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JOURNAL OF
THE TRANSACTIONS
OF
The Victoria Institute,
OR,
Philosophical Society of Great Britain.

EDITED BY THE SECRETARY.

VOL. XL.



LONDON :

(Published by the Institute, 1, Adelphi Terrace House, Charing Cross, W.C.)

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1908.

ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.*

THE REV. G. F. WHIDBORNE, M.A., F.R.G.S., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read and confirmed.

The following paper was then read by the Author :

*ON THE DECAY OF ULTRAMONTANISM FROM AN
HISTORICAL POINT OF VIEW.* By Rev. Chancellor
J. J. LIAS, M.A.

I HAVE been asked to give an account of the present condition of Ultramontaniam from an historic point of view. There can be no doubt whatever that a most extraordinary ferment is at present going on in countries formerly Roman Catholic, and especially in France, which has produced a crop of more recent movements, spasmodic and unrelated to one another, not only in France, but in Spain and Italy, and even in the United States, in South America, and in the Philippine Islands. Many of these movements are wild and unregulated, and not always destined to be permanent. But taken all together, they represent a state of chaos among the members of the Roman Catholic Church which is altogether unprecedented in the history of Christianity. Nor can the keenest foresight, nor the most powerful imagination, attempt to forecast the future of Christianity in these lands. In the sixteenth century, whatever the violence of the religious upheaval, the conflict was at least one between different forms of belief. In the twentieth century it would seem to be a conflict, not so much between different forms of religion, as between belief, non-belief, and downright unbelief. To such a pass has the rule of Rome brought religion in the countries over which she has so long had sway.

* Monday, March 16th, 1908.

Not but that there has long been constant dissatisfaction among the more far-sighted and independent of her sons. The names of Wessemburg, Hirscher, Sailer, Schmidt, Rosmini, Gioberti, Curci, Lamennais, Lacordaire, and even Montalembert himself, will remind us that continual protest against the working of the Roman system was raised by men of genius and character in various lands. But all these men agreed in one point. However necessary reform might be, resistance to authority was a thing not to be thought of. So each one of them was silenced in turn, and died in distress and isolation. And as it is a notorious fact that unsuccessful resistance strengthens the hands of those in power, the reforms so ably and conscientiously urged became more and more impossible as each of those who had advocated them was condemned to choose between excommunication and retraction. One, however, of those men, Lamennais, when driven into exile from his Church, uttered a noteworthy prediction. He said that so abject was the spirit of the members of the Church of Rome, that even the noblest of causes could not stimulate their advocates into open resistance to Church authority. If, he added, there ever were such resistance, those who dared to raise the standard of rebellion would be stigmatised at first as fools or madmen; few would join them; and the infant community would be almost overwhelmed with the storm of ridicule and obloquy to which it was exposed. But if its members persevered, he added, they would by degrees attract adherents, but it would be a long time before they would be more than an insignificant sect. This prophesy has been realised to the letter in the history of the Old Catholic body.

That body owed its existence to the Vatican Council of 1870, which put the capstone on the Papal autocracy by decreeing the personal infallibility of the Pope. The summoning of the Council created a great turmoil in Europe. A band of German theologians, with Dollinger at their head, resisted the definitions with all their might, pointing out that they involved a change of doctrine of a very serious nature; that they were opposed to the decrees of the Council of Constance in 1415—decrees which the Council of Trent in the 16th century did not dare to touch; and that they would certainly embroil the Roman Church with the Civil power throughout Europe. I cannot dwell on the history of that Council. Those who wish to study it can do so in the late Mr. W. Arthur's *The Pope, the Kings, and the People*. It is true that the history of the Council, like that of Trent, has come down to us in different shapes. Just as Pallavicino and

Sarpi have told the story of the latter, so Mr. Arthur, following Friedrich and the author of the *Letters of Quirinus*, is confronted by Cardinal Manning, in his *True Story of the Vatican Council*. Modern historians, with their peculiar views of impartiality, have been accustomed to cut the Gordian knot of this conflict of testimony on the well-known commercial principle of "splitting the difference;" that is to say, taking the mean between the two extremes. It would seem to me, I confess, fairer to scrutinise the statements on each side with unsparing severity, just as witnesses on both sides of a case tried in our Courts of Law are examined and cross-examined by the counsel employed, and more especially to make allowance for the fact that the conflicting witnesses are on the one side speaking on behalf of an ancient and powerful association, strong in prescription, in material resources, and in influence with persons in authority, while the witnesses on the other side are men with their lives,* or at least their characters and prospects, in their hands, men who may not unfairly plead that they were urged on by a moral necessity to expose the devices by which their opponents have sought to maintain their influence over the thoughts and actions of mankind.

Certain it was that the resistance to the Vatican decrees was extremely strong in intellect if not in numbers, both within and without the Council, and that the strongest possible pressure of all kinds was put upon the recalcitrants. But the prediction of Lamennais was fulfilled to the letter. Every bishop, except Strossmayer, who had opposed the decrees, ultimately gave in his submission. And Strossmayer, so long as his adversaries let him alone, was indisposed to attack them. The Archbishop of Munich therefore felt himself strong enough to excommunicate the real leader of the opposition, Döllinger, who declared that neither as a Christian, a theologian or a citizen, could he accept the decrees. The excommunication was launched in April, 1871.

