

to exercise a powerful influence on the progress of Catholicism in Eastern Europe. In the old days Poland was the bulwark of Europe and of the Church. May we not hope that the new kingdom will play an equally glorious part against the more insidious enemies that in our times threaten to overthrow society and religion? Still, it is well to remember that in Poland, as elsewhere, there have been great changes during the past one hundred years. The Socialist party is by no means a negligible factor, from the point of view of numbers or of public activity, and it may be that in the new kingdom there will be a prolonged period of strife before victory is assured. For the rest, the collapse of the Holy Synod and the restoration of religious freedom cannot fail to promote the submission to Rome of many among the Ruthenians, Lithuanians, and the other races inhabiting the western provinces of Russia who were held in bondage to the Orthodox Church by tyranny and oppression.

The conclusion of an armistice, even though its terms involved the disruption of the Austro-German forces, does not necessarily imply that Europe is assured of peace. Even though the Congress of Versailles should succeed in adjusting the conflicting territorial demands that will be brought before it, there is no guarantee that it will be able to apply effective remedies against the spread of anarchy and disorder which threaten to overthrow society and civilisation. It is not by bayonet or machine-gun that these can be defeated; it is only by the removal of the causes that have brought about the upheaval. In the work of stemming the advance of Bolshevism, principles must play a more prominent part than force, and conscience rather than fear must be relied upon to secure restraint and moderation. In this field of operations Church and State should unite their forces in the adjustment of economic conditions and in the removal of the glaring usurpations that threaten to drive the masses of the people into the arms of Bolshevik agitators. Bolshevism began in Russia, where the soil was ready for the seed, but where it may end, or how it may develop, unless some drastic remedy be found, it is difficult to foresee.

Various causes have contributed to bring about the present social unrest. Among these may be reckoned the sufferings and anxiety inflicted by the war on the masses, who were allowed no voice in declaring it, the high prices and scarcity of provisions, bordering in some countries on famine, the temporary nationalization of railways, shipping, factories, mines and raw material, the interference of the State in so many matters that were formerly regarded as the domain of the individual, the continual attempts to secure internal peace by the alternate policy of doles and repression, and, added to all these, the protracted tension caused by the war and by the glowing programmes launched on the world by the belligerent statesmen. The social anarchy that threatens to engulf Europe to-day is as dangerous for religion as it is for the State, and it will be necessary for the Church to face the situation with a well-defined and courageous programme if the danger is to be averted. It will be necessary for the clergy to re-study this question, and possibly, in some particulars to modify their views; to arrive at a clear understanding about the rights of the individual as against the rights of the community, about the meaning and limitation and indestructibility of private ownership, and about the true attitude of the Church towards the various programmes of reform, most of which are so often indiscriminately and incorrectly labelled Socialism by their supporters and their opponents.

The position of the Pope, at all times a difficult one, was exceptionally delicate and responsible during the war. Unmindful of the charges of partiality or cowardice levelled at him by newspapers and politicians, Benedict XV. pursued his mission of mercy and peace. Wherever it was possible for him, he intervened to relieve suffering or to prevent injustice, and at all times he bore himself amongst the warring factions as be-

came one who was the representative on earth of the Prince of Peace. Catholics throughout the world, whether they sympathise with Germany or France, are at one in their attitude of loyalty to the Pope. They demand that one who has done so much for the promotion of peace, and who by his very position can do so much for the preservation of the new European régime, should be admitted to the Congress that is to settle the future of so many of his subjects. They are at one, too, in desiring that the grave injustice inflicted on the Papacy and the Church by the spoliation of 1870 should be remedied, in spite of secret treaties or Italian hostility. They do not ask for the restoration of the Roman States; they commit themselves to no particular scheme of redress; they require only that the Pope should be consulted, and that some settlement should be arrived at in keeping with his dignity and with the dignity of the world-wide organisation of which he is the supreme ruler.

Possibly never since the religious convulsions of the sixteenth century was the international position of the Pope more clearly recognised on all sides than it was since the outbreak of the war. Governments that had long refused to accredit representatives to the Roman Court displayed extraordinary eagerness to secure representation, and nations that had but recently broken off diplomatic relations with the Vatican showed considerable anxiety to make amends through unofficial channels. One and all, whether Allies, Germans, Austrians, Turks, or Bulgars, they recognised that the Pope is still a mighty sovereign, and that the views of Rome, even on non-religious matters, are not without their influence in the world. In this connection it is interesting to note that, after a diplomatic rupture lasting eight years, Portugal has once again established friendly relations with the Holy See. Last December a counter-revolution was begun, and after a brief struggle the moderate party found themselves in control. Senhor Sidonio Paes was elected President of the Republic by an overwhelming majority of votes. At once he announced that he and his Government stood for a policy of justice and pacification, and for personal, social, and religious freedom. In pursuance of this policy he proclaimed full religious freedom, restored the churches and the seminaries, invited the bishops and exiled Orders to return, and opened up negotiations with the Nuncio at Madrid for a complete reconciliation with Rome. After a short discussion the outstanding difficulties were adjusted, and Monsignor Locatelli was despatched as Nuncio to Lisbon, while Senhor Feliciano de Costa was received by the Pope as the Minister of Portugal.

It is interesting, too, to recall that during the past year the new Republic of China, anxious to make friends and to keep in touch with modern developments in Europe, requested the Pope to agree to an exchange of representatives. The Pope was most anxious to accept this proposal, but unfortunately the Government of France interfered to prevent its realisation. Once before, in 1886, taking its stand on the rights guaranteed to it by the Treaty of Tien-Tsin (1858), France blocked the way against the appointment of a Papal representative at Peking, and now, a second time, it succeeded in bringing to naught the renewed negotiations. By this Treaty France was guaranteed the protectorate of the Christian missionaries in China, and though this privileged position has been shorn of much of its importance in recent years by the claims of other nations to safeguard directly the interests and lives of their own subjects, still sufficient is left to give the French representative at Peking a unique advantage. It was feared that by the appointment of a Nuncio the protectorate would be completely destroyed, nor were the official declarations and explanations of the Holy See considered sufficient to allay this apprehension. Pressure was brought on the Chinese Government to object to the proposed appointment of Monsignor Petrelli, on the ground that he was pro-Austrian, and after some further exchanges, the negotiations were suspended until a more favorable opportunity should arise.

(To be concluded next week.)