

are in communion with the mind and will of the designer. The voice of such prophecy as that of the Scriptures is the unmistakable voice of the living Being, by whom the life and the history which it predicts are controlled, and it forces us to recognise, not merely the existence of God, but His living presence and action. Let me only add that it gives us an invaluable assurance that we ourselves in our daily lives are similarly in the presence and under the guidance of that living God. It affords us a sure and solid ground for our faith in the conviction of the Psalmist: "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect, and in Thy book were all my members written, which day by day were fashioned when as yet there was none of them." It must enable us to exclaim with him: "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me."

HENRY WACE.



ART. VI.—WHAT ENGLAND MAY LEARN FROM ITALY.

WHEN in 1870 the Italian nation entered into possession of its capital, the King's Government knew well that it had before it a most difficult task to adjust the relations between the Papacy and the kingdom. In 1866 an opportunity had been given to Italy to cut the links which bound the Church to the Pope, and to establish an independent National Church under its own Archbishops and Bishops, independent of the Papacy and loyal to the State. At that moment the mind of the Italian people was intensely irritated against Pius IX., who had led them forward on the path of political reform, until he found that it was leading to the aggrandizement, not of the Pope as the President of a Federal Italy, but of the King of Piedmont as the monarch of the Peninsula, when he turned round upon his steps, and throwing himself into the arms of the Jesuits, desired Catholics to burn what he had ordered them politically to worship, and to worship what he had ordered them to burn. And this was not the only cause of irritation. While Pius IX. was driven into exile and only restored by French arms, which afterwards supported him, the young kingdom of Italy had been constituting itself, with Florence for its provisional capital. And so keen an antagonism had sprung up between that new kingdom and the

Papacy that no less than thirty-four bishoprics in the Peninsula were vacant, the Pope refusing to consecrate the nominees of the Crown. All seemed progressing towards the establishment of a National Church. The crisis came in 1866: Cavour was dead, Baron Ricasoli was Prime Minister, and he had to decide between the policy of defiance and of reconciliation. His personal feeling was one of strong hostility to the Papacy; but he did not feel himself justified in acting on personal feeling. He was answerable for the safety of the new kingdom, which had hardly yet established itself in the eyes of Europe. He did not dare to array against the Italian kingdom a hatred more bitter than was already entertained by the ultramontane sentiment of Europe and the Roman Curia. He resolved on a policy of reconciliation. That meant giving up to the vengeance of the Pope, and the Bishops newly appointed by the Pope, presbyters who had aimed at reform in Italy; and it meant a policy on the part of the State of washing its hands of all religion in accordance with a mistaken understanding of Cavour's famous saying, "a free Church in a free State." Accordingly, the nomination to the vacant sees was given up to the Pope; the oaths of vassalage which bind Roman Catholic Bishops to the Pope, and the fetters which fasten the lower clergy to the Bishops, were drawn tighter instead of being relaxed; the priests who, relying on the King's protection, had been loyal and patriotic, were given up defenceless to the vengeance of their superiors, and a dull state-craft played the game of the Papacy in the name and under the disguise of Liberalism. Ricasoli's reconciliation policy crushed the reformation movement in Italy for a generation. The vacant sees were filled by men who gloried in being the willing instruments of the Roman Curia, and they made it their first work to stifle the spirit of reform which had been strong enough and venturesome enough to make the Vatican tremble. They succeeded. At Naples alone 300 priests, hitherto under the jurisdiction of the King's chaplain, were compelled by Archbishop Riario Sforza to choose between unconditional surrender or starvation. In every corner of Italy the Church reformers were hunted down and silenced. Finding themselves helpless, they returned to the old system, according to which they might believe what they liked, and live as they liked, provided they said and did nothing to the detriment of the authority of the Curia. Priests became more than ever the slaves of the Bishops, and the Bishops were more than ever the slaves of the Pope, and laymen went their way, disregarding both.

When, in 1870, the Italians entered Rome and made it the capital of the kingdom, the same policy of abstention in

religious matters was adopted. Conversing with Signor Minghetti, the Italian Prime Minister, in 1871, I asked him if something could not be done to give Italy a more loyal body of Bishops. "No," he said, "that would be impossible, because all interference on the part of the State with spiritual or ecclesiastical matters should, we think, be done away with."