The sequel is a further illustration of the soundness of the forecast by Lamennais. The excitement throughout Europe was immense. Would there be any resistance? It had been threatened. And if Döllinger headed a schism, it would most certainly be a formidable one. But Döllinger had enjoyed—or undergone—the training of a Roman ecclesiastic, and at the critical moment he shrank from precipitating a schism. He

* Fra Paolo Sarpi was more than once attacked by assassins, and escaped with difficulty from their hands.

resisted as an individual ; he submitted as a priest. He subsided into private life and never performed priestly functions again. Without him the resistance became insignificant, as far as numbers were concerned. A few priests and laymen in Switzerland, Germany, and Austria, resolved that they would organize for religious worship, for the baptism of their children, for the religious solemnization of matrimony, and for the burial of their dead. But their numbers did not amount to more than 50,000 in Germany, about the same number in Switzerland, and 20,000 in Austria. In France only one single priest, the celebrated preacher Père Hyacinthe, dared to resist, and one single congregation in Paris alone survives to this day. The French temperament, more vivacious than qualified to maintain an uphill fight, may have been one cause for this. But a far more serious one was that there was war between France and Germany at the time, and that the leaders of the opposition to the Council were German theologians. A few congregations were formed later on in Italy, under the leadership of Count Campello, a former canon of St. Peter's at Rome. But the work was feebly prosecuted and ultimately died out.

The question how the new body was to be provided with a canonical Episcopate, when all the dissentient Bishops eventually submitted to the decrees, except Strossmayer, and when he was disinclined to offer overt resistance, was settled in a singular way. There was in Holland a small and dwindling body which called itself the Old Catholic Church of Holland. This had subsisted for two centuries in consequence of a quarrel with the Pope, which had ended in his launching an excommunication at the recalcitrant Bishops and in their determination to offer organised resistance to what they conceived to be the unjust action of his Holiness. The whole story is full of interest, but it must not detain us now.* It is sufficient to say that the Dutch Old Catholic Bishops threw themselves heartily into the resistance to the Pope's pretensions, and one of them came over to Munich to confirm the children of those who had been excommunicated in consequence of their refusal to accept the new dogma. He was received with enthusiasm, and eventually John Hubert Reinkens was elected by the dissentient clergy and laity first Old Catholic Bishop for Germany. He was consecrated by Dr. Heykamp, Old Catholic Bishop of Deventer at Cologne, on June 4th, 1873, amid general delight.

* It will be found in Von Schulte's *History of the Old Catholic Movement*, and in Miss Scarth's brief sketch of it.

On that very day the Old Catholic Archbishop of Utrecht, who had accepted the invitation to Munich to hold a confirmation, died, and Dr. Heykamp subsequently took his place. Three years later Dr. Eduard Herzog, formerly Professor of Theology at the University of Berne, was consecrated Old Catholic Bishop for Switzerland. In Austria, where there were several congregations, Dr. Cech was elected Bishop, but the Austrian Government refused to allow him to be consecrated, and to this day he remains still Bishop elect, though the recent changes in the Austrian Constitution make it not improbable that the objections to his consecration may be withdrawn.

Everything that money, influence and numbers could do, was done by the Roman Church to crush the infant community. If the Old Catholic leaders are to be trusted—and I for one believe them and have reason for believing them—Roman ecclesiastics stooped to slanders of the vilest kind against men who were giving up all for conscience sake. Protestantism was scarcely less hostile. The German and Swiss Protestants could not understand—cannot yet understand—why these men did not become Protestants. And the German Government—governments on the Continent interfere more in religious matters than we do—was irritated when a *third* religious body came into existence and demanded State recognition. That recognition was not denied, but it was grudgingly accorded, and so the State, the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Churches united to stifle the infant communion in its cradle. As the Lutheran Professor Beyschlag, who up to his death warmly championed the movement, once said, there was no form of persecution, short of death or imprisonment, which had not been employed to break up the Old Catholic Church. And the Roman system which had for centuries been strong enough to bear down all opposition within its pale, had created a timid and helpless laity, a still more timid and helpless priesthood, and a most timid and helpless Episcopate—all of whom were hopelessly ill-adapted for resistance of any kind. Well did Lamennais prophesy that any attempt at organised resistance to the Papacy would be found almost an impossibility. But the "little flock" went bravely on its way and defied all the combined attempts to put it down.

Meanwhile the struggle over the infallibility question excited the keenest interest in this country. In the earlier stages of the struggle the columns of the *Guardian* were full, week by week, of news from Germany, and especially from Munich. But with the submission or inaction of all the Bishops present at the Council the interest of the Tractarian leaders in the conflict

visibly waned, and when Döllinger refused to head the schism it had almost disappeared. But with an inexplicable, yet most pardonable inconsistency, Döllinger became the champion and the counsellor of the Church he had refused to join. He called together members of the Churches which claimed the title of Catholic, and in 1874 and 1875 Conferences were held at Bonn, which were attended by Anglican bishops and priests, Russian ecclesiastics and "Orthodox" bishops. I myself went to the Conference in 1875, at which, among others, Archbishop Plunket and Canon Liddon were present; and the scene was a striking one. It seemed as though the cause of disunion in the Christian Church had been at last arrested, and that the current of feeling would henceforth run in the direction of reunion. The formula of concord between East and West arrived at on that occasion, after long and thorough discussion, seemed a pledge that this pleasing prospect was not deceptive.

