

Current Topics

Germany

The Holy See has appointed the Right Reverend Joseph Deitmar Auxiliary Bishop of Breslau, with residence in Berlin. German Catholics rejoice at this new mark of favor of the present Pope who now appoints a resident bishop to the German capitol. German Catholics are making a splendid fight for their full rights of Catholic education. There was a remarkable response to a demand for signatures through northern and southern Germany. In Bavaria alone two and a quarter million names were at once obtained, and accounts from the north represent the campaign as equally live there. The Socialist *Vorwaerts* cannot conceal its anti-Christian joy at the alleged fact that 18,000 Protestants have left their Church in the Berlin district alone.

Rumania

Persecution of Catholics continues unabated in Rumania. Bishop Glattfelder who was compelled to resign by the Bratianu Government is threatened with persecution for writing a farewell letter to his clergy! Monsignor Hirschler, of Cul, in Transylvania, was summoned to answer several absurd charges of which the following are a sample: His church, located on territory which was formerly Hungarian, contained a stained glass window with a picture of two angels supporting the arms of Hungary; he had celebrated the Feast of St. Stephen, Patron of Hungary, last August; and his parishioners had invoked Our Lady as "patroness of Hungary." More ridiculous still was the motion for the expulsion from the Rumanian Senate of Bishop Szechenyi who was not a member of that body at all! A girls' school was attacked because some children wore bonnets of a Hungarian style. Two thousand hymn books were seized because they contained a hymn popular among the Hungarians. Our Mr. Parr would flourish like a green bay tree in such a congenial soil for people given to stupid stunts.

Russia

Persecution increases in Russia as time goes on. The insane anti-Christian hatred in the breasts of the rulers of Russia has no limits. The following historical note from *America* will be of interest to our readers:

"Under the old regime the nominal head of the Russian so-called Orthodox Church was the Czar, who ruled through the Holy Synod. The head of the Holy Synod itself was the procurator, a layman, and a member of the Government.

"After the March Revolution in 1917, in which the Czar was deposed, a Convocation of the Church revived the Patriarchate of Russia. This made the Church independent of the State. Archbishop Tikhon was made the Patriarch, the first since the days of Peter the Great in 1721. The Bolsheviki came into power in the October Revolution in 1917. These men came from abroad and were mostly aliens. According to a publication of the "Unity of Russia," quoted by the *Civiltà Cattolica*, of the 22 who composed the Supreme Council of Commissars in 1920, three were Russians, two were Armenians, and 17 were Jews. Of the 545 members of the executive departments, 30 were Russians, 447 were Jews and 68 of other nationalities. There is no reason for believing that these figures have changed much since 1920. It should be noted that these men are renegades to their religion, and mostly atheists. Their relations with the Orthodox Church, according to a writer in the *Atlantic Monthly* for March, 1923, fall into three phases. At first the Bolsheviki proceeded cautiously, as if they were unsure of the attitude of the people. They began with a violent propaganda against all religion, and for four years concentrated their efforts on the young men. In 1922 the churches were ordered to give up their treasures. Confiscation followed, met by resistance. This was countered by

severe measures; 28 bishops and 1200 priests are said to have been put to death by April, 1922, and many more since then. In the third phase of the persecution the Bolshevists aimed at a division in the Church itself, so that now there are two Russian Churches, the Orthodox Church, an illegal body, and the Supreme Church Administration, split into many parties. This is the official Red Church. There is said to be a real revival of religion among the people, but the gravest fears are expressed for the Russian youth, who for five years have been exposed to every form of immoral and irreligious teaching. It is forbidden by the Penal Code to teach any religion to anybody under eighteen years of age. This affects Jews, Orthodox, and Catholics alike.

Bible in Schools

The Anglican Synod is much concerned about having the Bible read in the schools of New Zealand. It proposes to make strong representations on the point to the Government. From our experience of the same Government we conclude that one has only to make noise enough to make it do anything short of resigning office and losing salaries and perquisites. If the Bible in the schools became the order of the day, what better would the Anglicans be? What would it avail to have a few neutral lessons read to children by people incapable of explaining them? Are we to suppose that the children would, by private inspiration, derive from the lessons, light and grace to become good Christians for ever after? To suppose anything of the kind is contrary to all experience. To make the movement worth anything, it ought to be provided that the New Testament be read, and that it be explained by men or women who know a great deal about the truths of Christianity, who believe in these principles, and who want the children to believe in them. And, as unfortunately there is no unity of belief among the different sections of the population, it would be further necessary that the explanation be given to the children of each religious body by a teacher who professes their own faith. In other words, unless we have denominational religious instruction it will be worth nothing. There is no use beating the air. What is wanted is not the Bible in the school but the catechism in the school: and the sooner earnest Christians agree that they will compel the Government to grant to Christians this justice, the sooner this country will recover from its moral paralysis.

America's Deal with the Turk

America kept out of European affairs when there was question of political troubles. But now she has come in because there is question of oil and of money to be made therefrom. The Angora Assembly has granted to an American corporation a billion dollar concession which is calculated to provide America with oil and at the same time with the opposition of her erstwhile allies among the European powers. Here is the picture the concession inspires in the mind of the *Literary Digest's* penman:

Four hundred million American dollars will be spent to make the waste places of Turkey in Asia blossom as the rose, and her slums turn into garden cities "under the fairy wand of the Chester concession." Negotiations which have dragged over a period of nearly twenty years came to a climax recently when the Grand National Assembly at Angora, the seat of Government of the Turkish Nationalists, ratified the billion-dollar concession sought by the American interests. This grant empowers the Ottoman-American Development Company to carry out a programme in Anatolia which includes besides the development of what is said to be one of the richest oil, copper and iron areas of the world the building of railways, canals, ports, and cities, forestation, the installation of telephones, telegraphs and electric lighting, and the construction of hotels, health-stations, banks and observatories. One clause in the agreement, according to a Paris correspondent of the *New York Herald*, calls for "the erection in some open and appropriate spot indicated by the Nationalist Government of a perfect capital, with buildings surpassing

Henry Scott

No. 3 CARROLL STREET,
(late Pier Buildings)
Phone 1100.

PAINTER, PAPERHANGER,
AND GLAZIER : : SIGN-
WRITER AND DECORATOR

First-class Workmanship Guaranteed.
House Painting and
Beautiful Room Decoration.
PRICES MODERATE.