The same idea pervades a discussion which I held with Signor Tommasi, a professor at the Roman University, in the same year. Like most other Italian Liberals, he thought that no help could be given to the National party within the Church by the State, though he allowed that the co-existence of the scepticism of the educated and the ultramontanism of the Jesuitical party was the great danger of Italy as a nation. "Does the liberty of the Church," I asked, "mean liberty on the part of the Pope to nominate to bishoprics men notorious for their hostility to the present settlement? and does it mean liberty on the part of the Bishops to suspend at their pleasure and otherwise tyrannize over all priests who do not absolutely submit to their commands?" "Parliament cannot interfere in these things," he said. "We have once for all granted liberty, and we leave the Church to settle its own internal affairs." "An excellent principle," I replied, "and one with which I have hearty sympathy; but are not the circumstances of the Italian Church such as not to make it fairly applicable at the present moment? An Englishman would inquire what would be the results." "The results," he said, "are evil" (and the condemnation of a priest for offering spiritual consolation to some of the King's soldiers, which occurred at this very moment, added force to his remark), "but how are we to obviate them and yet preserve our principle of washing our hands of all religion?" "Is not," I said, "the Papal system different from that of all other Churches and religions? Is it not practically, in one of its aspects, a temporal power, under an absolute despot? and does not this temporal power require to be confronted by the more legitimate temporal authority of the civil power?" "Liberal politicians are not prepared again to entangle themselves in religious matters," he returned. "But there are at least two great encouragements," he continued. "Free principles are undoubtedly rooting themselves in Italy, and the kingdom of Italy has won the prestige belonging to the occupation of Rome. What is now wanting is a movement by a leading ecclesiastic." "And what protection would he and his followers have from the State if they were deprived of their benefices and salaries by the Pope?" "None." "Then they would be starved?" "Unless they could find support for themselves." "Under these circumstances, it is not wonderful that there is no Döllinger and no Hyacinthe of Italy."

Here, then, was a principle resolutely and firmly adopted by the State when it established itself in Rome on the ruins of the Papal monarchy. "We have accepted the Pope and the Papal system," said Italian statesmen, "whether for good or for evil, and our intention is to give full power to the Pope and the Papal authorities to conduct their Church as a religious system in any way that they please."

Since the entrance of the Italians into Rome a quarter of a century has passed, and in that time the successive Italian Governments have found that, in spite of the abolition of the temporal power—or perhaps, indeed, all the more for that reason—the Roman Catholic Church in Italy has shown itself not merely a religious but a political institution, thwarting the interests of the State wherever opportunity offered. Dr. Robertson, who has written a most instructive book, called "The Roman Catholic Church in Italy," full of the animus of a man who has lived long in Italy and shares the feelings of lay Italians, points out that the Italian Government, having recognised this fact, have met the aggressions or intrigues of the Roman Catholic Church with measures calculated to frustrate its mischievous efforts, or to prevent the evils naturally resulting from those efforts. He instances, in two cases, education and monasteries, and he goes on to inquire how, in like circumstances, the British Government has acted in Ireland and elsewhere. We may, with him, ask whether there are not lessons which England may learn from Italy.

Unlike all other religious systems, Roman Catholicism, according to Dr. Robertson, where it ceases to be a political power becomes a political conspiracy. This was the case, he maintains, in England, as shown by the history of the times of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth. But he continues: "It is in Italy, with its capital still, unhappily, the seat and shrine of the Pope, that the character of the Roman Catholic Church as a political conspiracy is most patent and pronounced. Here it proclaims itself unblushingly as the uncompromising enemy of the State, and it is recognised as such, and it is dealt with as such. Signor Crispi, in the *New Review* for May, 1892, wrote: "To be a sincere Catholic and a friend of Italy is to the Italians a contradiction." The King and the Pope stand face to face in Rome—the King holding the title and exercising the rights of the Sovereign of Italy, the Pope denying the King's claims and arrogating a sovereignty to himself; the King representing the Italian State, the Pope, Cardinals, Canons and priests intriguing against its unity and independence and all that makes for its prosperity and happiness. We have seen a similar state of things in the history of England. In Elizabeth's reign Gregory XIII. sent an invading army to Ireland,