But the time for reunion movements had not yet arrived. The baneful spirits of prejudice and mutual suspicion were still too powerful. The refusal of Dr. Pusey to accept the formula cooled Dr. Liddon's interest in the movement. The more extreme of the Tractarian party raised the cry of "schism." The Tractarian journals either threw cold water on Old Catholic concerns, or suppressed as much information about their affairs as possible. They sometimes even hinted that they "could a tale unfold" about the Old Catholic clergy, which, out of kindness they would leave unrevealed. The old-fashioned Anglican or High Church party still held fast to a movement which seemed to approximate to our own English Reformation. I am sorry that I must refer my hearers to Miss Scarth's work for the generous and enthusiastic appreciation of the movement and its leaders on the part of Bishops Christopher Wordsworth and Harold Browne in England, and of Bishop Cleveland Coxe in America. But most unfortunately, as I must think, the old-fashioned High Churchman took no steps to preserve their existence as an organised school of thought in our Church, and our moderate men now are moderate by temperament rather than on definite grounds of theology and history. The old warm and generous appreciation of the English Reformation, and of the English Prayer Book as its exponent, has died out, and with it all interest in a movement which, of all religious movements, approaches most nearly to the principles of the Reformed Church of England. As long as Bishops Christopher Wordsworth and Harold Browne lived, there was close and continuous communication between the Old Catholics and our

Church, which culminated in the visits of Bishops Reinkens and Herzog to England in 1881, when they repeatedly received Holy Communion with the bishops and clergy of our Church. Since that time a coolness has been allowed to grow up on both sides, which has slowly and steadily increased. Bishop Herzog had already, in 1880, crossed the Atlantic, and had been received in full Convention by the American Church as a Catholic Bishop. But the same mysterious coldness, the causes of which I am unable to fathom, seems to have crept in between the American Church and the Old Catholics. The latter fancy it is because they are a small and not rapidly growing body (how far this is true we shall see presently). It has doubtless been increased by what is known as the "pact of Utrecht" (what that is I will shortly explain). But I am bound to say, personally, that I can see no rational ground for the coolness which exists, and that I am convinced that it is the duty of lovers of peace on both sides to put an end to it as soon as may be.

The new movement was imperilled at the outset by dangers from within as well as from without. The first intention of those who raised the standard of rebellion was, as "Old Catholics," to take their stand upon the doctrine and practice of the Latin Church previous to the Vatican Council. But at no great distance backward there loomed upon them the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, decreed by the Pope on his own sole authority in 1854. To this decree they were themselves, if not actively, yet at least passively, bound. By degrees they found themselves compelled to disown the decrees of Trent, and finally to cut themselves adrift from all which had not formally been decreed as doctrine previously to the great schism between the East and the West in the eleventh century. With this doctrinal reform, the necessity of reform in the discipline and ritual, of the Church was inseparably connected. This new departure, however unavoidable, placed them on an altogether different footing to that which they at first intended to take, and was soon found to have raised up some serious difficulties in their way. It was, nevertheless, impossible to recede from the path of reform, and Transubstantiation, the Roman doctrine of Purgatory and its abuses, that of Invocation of Saints, the belief in Seven Sacraments, in the necessity of Confession, in the application of the Sacrifice of the mass to the soul of any one person, living or dead, were given up, and a commemoration of the souls of the faithful departed was substituted for public prayers for the dead. The Calendar was revised, and its reference to many legendary

saints and events was struck out. The service was cleared, as ours was in the sixteenth century, of what was regarded as superstitious, unhistorical, heterodox, or doubtful, and in Germany and Switzerland, as also in Austria, it was translated into the vernacular, and communion in both kinds was, for the present at least, permitted, though not enjoined. These changes, necessary as they were to the future growth of the Old Catholic body, were vehemently resisted by a section of it, and as an instance of the difficulties involved in such forward steps, it may be mentioned that the Abbé Deramey, who presided over an enthusiastic congregation of 1,500 souls at Porrentruy (or Pruntrut) in the Bernese Jura, positively refused to accept the changes, left his cure, and Porrentruy has been lost to the movement ever since. The movement received a still more serious check in 1878. The laity, in view of the frequent scandals resulting from the rule requiring all clergy to be celibates,* insisted that this rule should be abolished. The Bishops, afraid of the consequences, resisted the proposal. Döllinger energetically pronounced against it. But in Germany the proposition was carried by 19 clergy to 6, by 56 lay delegates to 16. The immediate effect was disastrous. Döllinger protested, and his protest was supported by the learned and excellent Professors Friedrich and Reusch. The former declared that the infant church had at one stroke alienated the vast majority of the devout women throughout all Europe. The Dutch community threatened excommunication, though the threat was never carried into effect. What was worse, the number of congregations in Baden sunk at once from 44 to 36. The number of souls in Prussia sank from 21,650 to 18,351, and this decline was progressive in Baden as well as Prussia until it was arrested in 1883. In Bavaria, where Döllinger's influence was all powerful, no numbers were reported between 1878 and 1883, when they were found to have been diminished by one half.

