

THE CHURCH IN FRANCE

PROGRESS OF A GREAT MOVEMENT

Those who are able to follow the developments of the religious question in France *from within* are firmly convinced (writes the special correspondent of the *Catholic Times*) that, in spite of the crafty persecution directed against Catholics, of the evil influence of the lay schools, and other alarming symptoms, a decided religious revival is perceptible throughout the country. This is the case more especially in Paris and in other large towns, where, precisely because the enemies of the Church are more numerous and more powerful, the Catholics are stimulated to bolder efforts.

Sympathy with the Church.

The causes of this religious revival would take long to explain; they are many and varied. Among them we may mention a certain feeling of sympathy for the Church, persecuted and poor as she is at present. When the Church was recognised by the State and her ministers were paid by Government this special feeling did not exist; it would seem as if the Separation, and the acts of robbery that attended it, had roused the dormant faith of many indifferent Catholics. 'Before the Separation, my husband never went to church,' said the wife of a prosperous Parisian tradesman to the present writer; 'now he never misses his Mass on Sundays.' The Church seems in many cases to have gained in independence and in popularity what she has lost in wealth. Another cause of the revival is that the Catholics of France have learnt from the example of their adversaries the enormous use and value of common and united action. In this respect they have done wonders within the last few years, and the close banding together of the Catholic forces on the ground of justice and liberty is one of the most hopeful symptoms of the revival to which we allude.

Frequent Communion.

A priest in whose presence these subjects were being discussed added his word to the discussion and

touched a more supernatural note. In his opinion, in France as elsewhere, the Holy Father's instructions on the subject of frequent Communion have strengthened the hands of the Catholics, and by bringing them nearer to God, the practice of frequent Communion has braced them to greater activity in the good cause. An example of this activity was afforded by the recent Congress of the 'Œuvre des Catechismes' that was held in Paris, under the presidency of Cardinal Amette. The association numbers forty thousand members, ladies and young girls, who once or twice a week, in Paris and in the provinces, devote themselves to teaching catechism to the children of the Government schools. They prepare these children to receive and understand the teaching of the overworked priests, who would be unable to cope with their tremendous task if the voluntary teachers did not pave the way. As a rule these children are utter pagans; in the so-called neutral schools they are taught atheism, and in their families there is often no influence to counteract this evil teaching. The 'dame catechiste' by her kindness and gentleness can exercise a more personal influence than the priest, and we may safely say that it is generally owing to her tactful action that the pupils of the lay schools are led to make their First Communion.

Lady Catechists.

The 'Œuvre des Catechismes' was founded twenty-five years ago; there were then only two lady 'catechists,' who between them had two hundred pupils. At the present time the work numbers over four thousand 'catechistes' in Paris alone, and thirty-two thousand in the provinces; close on one hundred thousand children are evangelised by them; forty-four thousand in Paris and fifty thousand in the provinces. These figures have a certain eloquence, but more striking still are the zeal, good temper, and real self-sacrifice with which a hundred young and wealthy women have thrown themselves into the work. It continually happens in Paris that young girls who are the brightest guests at a ball or garden party have spent their morning in some distant 'faubourg' where they sweetly and patiently instil the great truths of religion into the

DALGETY & COMPANY, LTD

STOCK & STATION AGENTS, WOOL & PRODUCE BROKERS, MERCHANTS

Stock Sales conducted as follows: Weekly at Cattle-yards, Dunedin

Country Sales as per arrangement

Rabbit-skins, Sheep-skins, Wool, Hides and Tallow: Weekly

USE CRITERION MANURES - - THEY ARE THE BEST

Agents: QUIBELL'S SHEEP DIPS; LLOYD'S LIVE STOCK INSURANCE; OCEAN ACCIDENT INSURANCE; VICTORIA FIRE INSURANCE; SHAW, SAVILL and ALBION SHIPPING COMPANY

The UNITED Insurance Co. Ltd.

INCORPORATED 1882

Capital £500,000

New Zealand Branch: Principal Office, Wellington.

Directors: Nicholas Reid Chairman, Martin Kennedy, R. O'Connor

Resident Secretary—James S. Jameson.

Bankers—NATIONAL BANK OF N.Z., LTD.

Branches and Agencies

AUCKLAND—L. W. D. Andrews, Dis. Sec. GISBORNE—Dalgety and Co., Ltd. TABANAKI—D. McAllum. HAWKE'S BAY—J. V. Brown and Sons (Fire); W. Kinross White (Marine). NELSON—M. Lightband. MARLBOROUGH—B. Purkiss. WESTLAND—T. Eldon Coates. CANTERBURY—W. B. McKenzie, Dis. Sec. OTAGO—J. R. Cameron, Dis. Sec. SOUTHLAND—T. D. A. Moffett, Agent. OAMARU—E. Piper, Agent.

FIRE AND MARINE,

Head Office, Sydney

Manager: Thomas M. Tinley. Secretary: Martin Maloh.

BRANCHES:

LONDON—Edward Batten, Res. Sec. MELBOURNE—T. Lockwood, Res. Sec. ADELAIDE—T. C. Reynolds, Res. Sec. HOBART—W. A. Tregear, Res. Sec. PERTH—J. H. Prouse, Res. Sec. BRISBANE—E. Wickham, Res. Sec. TOWNSVILLE—G. W. Gilbert, Dis. Sec. ROCKHAMPTON—T. H. Shaw, Dis. Sec.