

upon the Church, substituting for episcopal rule the domination of lay associations. These are to be wholly independent of the ecclesiastical authority, but completely at the mercy of a Council of State even for their corporate existence; they may be of any creed or no creed; they are free to introduce any form of worship they please; and they are to have full control of churches, seminaries, presbyteries, etc. And the (at present atheistic) Council of State is (as the 'Saturday Review' aptly states) constituted by law a secular and partisan tribunal to decide on grave questions of faith and morals.

In the pre-Reform days in England there was a despicable class of political camp-followers who were known by the contemptuous nickname, 'potwallopers'. This corps d'élite of the political chicanery of the day were intent on 'boiling their own pot', Reform or no Reform. They were the creatures and 'fags' of the anti-Reform party, the obsequious perpetrators of every scurvy trick and underhand resort that was deemed desirable in their campaign against the growing spirit of civil and religious liberty. When, in furtherance of the Christ-hunting policy, M. Briand—on schism-making bent—urged the formation of worship-associations in defiance of the bishops, he probably knew that he could count upon the 'potwallopers'. Their name in France is legion. A few of these put their heads together and formed an association with the fraudulent designation, 'The League of French Catholics', for the purpose of putting into practice the entreaty of M. Briand, official Christ-hunter and Minister of Justice and Education. A few weeks ago the cable agents at Paris announced with an 'lo' and a flourish of trumpets the formation of this 'League of French Catholics' notwithstanding the papal interdict, and the establishment of some hundreds of associations for public worship throughout the various departments into which the country is divided.

The founder of the League is a hack journalist named Des Houx—an anti-Catholic, and a paid servant of the atheistic 'Matin', which is a semi-official organ of the Freemason-Radical-Socialist 'Bloc', and noted for the vindictive bitterness of its antagonism to the Catholic Church and revealed religion. We gave some scraps of Des Houx's biography in our issue of November 15. M. Yves Guyot is another of the aggressive infidels whom the cable-man in Paris tried to pawn off upon simple-minded Australasians as a 'French Catholic'. He is the editor of the once important but now decrepit 'Siecle', an anti-Catholic and Voltairian organ. Two other anticlericals who assisted in launching the so-called 'League of French Catholics' were M. Cornely and M. de Bonnefons. The latter (says a writer in the 'Saturday Review') 'is the worst offender of the party, for he has again and again been convicted of inaccuracy, and his pseudo-interviews in the 'Journal' with the Pope and Cardinals have invariably been contradicted immediately after publication'. A representative of 'La Patrie' was present when the League was founded. The dramatis personae gathered, by invitation, at the lodgings of Des Houx—away up on the fourth floor; and there the political farce was played. 'I found myself', says the representative of 'La Patrie', 'in a sufficiently large and very dark room, from the obscurity of which one would have judged that the fifteen or twenty persons collected there feared nothing so much as to be recognised'. Des Houx's son sat at a table with a number of papers ostentatiously displayed—lists, we were told, containing the adhesions of thousands of (anonymous) sympathisers. Among the founders of the League of French Catholics were 'an unknown Protestant minister' and some two unfrocked priests—one of them so threadbare and dissipated that the member of the 'Patrie' staff gave him the price of a penny roll—for which the hapless potwalloper displayed indiscreet gratitude. And thus was founded the bogus League of French

'Catholics'—about which the cables spoke so much portentous nonsense. Of the hundreds of associations said to be formed at the instance of Des Houx and his fellow anti-clericals, the latest European papers to hand contain notices of only three—three among the forty thousand parishes into which France is divided. The semi-darkness out of which the new League of French Anti-Catholics was evolved was perhaps intended to enable the political thimble-riggers, Des Houx and Company, to keep the pea beneath the thimble. In this they happily failed. There were sundry chiefs among 'em takin' notes. An' faith they prented them. The intended tragedy of wholesale schism became a bit of opera bouffe—in a garret. And for all purposes of deception M. Briand's League of French Cat's-paws may now (to use Carlyle's expression) pass like snow-flakes on the river or the foam of penny beer.

Notes

The Irish Envoys

Mr. Devlin, M.P., reaches the Bluff on Monday next, December 10. The following are his engagements to address public meetings in Southland, Otago, and Canterbury: Invercargill, Monday, December 10; Gore, Tuesday, December 11; Dunedin, Wednesday, December 12; Oamaru, Thursday, December 13; Timaru, Friday, December 14; Ashburton, Saturday, December 15; Waimate, December 17; Christchurch, December 18; Rangiora, December 19. Consecutive dates have been arranged in consequence of an intimation from Mr. Devlin to us (through the Right Rev. Mgr. O'Haran) that he is 'willing to take up meeting every evening in succession, beginning with Invercargill.' Mr. Devlin's itinerary in the Southern provinces had to be so arranged as to ensure his speaking in Christchurch on December 18 and in Wellington on December 21—the only dates on which it has been possible to secure large halls in those two centres. From the Right Rev. Mgr. O'Haran we learn that Mr. Donovan (the other envoy) is remaining in New South Wales to complete the tour there. He will afterwards address meetings in some minor centres about Melbourne, concluding the Australian campaign about December 9 or 10, afterwards joining his colleague in New Zealand. Owing in part to the present uncertainty as to Mr. Donovan's movements, fixtures for the West Coast of the South Island, and for many places in the North Island, cannot yet be definitely arranged. Mr. Donovan is expected in various places in the South where—owing to the difficulty of securing timely information as to dates from over-sea-sympathisers were unable to arrange for a visit by Mr. Devlin on his hurried and hard-wrought tour northward.

We bid the envoys a hearty welcome. And, despite great counter-attractions and the unpropitious season for which their visit was unavoidably arranged, we are confident that the gifted spokesmen will take with them from New Zealand a generous store of funds with which to fight the closing and triumphal onset for the rights and liberties of the Isle of the West. The general enthusiasm and expectancy with which their visits are awaited in the various centres are the best earnest of success. In describing the overflowing enthusiasm with which the other Irish delegates were received in America, the gifted Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., said a few weeks ago: 'I saw then what every hour since has confirmed, that we are at the beginning of the greatest movement in America for twenty-five years; that it is a prairie fire which will spread and grow, and that now the war-chest need give Redmond and his colleagues no further trouble.' That surcease of the 'war-chest need' is a consummation devoutly to be desired. And we have faith that New Zealand, like America and Australia, will do its part.

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