Yet the brave little band still struggled on. But its history since 1878 has been a hidden one. Switzerland and Austria ranged themselves by the side of Germany on the celibacy question, but apparently without the sinister influence upon numbers which was experienced in Germany. The little Dutch Church, which had been crystallized and unprogressive

* The inquirer may be referred, on this delicate subject, to the reports of convictions given in *La France Noire*, by Paul Desachy, pp. 294, 295, 296, note.

since 1700, refused to alter either doctrine or practice in any way, and the Roman Mass, and even the prayer for the Pope, are still retained in its Liturgy. The first parish formed in the Roman Catholic Cantons in Switzerland was formed at Lucerne in or about 1884, and after a desperate struggle to obtain a Church from Government to worship in, which lasted about ten years, the Old Catholics and the Anglican Church in America combined to build a Church for themselves, where they still worship together. No further steps, however, have been taken in the Catholic Cantons. In 1890 the "pact of Utrecht" to which I have already alluded, was formed, bringing the five Old Catholic Bishops into close and constant connection. This was much lamented by the friends of the movement in this country and America, and was doubtless one reason of the coolness which has sprung up between the Anglican and Old Catholic Churches. The Dutch Old Catholic Church was possessed with a strong prejudice against us Anglicans, which in 1894 displayed itself in an attack on the validity of our Orders, published when some Anglican clergy were their guests at a Congress held at Rotterdam. This attack was at once energetically repudiated by Bishop Reinkens and Professor Friedrich. But the mischief done has never been repaired. It threw many Anglicans who were well disposed to the movement into the arms of those who had energetically protested against it from the beginning. Yet it is impossible to see how the Old Catholics could have done otherwise. It was impossible for either the German or the Swiss Bishop to repudiate the body from which they had obtained their succession. And as separation was thus felt to be impossible, closer union was inevitable, let the consequences be what they might. And after all, the closer union has been found to cut two ways. A visitor to the Congress at the Hague in September, 1907, could not fail to perceive how far the Dutch body had progressed in a liberal direction since 1894. And as a proof thereof it may be stated that a version of the Liturgy in Dutch has been prepared by authority, and may at any moment be formally adopted.

The literary result of the movement has been altogether out of proportion to its numbers. Von Schulte's monumental work on the Old Catholic movement, the great work of Döllinger and Reusch on the Jesuits, Langen's history of the Roman Church, Michaud's learned researches into the history of France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, are known to all scholars. The *Deutscher Merkur*, a newspaper published at Bonn, has been a great help to the struggling communion. The weekly organs

of the movement are able and well conducted. And the establishment in 1892 of the *Revue Internationale de Théologie*, which has appeared quarterly ever since that date, and which has contained articles in German, French, and English by members of the Old Catholic, "Orthodox," and English Churches, has at least maintained the character of the movement for intellect and learning. Nor should the historian of the movement omit to mention the Congresses which have been held biennially or triennially since 1892. The first Congress held at Lucerne was in many ways a notable gathering. I cannot now enter into particulars. But if the succeeding Congresses have been far less remarkable and epoch-making, and if we Englishmen have unfortunately been chiefly conspicuous in our absence from them, they have undoubtedly been among the most effective means of keeping the Old Catholic Churches together, and in being. Their numbers have not grown to any very great extent save in Austria, where the *Los Von Rom* movement, erroneously supposed to have been a purely political movement, has largely augmented, and is still largely augmenting, the numbers both of Protestants and Old Catholics. Under its auspices, Old Catholicism has extended to Bohemia, Styria and the Tyrol. In Germany and Switzerland the Old Catholics have unquestionably at least repaired the losses I have mentioned above, if they have done no more.* But the Hague Congress of 1907 showed signs of expansion in very remarkable and unexpected ways. The unrest and dissatisfaction which permeates the Roman Church from one end of the world to the other, broke out a few years ago between the Polish Catholics and their Irish Bishops at Chicago. The Old Catholics were appealed to, and they consecrated a Bishop for the Poles, who were supposed to number about 40,000. The Bishop died in 1907. His flock at once appealed to the Old Catholics to consecrate another Bishop. Dissensions had broken out among the adherents of the first Bishop. But it was announced at the Hague that both parties had united to elect Franz Hodur in his stead, and he was accordingly consecrated in Holland last October. A considerable number of dissatisfied Czechs in America also sent a Bishop elect to the Congress, but it was decided not to consecrate him at present, but to authorize Bishop Hodur to perform for these dissentients any episcopal acts that might be necessary. The representative of some

* Congregations were formed for the first time at Stuttgart in 1907, and at Lausanne in February, 1908.

Portuguese Reformers also appeared at the Congress, and asked for, and received, expressions of sympathy.

Bishop Van Thiel, of Deventer, announced that applications had been received from France, and that as soon as properly elected candidates to preside over Old Catholic sees there had been presented to the Dutch Bishops, they were prepared to consecrate them. The republic of Bolivia, having disestablished its Church, sent a deputation to Europe not long ago to report on the condition and working of the Old Catholic Churches. It is clear, therefore, that, in spite of the repeated prophecies that Old Catholicism was either dead or dying, it is very far from being either one or the other. On the contrary, it is extremely likely that, in the chaos into which Rome is being reduced all over the world, large numerical additions to the Old Catholic Churches will take place in the near future, since they have both a stable organization, formularies, and a definite creed, and make their appeal to the ages when the Church of Christ was visibly one.

