

interfering with the Roman Catholic religious position. The movement, therefore, will have the support of Orangemen only, and if the Orangemen are prominent in it, nothing else will so quickly discredit it. To do the clergy justice, they do not now ask for religious education in the schools: they ask for Scripture lessons only. But there is no enthusiasm behind the movement. A handful of Kyabram farmers started the agitation for the reform of Parliament, and they infected the entire community. The whole body of clergy has been asking for religious education for years, and are as far off infecting the community as ever. Earnestness and enthusiasm some of the clergy have; but they have not got right and justice on their side.

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Certainly there is little of right and justice, and still less of Christian charity, in this absurd proposal for an anti-Catholic campaign. It is in its essence, as the *Times* writer indicates, nothing more nor less than an unholy alliance with the justly despised and discredited Orangemen. It is essentially a backward movement, utterly opposed to the broad and tolerant spirit of the times, and calculated only to bring about an era of bigotry, bitterness, dissension, and strife. In the interests of peace and mutual good-will, it is earnestly to be hoped that the proposed anti-Catholic organisation over which these misguided clerics have so long been incubating may meet with the failure it undoubtedly deserves.

### Catholic Growth on the Continent.

Under the heading 'Romanism on the Continent,' the *Christian Outlook*—the official organ of the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational Churches in this Colony—published in a recent issue a paragraph purporting to show that Catholicism on the Continent is undergoing a process of steady but quite perceptible decline. The paragraph, which would appear to be going the round of the Protestant exchanges, is as follows:

'Roman Catholicism is said to be on the decline in some of its Continental strongholds. The *Kölnische Zeitung* has just published some interesting statistics on the subject, according to which in Germany alone during the year 1890, 3105 Germans left the Church of Rome and became Protestants, while 554 Protestants went over to Rome. In 1899 no fewer than 5549 Catholics became Protestants, and 600 Protestants Catholics. In Austria, also, Protestantism is growing, and in 1899 Lutheranism added 6492 converts to its numbers, while 785 Lutherans turned Roman Catholics.'

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It seems a pity to shatter so pleasing a delusion, but the fact is that the boot is on quite the other foot and Protestantism on the Continent, and especially in Germany, the 'cradle of the Reformation,' is in a condition which Protestant writers themselves describe as 'both unwelcome and alarming.' Here are full particulars on the point, given in an article quoted by the *New York Freeman* from the *Evangelist*, a Presbyterian journal: 'The figures in Pieper's *Kirchliche Statistik* showing the per cent. of increase of the Protestant and Catholic confessions (in Germany) from December, 1871, to 1895, reveal a condition of things both unwelcome and alarming from the Protestant point of view. Prussia contains nearly two-thirds of the entire population of the Empire, and in many of its separate provinces and large cities has been long considered the seat of the Protestant strength, but the increase of the Catholics during the period of 24 years has been 6 per cent. greater than that of the Evangelicals. For the same space of time the Kingdom of Saxony, which so warmly espoused the movement of Luther, shows nearly a fourfold increase for the Catholics, and Hesse, the brave defender of the Reformation, manifests an advance of about one and a half times in the same direction. In Bavaria, in Wurtemberg and in Baden, it is relatively less both in numbers and in significance. The large evangelical excess in Elsass-Lorraine (comparatively a small State) is due to the removal of the non-Protestant elements of the population after it had been made a part of the German Empire; to the presence of one of the army corps drawn mostly from northern Germany, and to immigration from various parts of the Empire. Pieper finds the chief cause of the Catholic increase in Prussia in emigration. The large percentage of those who emigrate from Prussia are Protestants, while in the eastern portion of the kingdom there is a large and constant pouring from Catholic Poland. To know the cause of these facts, however, will not change them. Catholicism has been gaining on Protestantism in both Prussia and Saxony for a generation with no sign of abating at a rate that well may awaken alarm in Protestant circles. Unless there is a diminution in Catholic increase in strength and numbers at strategic points, the great Chancellor's successors in office will probably be compelled to go much further toward Canossa than he went.'

