

# The Catholic World

## ENGLAND—The Holy Father and the Government

The following communication has been issued from Archbishop's House, Westminster, to the press:—The Holy Father has desired the Archbishop of Westminster to convey to his Majesty's Government his heartfelt thanks for the services rendered to his spiritual children, especially at Reggio, by the officers and men of the Royal Navy. His Holiness makes a specially grateful allusion to the efforts that they made to provide not only for the material relief of the victims of the earthquake, but also for their spiritual wants. The Archbishop has communicated the Holy Father's message to the Prime Minister.

## The Holy Father's Appreciation

The Holy Father, at the request and on the recommendation of the Archbishop of Westminster, has been pleased to bestow on Mr. T. W. Hunter, M.A., of Archbishop's House, Westminster, the Knighthood of the Order of St. Gregory the Great, in recognition of the services which he has rendered for many years as secretary of the Westminster Diocesan Education Fund, and of the Diocesan Schools Association, especially in connection with the recent Crisis Fund. On the same recommendation, his Holiness has also conferred on Mr. John Gilbert, B.A., the Knighthood of the Order of St. Sylvester, as a mark of his high appreciation of the very important work which Mr. Gilbert has done in the cause of Catholic education.

## Help for the Italian Sufferers

His Grace the Archbishop of Westminster has forwarded to the Holy Father the first instalment of £600 of the collection that is being made in the Westminster diocese for the sufferers by the earthquake.

## FRANCE—Joan of Arc

The Decree authorising the Beatification of Joan of Arc was read in the Hall of the Consistory on Sunday, January 24, in the presence of the Holy Father. His Holiness delivered an address from the Gospel of the day, in which the healing of the leper and of the centurion's servant is narrated. He prayed the Venerable Joan of Arc to intercede with Almighty God on behalf of modern society, which so much needed to be cleansed of the leprosy of atheism with which it was so sadly disfigured.

## The Religious Situation

The religious situation in France is, from one point of view, as bad as it well could be (remarks the *Catholic Weekly*). But there is a point of view seen from which the situation is most hopeful. An admirable unity binds the clergy to the Bishops, and the Bishops to the Holy See; and there is a most devout and devoted body of lay men and women, small, perhaps, in comparison with the great body of the population, but sufficiently large and influential to save the nation from absolute infidelity. The Archbishop of Montreal, Mgr. Bruchesi, who has just been on a visit to France, has expressed sentiments to a representative of the *Times* which, we think, furnish the correct view of the religious situation in that country. 'What impressed me greatly during my sojourn in France,' said his Grace, 'was the admirable union of all the Bishops with the Pope, and the devotion of the Catholic population for their Bishops and clergy. While I have confidence in the future, I fear it will be long before the Church can contemplate the position of affairs in France with satisfaction.'

## GERMANY—The Leader of the Centre

Count Hompesch, leader of the Centre, passed away on January 21, and his remains were consigned to the grave in Berlin after a Requiem Mass in St. Hedurg's Church, at which all the German political parties were represented. The Count was the leader of the Centre for a period of fifteen years. He was not a man of very brilliant parts (says the *Catholic Times*), but in the sterling qualities that win lasting respect he was not inferior to his friends, Mallinckrodt, Franckenstein, Windthorst, and Lieber. Amidst difficulties he was ever confident of success, and to his followers he was true as steel. He always lived up to the principles he professed. Dr. Schaedler, who delivered his panegyric at the service in St. Hedurg's Church, observed that he was a true descendant of Heinrich von Hompesch, of whom chroniclers declare that he was 'the bravest and most pious of knights.' Count Hompesch heard Mass each morning, was a frequent Communicant, and never allowed any duties, public or private, to interfere with his devotions. He carried his beads into the Reichstag, and however urgent the demands on his time never neglected to recite the Rosary before retiring

to sleep. A soldier of the Cross, he gave special directions on the approach of death that that sacred symbol should appear on the plate of his coffin. Throughout his long career he never knew fear and never laid himself open to reproach.

## INDIA—A Venerable Prelate

His Grace Archbishop Colgan, of Madras, is said to be the oldest prelate of the present day. He was working in India several years before the provinces of Otago or Canterbury were founded.

## ITALY—The Government and Earthquake Victims

When the Deputy de Felice accused the Italian Government of having caused the loss of 20,000 lives in Messina by its neglect, or rather its red-tape regulations, many considered his accusation uncalled for (says a Rome correspondent). However, the public have awakened up to the fact that perhaps the number of those who have been left to die beneath the debris may be anything from 10,000 to 30,000. The want of a sufficient number of men, the absence of any plan, the attention paid to guarding property, while the owners of it were either buried in the ruins or shivering in the rain and crying for a crust, and a spirit of general distrust in which every man thought his neighbor a rogue, have caused the loss of more lives in Messina than the earthquake. Even the staid *Osservatore Romano* has joined in the outcry raised on account of the delay in succoring the people—both those above and below the ruins—and now speaks plainly of the thousands left to die beneath their houses. The *Corriere d'Italia* has been imploring the Government day after day to do away with its red tape arrangements and come with a quick hand and whole heart to the help of the survivors.

## The Clergy of Messina

It is against the clergy of Messina (says the *Catholic Times*) that Admiral Mirabello, the Italian Minister of Marine, directed his reproach when he remarked that they were not to be seen amongst the sufferers. We have stated in our columns that the Admiral, if he had moved much amongst the injured himself, would have seen them—all that remained of them—and information contained in an article published by the *Spectator* confirms the assertion. The Archbishop was buried for nearly fifty hours in his private oratory, where, deprived of light, air, food, and even water, he remained continually in prayer until he was extricated. Then, after a little sleep to revive his strength, he set to work energetically in the organisation of relief. As to his clergy, observes our contemporary, they were more than decimated, and how could the Minister see them conspicuous in rescuing others, when so many of them wanted rescuing themselves? What actually happened to the clergy we find set forth in an official statement which has been prepared at the instance of the Archbishop and is given by the *Corriere d'Italia*. From this reliable document we learn that on the eve of the disaster there were in Messina one hundred and eight priests. Of these twenty-one were invalids or too old for duty. There were therefore eighty-seven in active service. In the earthquake twenty-seven were killed, and twenty-one were buried under the debris and more or less seriously injured. Thirty-nine who were fit for active labor escaped, and of that number thirty-one went about relieving and consoling the afflicted.

## ROME—The Devotion of the Nuns

The devotion and heroism of the nuns of the Little Company of Mary, Rome, in connection with the Calabrian earthquake have (says the *Catholic Weekly*) excited considerable admiration even in quarters where nuns are not much liked. The English press has published a Reuter telegram which should help to rectify the wrongheadedness of those sections of Evangelicals in England who still worry their representatives in Parliament, their neighbors, and themselves on the subject of nuns. The telegram is as follows:—A report from Calabria says that four English nuns of the Little Company of Mary, known as the "Blue Sisters," are doing wonders in works of charity—nursing the wounded, helping the needy, and looking after the children—and are arousing the admiration of the authorities, especially the officers. In the home of the "Blue Sisters" here, the hospital being already overcrowded, all the sitting-rooms are being transformed into hospital wards and lodgings for the refugees.

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