I have spoken at length on the Old Catholic movement, because it is the first in our time, and the fact that it has not been crushed out has had some effect on what has followed. I must now glance at some other movements, still in their infancy, which at once manifest the inner weakness of the Roman Church and tend to increase it. The history of France and its Church since the Revolution is unfortunately very little known in England. I am indebted to the fascinating volume of my friend the Rev. A. Galton for most of the details I am about to give, though since 1895 I have been personally and rather closely acquainted with some of the numerous priests who have seceded from the Roman Church in France, and have been working for reform. For the sake of brevity, I must begin at the French Revolution. In 1790 the Legislative Assembly dealt with the affairs of the Church, and, naturally enough, approached them from a democratic point of view, and under the impression that, under an aristocratic *régime* the rights of the poorer clergy had been very much neglected. Mr. Galton thinks that the *Constitution Civile du Clergé* which it drew up has been unfairly represented, and in defending it he has, I think, made out a good case. The attacks of Ultramontanes upon it may well be explained by remembering the fact that they are never satisfied unless they have the absolute control of State as well as Church. Next comes the *Concordat* between Church and State, approved by Napoleon in 1802. Of this it is sufficient to say that its provisions have been so manipulated by the Pope

and his advisers that it has given the absolute control of ecclesiastical matters into their hands, making the parish priests mere slaves to their Bishops, and the Bishops to the Pope, while the religious orders are under the control of the Papacy alone. The *Organiques* or administrative provisions of this *concordat* have never been accepted by the Pope, and the numerous changes of government which have taken place between 1802 and 1870 have practically prevented the State from insisting on them. We come next to the Third Republic established in 1870 on the ruins of the Second Empire. Strange to say, this Third Republic was at first ultra-conservative. Under the presidency of MacMahon, the old monarchy of the days before 1789 was just on the point of being restored, when the determination of the Legitimist heir to the throne to fly the white flag, the symbol of the *ancien régime*, put an end to the negotiations. It is hardly necessary to say that the Ultramontanes made the best use of their majority in the Legislature, and never, since France became a nation, was the Church so uncontrolled in that country as during the years immediately following 1870. A change, however, was at hand. The Republicans, under the leadership of Gambetta, first obtained a majority in the Chamber, and then in the Senate. That able statesman clearly discerned the direction from which danger threatened the Republic. *Le clericalisme, voilà l'ennemi*, was the pregnant phrase with which he inaugurated the campaign which may now be regarded as closed. One would not refuse to associate oneself with this sentiment, provided it were understood that by "clericalism" was meant the autocracy, not the legitimate influence, of the clergy. But this by the way. The Ultramontanes saw their danger clearly. In the Boulanger episode, and then in the cruel attempt to fix a false charge on Dreyfus, they endeavoured violently to suppress popular government by means of the army. We have not all, I hope, forgotten the proceedings at the Dreyfus trial, the savage abuse of opponents found in the Ultramontane organs *La Croix* and *La Libre Parole*, and pilloried by "Verax," a Roman Catholic, in the London *Times* of that date. These passionate outbursts culminated in the dastardly, and I believe entirely unprecedented, attempt to murder the counsel for the accused man. It is true that this was probably the attempt of a fanatic. But the memory of William the Silent, of Henry III., and Henry IV., of France will recall the fact to us how often Ultramontanism has stimulated and has never declined to use fanaticism for its own ends. The genuine Republicans in France were

naturally seriously alarmed. The immense wealth of the Orders, or "congregations," as they are sometimes termed, and the determined way in which it was employed to the prejudice of the popular cause, roused the Republicans to action not less resolute.

We must remember that these orders—so-called "religious"—are not simply, as many English people believe, associations of pious folk for purely religious purposes. Many of them, as a Roman Catholic correspondent of the *Guardian* has frankly admitted, are purely money-making institutions. More than one of the male orders is largely engaged in the manufacture of *liqueurs*. Many orders of women are occupied in laundry or dressmaking work. Not unfrequently they have been enabled to obtain for themselves exemption from the rules relating to sanitary matters, and hours of work, which are imposed on ordinary traders. And it is also matter of common knowledge among people abroad that a very lucrative traffic is carried on in the names of St. Joseph and St. Anthony of Padua, in the way of intercessions with the Court of Heaven for persons on earth who desire sundry material benefits.* The "teaching orders," too, had managed almost to monopolise the education of the young. It may fairly be said for the French Republic that, had the "congregations" kept themselves entirely to religious matters, instead of meddling in political intrigue, and trying to overthrow the form of government which the country had deliberately adopted, they would have been left alone. As it was, they were simply required to enter into reasonable engagements to behave like loyal citizens, and to conform to regulations of no very great severity laid down by the civil authority for its own protection. And, as Mr. Galton tells us, "the Republic has only applied laws which every French government has administered without question."† The point to which I would ask your attention is this: that three successive administrations have approved the measures taken in the interests of public order by MM. Waldeck-Rousseau and Combes, and that the separation of Church and State, including the turning the Bishops out of their palaces, has been passed by

* See the articles by St. Genix—a Roman Catholic—in the *Contemporary Review*, afterwards published in a separate form by the Imperial Protestant Federation.

† *History of Church and State in France*, p. 260. The words "without question" are undoubtedly too strong. But the Ultramontanes have frequently acquiesced in such application, and have only denounced it when they felt strong enough to do so.

large majorities in the Legislature and approved by an overwhelming majority of the people. That the rejection of the Church involves, for the present at least, the rejection of Christianity, must be regretfully admitted. But it is surely only fair to contend that the whole blame of this can hardly rest on the French people. If a similar event occurred in England, we should surely feel ourselves unable to deny that the bishops and clergy of the Church must bear at least some part of the blame. It seems at least a fair inference that there is something amiss with Ultramontane Christianity when it finds itself at once suppressed by the Government and abandoned by the people. Public opinion in this country appears in this matter, as it usually does, very much astray when it discusses the ecclesiastical or civil affairs of other countries. It may be questioned whether we always understand our own politics. Anyhow, we may honestly confess that we give ourselves a great deal too little trouble to understand the politics of other peoples.

