

only try hard enough and long enough the besiegers will at last succeed, the most persistent attempts have been and are being made by the Powers most immediately interested to induce the Holy Father to commit himself to some departure from his obviously proper course of strict neutrality. Germany appears to be making its appeal chiefly to material considerations. The diplomats and agents of Germany and Austria have explained to his Holiness that the cause of France is the cause of Freemasonry, anti-clericalism, and irreligion; and they are alleged to have promised him immense concessions to Catholicism in their respective countries, even to the extent of hinting that if he sided with them they would give him back the temporal power and make him the arbiter of the world in settling the affairs of nations. France has tried, much more subtly, to gain her end by invoking the moral argument. What looks to us like a particularly clever and ingenious attempt in that direction is reported in a despatch from Paris, under date April 30, which is published in American Catholic papers just to hand.

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According to this despatch, French and Belgian Cardinals, archbishops, and bishops have united in an appeal to Pope Benedict to draw up and issue a complete and comprehensive statement of the principles of international morality from the Christian standpoint, and as they are binding on the Christian conscience. The memorandum of appeal is said to have been signed by Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, Cardinal Amette, Archbishop of Paris, and other members of the Sacred College. It urges that the statement asked for, issued at the present psychological moment, would be epoch-making in the history of the Papacy: and points out that such an opportunity may never occur again for the Church to show that it stands above political considerations, caring only for the moral and religious interests of its people. It is recalled that even in the Vatican council of 1870 a petition signed by forty bishops was presented demanding that the Church promulgate Christian principles to regulate war and the rights of nations. Other attempts having the same object were made even before that date. In 1868 Cardinal Coulli accepted the patronage of the union for the study of rights of nations according to Christian principles. Among those who joined in the movement were Cardinals Rampolla, Mercier, Bourne, Amette, Maffi, and Vaszari.

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The memorandum, as reported, proceeds: 'Now is the moment to put into practice the result of those studies, as Catholics and even a certain number of Protestants look to the Pope as the neutral defender of Christian morality, demanding guidance in matters so connected with modern civilisation which are the outcome of Christian teaching. The Pontiff as the supreme pastor of Catholics throughout the world has the right to lay down moral principles which should govern all Christian nations in their reciprocal relations. The earliest theologians condemned war altogether, but later, chiefly through the influence of St. Augustine, war sometimes was considered inevitable. St. Thomas and other authorities teach that war always is unlawful unless it is just, which justice can exist only through a just cause and a right intention. In justice it is no more morally right for a nation than for an individual and its perpetrator is condemned by all Christian principles. Theologians denounce as pagan error the assertion that "might is right," or that the right to wage war depends on force of arms. It is worse still when a stronger country fights from a desire for conquest or demands a great indemnity. This, after the killing of thousands, is called by St. Augustine "brigandage," necessitating a league of honest, peace-loving nations. Christian theologians call such wars theft, and say that the injustice which war seeks to redress must be certain and evident. War is morally wrong when in vindication of probable or doubtful rights.' After citing authorities who condemn the unnecessary destruction of life and property, recommending love even between enemies and ordering that non-combatants be spared, the memorandum closes with

this statement: 'International laws and conventions are expressions of legitimate consideration. The Hague Convention of 1907 gives expression to moral principles binding on the conscience of all Christians.'

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The whole thing is very plausibly and cleverly conceived; but we are tolerably safe in asserting that no such document was signed or sent by the distinguished prelates named. It is much more like the work of some interested and ingenious press agent, bent on furnishing the credulous public with the sort of 'copy' which he knows they are hankering after. The message is described as 'unconfirmed'; and in the form in which it has been given, we should be very much surprised if it ever is confirmed.

SILVER JUBILEE OF FATHER COFFEY

PRESENTATION FROM THE PRIESTS OF THE DIOCESE.

A number of the priests of the diocese of Dunedin met at the Bishop's Palace on June 8 in order to do honor to the Very Rev. Father Coffey, Adm., on the occasion of the silver jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood. His Lordship the Bishop was present with the following priests:—Very Rev. Mgr. O'Leary, V.F., Very Rev. Father Hunt, Rev. Fathers Delany, O'Reilly, J. Lynch, P. O'Neill, Buckley, Corcoran, Kavanagh, D. O'Neill, Foley, Falconer, Kaveney, Liston, Morkane, Collins, Scanlan, and E. Lynch. Several apologies were received.

Monsignor O'Leary referred in graceful terms to the fine priestly qualities of Father Coffey, and congratulated him on the good work he has done in the diocese. Father Coffey, the speaker said speaking from intimate personal knowledge, was a most zealous and devoted priest, who had left his mark on several parishes in the diocese, and who was esteemed throughout New Zealand by non-Catholics as well as by Catholics. He had carried out an arduous and very successful campaign throughout the diocese on behalf of the St. Vincent de Paul Orphanage at South Dunedin, founded by his Lordship the Bishop, and carried on by the Sisters of Mercy, and since the opening of that institution had been its trusted and active manager. The Christian Brothers' School would stand as a monument of his boundless energy and financial genius. He had placed all the priests of the diocese under many obligations to him by his warm hospitality and generous assistance on all occasions.

Monsignor O'Leary then read the following address, and in the name of all his fellow-priests without exception, presented Father Coffey with a substantial cheque:

Very Rev. and Dear Father,—We, the priests of the diocese of Dunedin, desire by our presence and congratulations to heighten the joy that must be yours on this, the twenty-fifth anniversary of your ordination to the priesthood. During the twenty-five years on which the seal of eternity is now set, you have done noble work in illuminating, guiding, strengthening, consoling, and saving souls. You have shown courage of a high order, deep sympathy, and great wisdom in dealing with the orphanage at South Dunedin; you have spent yourself in building a magnificent school in order that the little ones, whom the Saviour loved, may grow up in an atmosphere of learning and piety, love and obedience, true light and chaste life. Your priestly life has ever been marked by a spirit of disinterestedness and self-sacrifice, by a largeness of heart, ability, and untiring energy. For all these years of zealous devotion in the diocese of Dunedin, we, your fellow-priests, desire to thank you most heartily. In a special way are we grateful for your ever genial hospitality, your successful labors in connection with the clergy sick fund, your ever-ready and valuable assistance, and for those many unremembered acts of kindness that make up the best portion of a man's life. We beg of you to accept this accompanying gift as a sign of our gratitude and appreciation.