under the command of Thomas Stukeley, whom he dared, by his own authority, to create Baron of Ross, Viscount Morough, Earl of Wexford, and Marquis of Leinster; and he ordered the entire clergy, nobility, and people of the kingdom of Ireland to support Fitzmaurice's rebellion, and "not be afraid of a woman (Elizabeth), who, having been long ago bound with the chain of anathema, and still increasing in her filthiness, has departed from the Lord, and the Lord has departed from her; and"—an unfulfilled Papal prophecy—"many calamities shall overtake her, according to her deserts." Elizabeth's statesmen knew how to meet force by force, and Italian statesmen have, according to Dr. Robertson, boldly confronted the hostility with which they are threatened by Papal intrigue and, he enquires, Are English statesmen of the twentieth century stamping out or succumbing to Papal disloyalty in Ireland?

"The Government of Italy, whilst allowing the Church great liberty, has at last had to pass laws which shut (Roman Catholic) priests out of all civil spheres, and which check them in all attempts to terrorize the people with their spiritual arms. The (Roman Catholic) Church in Italy has had to be tied down by penal statutes, Disabilities Acts, such as England with foolish magnanimity has erased from its statute books" (p. 141).

All of us who have read Mr. McCarthy's "Priests and People of Ireland"—and we ought all to read it if we have not already done so—will have been astonished to see the enormous sums of public money which, under one heading or another, are placed in the hands of the Irish Roman Catholic Bishops and priests for the education of the young in hatred of England. Dr. Robertson tells us that Italian statesmen, finding that schools under the direction of Roman Catholic priests "were turning out scholars ignorant of everything useful, and with hatred to their country rankling in their breasts, exactly as they do to-day in the Government schools of Ireland," banished Roman Catholic priests from all the public schools. Finding that professors of universities were corrupting the students by teaching the theology of Alfonso de' Liguori, they dismissed them and abolished their chairs. Finding that chaplains in the army and navy were tampering with the loyalty of soldiers and sailors, they removed them. Finding, further, that the Roman Catholic priests were seeking to influence and control elections by the exercise of spiritual terrorism, as they are freely permitted to do in Ireland, and were persecuting any who sent their children to Protestant schools, they passed, in 1890, a New Penal Code, making ministers who abused their powers to the injury of the institu-

tions of the State, or who damaged private interests and disturbed the peace of families, liable to immediate punishment by fine, imprisonment, or suspension. The effect of this law has been to prevent what notoriously goes on without hindrance in Ireland. For example, the priest at Brescia threatened to withhold the privileges of the Church from any who should vote for the present Prime Minister, Signor Zanardelli, and on repeating the offence, after warning given, he was fined £20, imprisoned for two months, and suspended for five years. In like manner, if a father complains that a priest has threatened him or any of his family for sending his children to Protestant schools, the priest becomes liable to penalties if he does not immediately desist. The same Act put a stop to another crying evil.

“I knew a case of a peasant in a Riviera village being induced by a priest to leave his money to the Church. His sons returned from America and took the priest to court; the will was set aside, they received the whole inheritance, and the priest was sent into penal servitude. I cannot help mentioning in this connection an almost analogous case which happened in Ireland, with, however, very different results. On the death of their father two sons returned from abroad. They found that a priest had, when visiting their dying parent, taken a lawyer with him, who then and there drew out a will in favour of the Church, setting aside one already existing in their favour. They took the priest to court, but lost their case; they then appealed against the decision, but lost again, and had the expenses of both trials to pay” (p. 145).

In contrast to Italian practice as now permitted, Mr. McCarthy, an Irish Roman Catholic layman, complains in the book above mentioned that the energies of the priests in Ireland are directed to “terrifying the enfeebled minds of the credulous, the invalid, and the aged, with the result that the saving; of penurious thrift, the inheritance of parental industry, the competence of respectability, are all alike captured in their turn from expectant next-of-kin, and garnered into the sacerdotal treasury.”