Meanwhile, the state of religion in France has grown rapidly worse. A large majority of the people profess no religion at all. The priests, since 1895, have been steadily seceding from the Roman Church, and since their number reached a thousand they have ceased to be counted. The Protestant bodies, though released from the shackles imposed upon them by the *Concordat*, seem unable to mark out a course for themselves, or heal their differences. The English McAll mission, from which great things were at one time expected, seems unable to gain any permanent hold on the French people. The *Chrétien Français*, an organ of the seceding priests conducted by M. Bourrier, seems unable to make much way. Another ex-Roman priest who came to the front for a moment has retired into private life. Mons. Henri des Houx, who adopted the very sensible course of forming *Associations Cultuelles* under the new law, which should be served by canonically ordained priests independent of the Pope, unfortunately fell in with a wandering Archbishop without Suffragans named Vilatte, of whom, had I time, I could tell you a great deal, and thus made himself ridiculous. And to make oneself ridiculous in France is to fail. So that once hopeful plan has been abandoned. One ex-priest wrote to me last year from Nantes, in Brittany, to say that he had started services in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer, and that he had been asked to do the same in Paris. Amid all this sad scene of confusion and disorder there seems only one practicable scheme, that of the Dutch Old Catholics, themselves the theological representatives of Port Royal,

consenting to consecrate a Bishop or Bishops for France, elected by the seceding priests. In that quarter, at least, one might look for a definite theology, a definite organisation, and for connection with Churches on precisely the same basis in other lands. England is, of course, too insular to intervene, or even to take any steps to understand what is going on. And it is to be feared that the Dutch Old Catholic Bishops will insist on their priests being celibates. In the present state of feeling in France they might just as well insist that they should be Hottentots. France, if she does nothing else, imperatively demands that the priest of the future shall be a man and a citizen—that he shall not form one of a caste apart from the national life.

I will conclude with the briefest possible sketch of the state of things elsewhere. In Spain, what is called "Liberal Catholicism," which is hardly distinguishable from scepticism, is distinctly on the increase. And so unpopular are the monks and nuns in some of the Spanish cities, that they are frequently hissed as they pass along the streets. In Italy, the Ultramontanes were at one time forbidden by the Pope to take part in the elections, and great apprehensions were once felt on the side of the Government and a lively satisfaction expressed by the clerical party as to the probable result when the Pope withdrew his prohibition. An election was held in Rome in November, 1907, and the result was the victory of the Government candidates. I have already referred to Bolivia, which, in its treatment of the Roman Church has followed the example of France. And in other South American Republics repeated requests have been made, with the support of ecclesiastics of high standing, that the priests may henceforth be allowed to marry. But the Curia was forced to turn a deaf ear to the request. In America, the once well-known Father Hecker raised the banner of "Americanism," a sort of ecclesiastical Home Rule for the Roman Communion in the United States. He had the support of the learned Father Klein and of Archbishop Ireland. All the diplomatic skill of Leo XIII. was summoned up to meet this danger, and by his adroit manœuvres he was ultimately successful in scotching at least, if not killing, the movement before it gained a head.

In the Philippines a priest named Aglipay has contrived to detach from the Roman Church some two or three millions of natives, exasperated by the treatment they received from the Spanish friars, and he has been joined by some hundreds of priests.

In Ireland a spirit of rebellion against the working of the

Roman Church has long been secretly felt, and open expression has recently been given to it by Mr. F. Hugh O'Donnell, Mr. Michael McCarthy, Mr. Bart Kennedy, and a very recent writer whose *nom de plume* is "Pat." Even in England dissatisfaction with Ultramontane methods is now being openly avowed. A considerable number of complaints have been transmitted by Roman Catholics to *Truth* concerning the methods of Ultramontane finance.* At Ealing the standard of rebellion was openly unfurled by Father O'Halloran, and I understand he is still working there in defiance of his ecclesiastical superiors. More than this, I saw myself at the Old Catholic Congress at Olten the representatives of a body of Roman priests in this country who, as I was informed by leading Old Catholics, were sent to ascertain whether a branch of the Old Catholic Church could be established in this country.

The negotiations came to nothing. But they at least bore witness to the widespread spirit of unrest which pervades the Roman Church. I must say just a word or two about the "Modernists," as they are called.† I am not disposed personally to subscribe to all the opinions expressed by these writers. I must believe that they occasionally meddle with subjects which among Christians should be held sacred. But at least one heartily associates oneself with a protest against the antiquated theology and exploded scholasticism of the Roman Church, and to the recent condemnation of long strings of propositions by the Pope. It is worthy of note that the earlier "Modernists"—Schell, Kraus and Ehrhard in Germany, and Curci, in Italy—were ultimately compelled to submit to the judgment of the Holy See. It is a sign of the times that St. George Mivart and Father Tyrrell in England, Loisy‡ and Houtin in France, have *not* so submitted themselves. I understand, moreover, that the Pope's recent Encyclical has disturbed the minds of many of the most influential clergy of the Roman Church here in England. It is understood to condemn Newman. And many of these clergy are Newman's disciples.

