this kind

Will Not Grant Freedom

to the Church—established or disestablished; that is quite clear. It will always do its best to hamper the action of the clergy and to make it difficult to be a Christian. Even when General Andre was turned out, and there was an outcry all over France at his oppression of the military officers, the man who was put in his place was also a Freemason. 'You must, not imagine,' remarked Dr. Barry to our representative, 'that I speak from party feeling. I have the greatest admiration for the French people; I have been in France, and I write and speak French. It would be the greatest possible advantage if the French could reconcile their differences and assume once more the old French characteristics—chivalry, courage, sense, light, and good nature.'

'What is the result to be? The more one cares for France, the more one fears that it is passing through a crisis. No greater misfortune can happen to Europe than for France to be blotted out; but the things they are doing there are making that possible. The

"Entente Cordiale"

I care about is not a military one, but an interchange of good offices between the English-speaking races and the French; and if France becomes morally weakened and chaotic—well, we know how many, or how few, miles it is from Metz to Paris. It is but a short journey.

Referring to that statement of M. Lanessan—'Some say the evil is clericalism—I say the evil is God'. Is that a common attitude?—Such statements have been

made over and over again. One Freemason—who had been a Protestant pastor—declared with evident satisfaction: 'The French Republic is anti-clerical and anti-Christian.'

Dr. Barry, in concluding the interview, begged our representative to make it quite clear that he did not speak of Freemasonry without reason. He emphasised again the fact that he had not derived his information from Catholic authorities because these would at once be suspected, and he added that every statement he had made could be proved by documentary evidence—much, at least, of which was, and is, in his possession.

CORRESPONDENCE

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for the views expressed by correspondents.]

A SUGGESTED FORWARD MOVEMENT ON THE EDUCATION QUESTION

To the Editor.

Sir,—Amongst the Catholic people the conviction, always strong, is deepening more and more, of the importance and absolute necessity of the maintenance of Catholic schools in their midst. They know that it is only in a Christian atmosphere that the teachings of their faith will take root and become a living reality to them. Their interest in their schools is neither moribund nor dead, so far as their determination to maintain them and send their children to them is concerned; and the new generation of people, who have grown up in them and realise even better than their parents the peculiar difficulties and dangers to which their children's faith is exposed, are hardly likely to relax in any way in the good work which their parents have so faithfully performed in the past.

It is not necessary to state that the present educational system has never been accepted by the Catholic people, not by their natural leaders, the Bishops, as satisfactory. Ever since its coming into force it has been regarded as a system that is godless. To be taxed for this system, while conscientiously maintaining our own schools where possible, was regarded as legal plunder and tyranny, and of course is still so regarded. At that time, the non-Catholic bodies tamely acquiesced, more or less, in the new system, with the result that, whatever were their views in accepting it, the non-Catholic clergy are profoundly dissatisfied with the present position, owing no doubt to the non-Christian spirit of many of the rising generation. The Bible-in-schools League have confessed to failure in making any serious impression on the country in favor of their views, as can be seen from the newspaper reports of the doings of the recent Presbyterian Synod. This is what was to be expected. The sense of justice and fair play of the community is very much alive. People can see that it is bad enough—if they will not see that it is unjust enough—for Catholics to be taxed for schools which they cannot conscientiously make use of, and if they do so at all, it is only in cases where there is no Catholic school available. Theoretically, the public schools are free to all without prejudice to their religious convictions, and so their case looks plausible. But who would maintain that in the school, where the child spends so much of his time each day, that colorlessness in religion is sufficient pabulum for training of the child-mind in the way it should go and grow?

To be taxed for schools where the teaching in religion is a negation or a blank is wrong enough, and even though everybody will not see it unjust enough. But if you are to be taxed for the endowment of a creed that you regard as positively erroneous, while still having to maintain schools at your own expense, the injustice of the double taxation becomes clearer and hardly any less difficult to bear, I should think. That the Bible-in-schools people have not made headway shows not so much that their people are not interested in the question, as that they are unwilling to do an injustice that the ends of the Bible-in-Schools League, however good in themselves, may be carried out. For if non-Catholics were to succeed in obtaining what Bible teaching they may wish as part of the public school curriculum, however much they may try to quibble, the schools become frankly denominational. I do not say that it would not be a good thing if that were so, and frankly acknowledged accordingly by those who wish Bible teaching in the public schools. It is at this juncture that Mr. J. A. Scott's suggested movement, as I think, comes in. His suggested approach to the heads of the different denominations would, whatever its result, bear fruit.

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