Having pointed out that it is by law that Italy holds in check “a gigantic ecclesiastical conspiracy,” Dr. Robertson says that she reads England a lesson; “for England obstinately and foolishly shutting her eyes to the political aspect of the Papal Church, and persisting in regarding it only from the standpoint of religion, allows her own subjects to be terrorized, robbed, and persecuted. This takes place every day in Ireland, and instances of it are becoming much too frequent in great centres of Christian work, such as in London and in Liverpool” (p. 148).

We need hardly say that no Italian statesman conceived or entertained such an idea as that of using the taxes of the people for establishing a university "with a Catholic atmosphere," where history might be perverted, and disloyalty and hatred of the governing power might be freely inculcated, at the will of the Roman Catholic episcopate, on Protestant and Roman Catholic students alike.

We turn to Dr. Robertson's other instance, monasticism. Since the abolition of monasticism in the sixteenth century England has seen so little of monks and nuns that we have hardly believed in their existence, or regarded them only as a curious relic of antiquity. The reason of this is given in Mr. McCabe's "Life in a Modern Monastery," p. 196. As a matter of diplomacy, he says that the friars laid aside their conspicuous costume; and this has been done by all the Orders and congregations in England. "They wear their distinctive habit in their houses and churches, but do not venture abroad in it. Thus the average Briton is wholly unsuspecting of the number of monks and monasteries that have grown up around him during the last half-century. In London alone there are five Franciscan friaries, containing some fifty brethren; there are altogether some two hundred or three hundred religious of various orders." In Ireland monks and nuns are more to the front, and what Roman Catholic laymen think of them may be seen in Mr. McCarthy's "Priests and People of Ireland." But English statesmen have not awakened to the peril or injury that they may be to the country. In 1866, Piedmont set the example to Italy of suppressing all monastic houses in her territory. Baron Ricasoli extended the Piedmontese law to the rest of Italy. With the exception of a few houses, "all religious Orders were declared to be at an end, the creation of new monks and nuns to be illegal, and all monastic buildings to be national property." These institutions have not been prohibited on the ground of their being religious societies, but because they have been proved to be detrimental to the interests of the State and to public morality. It may be asked, Are such institutions a peril to Great Britain at the present moment? That depends upon their number and the power that they exert in the British Isles. There are some drugs that are conducive to health so long as they are taken in small quantities, but as soon as they exceed the proportion which they ought to hold with reference to other elements, they cause death. In like manner monastic institutions, Jesuit societies, and, in general, Papal influences, may be absorbed by the body politic, and cause no harm so long as they stand in such proportion to other organizations and institutions that their effect is reduced practically to nothing,

but let them make themselves felt, and become a power in the State, and the ruin of the country is assured. The numbers of monks and nuns who are at the present time passing over from France to England is enough to cause grave apprehension. Certainly, if our eyes were opened, we should not encourage nunneries by specially exempting from inspection the sewing and washing institutions which they direct, in spite of the terrible revelations which have been made in France of the cruelty, surpassing that of any sweating houses, with which nuns have treated those whom they have employed and by whose labour the nunneries have been made rich.

Dr. Robertson ends his book by again impressing on Englishmen the "object lesson" which he has offered to them. After reading the books of Mr. McCarthy and Mr. O'Donnell on education in Ireland, he asks whether England is not "false to herself, and false to the trust imposed upon her by God," in leaving the education of her subjects in the hands of the Roman Catholic priests. Italy, he says, has banished Roman Catholic priests and nuns as teachers from all the public schools, and does not allow Roman Catholic priests to be professors in the universities, the reason of this being, not that they teach religion, but that they teach a religion that is incompatible with the welfare of the State. That we have arrived at a point where it is necessary to adopt such drastic measures as those urged by Dr. Robertson¹ we are not prepared to say. But at least we may resolve that no further public moneys shall be poured into the laps of the Roman Catholic Bishops and priests in Ireland for the purpose of creating institutions "with a Catholic atmosphere," where, as Mr. Dillon has said, "the soul of Ireland" (as figured by himself) "may freely" (except for Papal fetters) "move and make itself heard."

F. MEYRICK.

¹ Page 270. The title of Dr. Robertson's book is "The Roman Catholic Church in Italy" (Morgan and Scott, London).