The revolt is spreading. It includes dissatisfaction with Roman doctrines and methods. As far as one can see at

* These details have been made known from time to time through the public Press, English and foreign.

† See an article in the *Contemporary Review* for November, 1907, by Mr. Addis, formerly a Roman priest.

‡ I see by the *Standard* of 9th March, that Father Loisy has been excommunicated.—Ed.

present, it appears that what in politics we call the democratic spirit, and what in the Christian Church is called the priesthood of the laity, is destined, some day, to deal a mortal blow to the Ultramontane cause.

DISCUSSION.

Professor H. LANGHORNE ORCHARD, M.A., B.Sc., wrote :—

Chancellor Lias never reads a paper in this room without making us his debtors. We hope that God will prolong his life so that he may be able to address us on several future occasions. The valuable paper, to which we have been giving our attention, is of an interest hardly second to its importance. There are, however, spots in the sun. One is the absence of any definition of the term "Ultramontanism." Apparently it is to be understood in the same sense as Gladstone's "Vaticanism." Another spot is the use of the word "Roman," instead of "Roman Catholic." Such use is open to the objection that it suggests that either the Roman Catholic is the only Christian Church in Rome, or the Roman Catholics are connected in some special way with the ancient Romans.

The origin and history of the Old Catholic Movement, so ably brought before our Society, constitutes a formidable indictment not of Ultramontanism only, but of Roman Catholicism as a whole. The learned Chancellor points out that "the Roman system which had for centuries been strong enough to bear down all opposition, had created a timid and helpless laity, a still more timid and helpless priesthood, and a most timid and helpless Episcopate—all of whom were hopelessly ill-adapted for resistance of any kind."

The pathetic narrative conveys a warning and a hope. A warning against slipping the neck into the noose of authority, when that authority is without justification in reason. A hope which, as we have seen, is warranted by many signs of the times, that, within no very long time, a degrading tyranny may come to an end. The *Los Von Rom* will continue, and the last word has not been said about the *Associations Cultuelles*. Ultramontanism must collapse before the invincible working of that Wisdom which is wiser than men and that Strength which is stronger than men.

Lieut.-Colonel MACKINLAY.—I wish to add my thanks for the very instructive paper which we have just heard.

The progress of the Spanish Reformed Church (with which I am in sympathy) has, I think, been somewhat overstated. Its growth has indeed been slow.

I have lived for two years in Spain engaged in gospel mission work, and have kept in touch with it since, and so I have had some opportunity to understand the Spanish attitude. There seem to me to be three difficulties with which the reformed church in that country has had to contend.

- (1) The Spanish nation strongly resented, I believe, the assumption of the authority of a bishop over those whom they considered to be heretics; I also believe that the patriotic Spanish instinct resented the action of the foreign Archbishop.
- (2) The time has not yet arrived in Spain for any easy and wholesale severance from the Church of Rome: hence those who leave her are almost invariably actuated by deep spiritual motives; they run the risk of persecution and they incur a certainty of loss of some kind. Men and women under such circumstances are apt to make a clean sweep. Having suffered from priestly domination, the recognition of episcopal authority hardly commends itself to most of them at the present time.
- (3) A really considerable number of gospel workers have gone to Spain during the last five-and-twenty years, chiefly from England. Few or none have gone with the idea of advocating an episcopal form of church government.

I therefore think that the present slight movement in Spain from Roman Catholicism is towards the formation of very simple congregations of believers, rather than to an episcopal form of church arrangement.

The SECRETARY (Professor HULL), in offering his cordial thanks to Chancellor Lias for undertaking to prepare the interesting paper to which they had all listened, admitted that it was with some feeling of hesitation he had invited the author to undertake the task, as he was a little doubtful whether or not the subject came within the range of those usually discussed at their meetings; but the manner in which the paper had been received had dispelled that

uncertainty. It would be observed that the subject had been treated in its historical aspect; and he (the speaker) considered that all great social, or religious, movements of the day were subjects properly open to discussion and examination by the Victoria Institute.

He confessed that he had from the commencement taken a great interest in the movement known in Germany as the "Alt Katholik," from the time when the illustrious Professor of the University of Munich, Dr. Von Döllinger, had headed the band of protesters against the modern assumptions of the See of Rome. He had long hoped for a reform movement within the Roman Church itself which, discarding the accretions of Romanism as laid down by the Council of Trent, and the still more recent innovations of the Vatican Council of 1870, might fall back on the doctrines of the Council of Nice—which were held by all the churches of the Reformation. The declaration agreed to at the Congress held in Lucerne in 1892 gives us the true position of Old Catholicism as "being no mere protest against the novel dogmas of the Vatican, but a return to the true Catholicism of the ancient and undivided Church, and at the same time a call to all Christian communities to unite upon this basis of Christian antiquity." This resolution was introduced by Professor Friedrich in an eloquent address (the *Record*, September 23, 1892). Surely such a call ought to be heartily responded to by members of all Reformed Churches! It was however, lamentable, to learn from the author's paper that in Protestant Germany, the government with Prince Bismarck at its head, should have taken up an unfriendly attitude to the New Reformation, though ultimately obliged to give it recognition. As an authentic statement of the enthusiasm with which the movement had been welcomed at the beginning of this century a paragraph from the Vienna correspondent of *The Times*, dated March 29, 1899, may here be inserted:—

