

The Catholic World

FRANCE

CATHOLIC CONGRESS AT CAEN.

A Congress of the association known as 'La Jeunesse Catholique,' has recently taken place at Caen, the Bishops of Bayeux, Coutances, Téez, Evreux, and le Mans were present, and more than five thousand young men, delegated by the various groups in the provinces, gathered round M. Pierre Gerlier, who is the president of the association, which numbers one hundred and twenty thousand members. We (*Catholic Times*) had occasion some months ago to speak of this association, which was started a quarter of a century ago, under the inspiration of Count Albert le Mun. It includes young men, under thirty, of every social rank, whose object is to advance the cause of religion by their example and apostleship. Their devotion to the different social institutions that have been founded for the material and moral benefit of the people, their docility to the teaching of the Church, their loyalty, unselfishness, and cordial spirit of good fellowship are the characteristics of these ardent young workers. The association is an important factor in the religious revival that is at present taking place in France. The members of the Congress at Caen made a special study during the three days that their meeting lasted of the attitude to be adopted by Catholics with regard to the tyrannical laws that are being framed against the free schools, laws that infringe on the prerogatives of the children's parents. The question is a burning one at the present moment and it was well to inform the scattered Congressites of its bearings. The Congress closed with a magnificent procession through the quaint streets of mediæval Caen. These public demonstrations would signify little if they were not backed by solid and practical work, but in the conditions where they take place they have a deeper meaning than appears at first. They link the provincial members of the association with their Paris brethren: they stimulate their zeal, encourage their efforts, and give the solitary workers in difficult and lonely posts an invigorating sense of brotherhood, that, to the young especially, is of infinite value.

ITALY

THE GOVERNMENT MAKES KNOWN ITS VIEWS.

The agitation raised by the press of Italy against the presence of officers of the army and navy in the ranks of Freemasonry has been productive of several results, not the least important of which is the disavowal of the secret society in the Chamber of Deputies by the Minister of War (writes the Rome correspondent of the *Catholic Times*). That highly placed officials in the army should belong to the secret Masonic Society seemed bad enough to the Italian people, but that the chief officers of some of the Italian men-of-war should be so placed in this organisation that the superior feared his inferior, was a state of things which they could no longer brook. It was high time, therefore, that the mind of the Government should be manifested on the matter. The Minister of War has done this in decisive terms. His opinion is that officers of the army and navy should hold it as an imperative duty not to belong to any secret society: that they should live in an atmosphere of light and frankness and not be connected with any body whose ends are dark and hidden. He does not apprehend any great danger from the participation of officers in Freemasonry, but the very character of the military ought, he holds, suffice to deter them from joining it. *L'Esercito Italiano*, the organ of military men in Italy, goes even further. 'We are,' it says, 'more than ever convinced that the incompatibility of the officer's presence at Masonic functions with the faithful discharge of his duties cannot be called in doubt, and that between Masonic and military discipline there must be a conflict.' As other papers, Catholic and non-Catholic, voice similar senti-

ments in even stronger terms; it is likely this year of grace will see an exodus of officials from the ranks of the Italian Freemasons.

ROME

THE BENEDICTINE ORDER.

The magnificent functions at the Abbey of St. Anselm were concluded on May 15 (writes the Rome correspondent of the *Universe*), when a distinguished gathering of ecclesiastics, the Ambassadors accredited to the Holy See, etc., met there to present their congratulations to the newly-elected coadjutor to the Abbot Primate. Abbot Fidelis von Stotzingen is well known in Rome, where he made his studies. The Holy Father received him most graciously, and promised him and the whole Order his goodwill and protection. Previously Brother Aelred Carlyle, the late Abbot of Caldey, had had a private audience of twenty minutes, and had been overwhelmed with kindness and affection by the Holy Father. The Abbots who assembled in Chapter have now departed, but not before having admired the most satisfactory development of the work of the Vulgate Commission under Abbot Gasquet's direction, and promising him the unfailing support of the whole Order. The Abbot returns to England at once to prepare for the general Chapter of the English Benedictines, due in June. After that it is his intention to sail for the United States, there to collect funds and engage support in aid of his great undertaking.

RECEPTION OF SCOTTISH PRELATES.

Among those who were admitted to audience with his Holiness the Pope on May 16 were his Grace Archbishop Mackintosh and the Bishop-Elect of Dunkeld, Mgr. Fraser, both of whom were accorded a warm reception by his Holiness. The Pope is, of course particularly well acquainted with Mgr. Fraser, who has on more than one occasion acted as his representative at Scottish functions. Monsignor Fraser was the recipient of a valuable farewell gift, in the shape of a beautiful pectoral cross set with jewels, from his Holiness.

THE HOLY FATHER'S THANKS.

Deeply touched by the presence of the vast concourse of prelates, priests, and people who gathered in St. Peter's on the Feast of Pentecost for the 'Te Deum' in thanksgiving for the restoration of the Holy Father's health, his Holiness has addressed letters of thanks to the Archpriest of the basilica, Cardinal Rampolla, and to Prince Lancellotti, President of the Primary Roman Society for Catholic Interests. The Pope's letter to Cardinal Rampolla is as follows:—'Most Eminent Lord Cardinal,—Moved by the filial affection shown towards me yesterday by the imposing concourse of persons present at the religious function of thanksgiving in the Vatican Basilica, I feel it a duty to express my gratitude to all the promoters of this solemn manifestation. While thanking you, my Lord Cardinal, I beg you to convey these sentiments of mine to the Canons and others of the clergy and laity pertaining to the administration of the Basilica, and assure them that I shall not fail to pray the Lord to recompense this act of good-will by greater graces. As an earnest of this I send to you, my Lord Cardinal, with special affection, and to all the others, the Apostolic Benediction. Yours most gratefully and affectionately, PIUS P.P. X.'

GENERAL

ANCIENT CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES.

Six universities in Latin-American countries (says the *Sacred Heart Review*) were established before the first one in the territory that afterwards became the United States. The Universities in Mexico and Lima were founded in 1551; Santo Domingo, 1558; Bogota, 1572; Cordoba, 1613, and Sucre, 1623. All these were founded under the auspices of a Church which many people still have the effrontery to call an 'enemy to education.'

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