These facts, given on the testimony of Protestants themselves, go to show that Catholicism in Central Europe was never more vigorous and flourishing than it is to day.

### Mr. Rhodes and the Catholic Church.

We have never been able to justify, still less to admire, the methods by which Cecil Rhodes became the greatest of the money kings of the modern world but we are bound to confess at the same time that his life and career have furnished convincing evidence of the keenness of his mental grasp and the general sureness and soundness of his practical judgments. Mr W. T. Stead in a much-quoted article in the *Review of Reviews* has made every one familiar with Mr Rhodes' high opinion of the Jesuits and with his great ambition to found a society composed of men of strong convictions and of great wealth, which would do for the federation of the English-speaking race what the Society of Jesus did for the Church immediately after the Reformation. His admiration for this great Order however and for the Catholic Church as a whole was still more fully and definitely expressed in dinner-table conversations with his friends one of whom, writing under the nom de plume of 'Logic,' has given a detailed account, in the following letter to *The Spectator*, of Mr Rhodes' remarks on one of these interesting occasions. We may add that the publication of the letter in a paper having the standing of the *Spectator* is itself almost a guarantee of the truth and genuineness of the events which the letter records.

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'I think,' writes the correspondent, 'the following brief account of a conversation which I had with him about three years ago may prove interesting at this moment to your readers. I was sitting next to Mr Rhodes at a large dinner, and our conversation turned on religious belief. Mr Rhodes expressed himself in strongly eulogistic terms of the Roman Catholic Church. He said: "I have a great admiration for the Roman Catholic Church; it is in my opinion the one logical religion in the world, and if I only had the time I should like to become a Jesuit myself. Do you know any Jesuits? I have met many of them in Rhodesia, and have so great a respect and so keen an admiration for them as a body, that I take off my hat to them, each and all. It is not so much what they do, or what they say; it is what they are that has impressed me so deeply." This expression of opinion, coming from such a source, naturally impressed me greatly, and the following day I repeated the above conversation to a Jesuit priest of my acquaintance, and have often quoted it since.'

### Leo XIII. and Wages.

Mr. C. S. Devas, the well-known political economist, in a recent issue of the *Dublin Review*, commences a series of articles on the economic teaching of Leo XIII. as laid down in his Encyclicals. The Pope's attitude on the important question of wages is very clearly and definitely stated. Wages, the Holy Father holds, to be just, must be sufficient, all contracts notwithstanding, for the support of a frugal and steady workman. If the workman is compelled by fear of worse evils to take less, being all that the master or contractor will give him, he suffers violent injustice. And such an evil, if it can be stopped in no other way, needs the intervention of the Commonwealth. Perfect justice requires wages to be in the proper correspondence with work. The Commonwealth should favor the acquisition of property by work people; and this is only possible if a man's wages are sufficient to maintain in comfort his wife and children as well as himself. It is, therefore, a mistake to suppose that wages are a mere matter of contract. No contract can set aside the dictates of natural justice bidding wages be fair, and neither master nor man must be a party to a bargain inconsistent with the decent living of work people.

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The foregoing is a good illustration of the clarifying effect of a clear statement of elementary principles, and it has a direct bearing on some of the questions that crop up from time to time in the working of our own labor legislation. It is often urged, for example, that our Conciliation and Arbitration Courts have no right whatever to say what wages an employer shall pay his men. Yet it is clear that if, as the Holy Father puts it, 'a workman is compelled by fear of worse evils to take less (than is sufficient) . . . he suffers violent injustice,' and if the evil can be stopped in no other way it 'needs the intervention of the Commonwealth.' It is obvious, therefore, that as a matter of principle the State, acting through appropriate organisations, is fully justified in intervening to prevent injustice, and to secure that so far as the wages of labor are concerned, a fair and reasonable minimum shall be observed.

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