"The extension of the revolt against the political influence of the Roman Catholic Church in this country is daily becoming more manifest. Constant evidence is forthcoming that should means not be found for counteracting it there is every likelihood of its assuming considerable proportions. The apprehension entertained that it would in course of time find an echo across the frontier proves to have been correct. An appeal on behalf of the agitation, just issued by the Berlin branch of the German Evangelical Association, which is specially devoted to assisting the movement in Austria, is announced in this evening's telegrams. The number

of conversions may not yet be very great, although, as a matter of fact, it is difficult to ascertain exactly on what scale they have taken place. It is known, however, that the movement has been making steady progress, and that it is intimately associated with the German Nationalist or Pan-Germanic agitation. Its significance does not consist in the actual number of proselytes. The mere fact that such an agitation should have made its appearance at all in Catholic Austria is a novel and profoundly interesting feature in the development of the great crisis through which this country is now passing."

Colonel Mackinlay's views regarding the position and prospects of the Spanish Reformed Church under the direction of Bishop Cabrera will doubtless be received with great respect, as they are the result of personal observation, though probably not very recent. He thinks the Spanish people resent the formation of an episcopal church in their midst as an intrusion. But the bishop of this reformed church was careful not to give any cause of offence, as he did not assume any territorial title, such as did the bishops appointed by the Pope, when on the advice of Cardinal Wiseman he nominated the present Roman Catholic hierarchy of this country. It may be questioned whether any form of pure Christianity, other than the episcopal, would have been understood by the people of Spain and Portugal. Certainly it would not have contained the elements of strength and solidity such as are afforded by the episcopal form of church government where there is a recognised head and centre of appeal in a large and wide tract of country. The Episcopal Church of Spain and Portugal is thoroughly evangelical in doctrine, and its progress in the short period may be judged by the following statistics taken from *Light and Truth* for January, 1908 :—

"In Spain there are ten churches or chapels, one Bishop, and eleven ministers.

In Portugal—ten churches and ten ministers.

There is an institution for training candidates for the ministry, presided over by Rev. J. S. Figueiredo. Mission services are held in a large number of towns and villages.

There are twenty schools in charge of forty teachers, and there are twelve licensed preachers. More than 2,000 children attend the schools, and all this work has had to be carried on in the face of opposition and persecution, and within a period which we can all recollect." There is, however, plenty of room for the work

of non-episcopal evangelists such as those Colonel Mackinlay refers to.

As regards Mr. Marston's statement, the question arises, is it well authenticated? The Pauline doctrine of Justification by Faith must be placed in connection with that of St. James, "Faith without works is dead" (Jas. ii, 14-17). Perhaps it is this two-fold doctrine that is the vital place in the Old Catholic Church, but we need more light before pronouncing judgment on a matter outside our knowledge, and indeed, outside the scope of Mr. Lias's.

The discussion was continued by Mr. ROUSE, who gave an account of Dr. McAll's mission work in Paris, by the Rev. Dr. NOYES, Rev. R. FAITHFUL DAVIES, Mr. W. SOLTAU, and the Rev. H. J. R. MARSTON, who, in thanking the author, expressed the opinion that the reason the Old Catholic movement had so slowly expanded was that its leaders had not grasped what almost all the Reformers of the sixteenth century had held as the central and vital place in Christianity, namely, the doctrine of St. Paul, "justification by faith."

The thanks of the meeting having been conveyed to the author in a few appropriate words by the CHAIRMAN, and the AUTHOR having replied, the meeting separated.

Postscript.—Since the above was in type it has been authoritatively stated that a branch of the Old Catholic Church is being organised in England, as will be seen by the following statement in *The Guardian*, April 8th, 1908:—

AN OLD CATHOLIC MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND.

[From our Old Catholic Correspondent.]

The organ of the Dutch Old Catholic Church, *De Oud Katholiek*, announces in its April number that on February 18th a meeting of Roman Catholic clergy and laymen was held at Chelsfield, the object of this gathering being to choose a Bishop independent of Rome, who is to receive his Consecration at the hands of Old Catholic Bishops. Seventeen priests and sixteen lay-people are said to have been present, and they elected as their pastor the Rev. A. H. Mathew, who claims to be Earl of Llandaff. The Bishop-elect was ordained priest in 1878 by the Roman Catholic

Archbishop of Glasgow, and was parish priest up to the year 1898, when he severed his connection with St. Mary's, Bath, and withdrew from all priestly functions. This step was the result of the doubts he had about the validity of the Vatican Decrees of 1870. The Dutch paper is in a position to state that the confirmation of this election and the observance of all canonical formalities has been placed in the hands of the Old Catholic Episcopate. Should the Bishops find, after careful examination, that no obstacles to the Consecration of a Bishop exist, they will comply with the wish of the leaders of the movement. It appears that a central Committee has been formed, with its headquarters at Kensington. The Rev. Mr. Keefe is given as Vicar-General, while the Revs. J. Higgins, A. Besanville, and C. Carey, and two laymen are named as assessors. Organised communities have been called into existence at Birmingham, Nottingham, Brighton, Hull, Ealing, Bromley, Orpington, and Chelsfield. I write this under an impression that the eventual Consecration by Old Catholic Continental Bishops of an Englishman for a number of English congregations may have far-reaching consequences.