

THE FRENCH REPUBLIC: WILL IT LAST?

THE second half of our century will ever form a most remarkable, and most interesting, most instructive period in the history of the world. And more so to the historians of succeeding ages than to our own. We who not only witness the development of event following event, but who frame to a certain extent at least these events ourselves; we, who breathe the spirit of the age, and cannot free ourselves, do what we will, from the influence this age exercises upon our individual judgment, must be ready to concede that the facts which unroll themselves before our eyes will bear a different character and present a different aspect after two or three generations to our successors. At present facts, things accomplished, naturally and quite legitimately occupy the foreground. The more these dry facts recede into the background the more will they dissociate themselves from the appendages which appear to hide from our sight the long and slow moving causes whose expression they are. *Königgrätz, Sedan, Plevna*; these three names signify for us three memorable events, namely: the inauguration of German unity, the downfall of the Empire of Napoleon III., and the collapse of the Mohammedan power in Europe. But the unexpected victory of the Prussian arms over the bravery of Austrian soldiers in 1866, the no less surprising complete superiority of the German forces over the armies of "la grande nation," and the frantic efforts of a brave race to repurchase by gallant heroism a lost cause, these three momentous phases in the history of Europe will appear in a different light when the tales of victory and defeat live no longer on breathing lips. The three names will continue to serve as landmarks, so to speak, but only in so far as they are the culminating points round which so many phases of progress and civilization have clustered themselves. The broader, larger, more comprehensive view, with fewer details, but outlines clearer defined, will obtain, and the student of the philosophy of history will try to formulate the correct answer to the question, What brought these events about, what imparts tone and color and lasting importance to them, what, in fine, caused that tremendous flow of blood wherewith an inexorable fate purples the deeds of nations? And that will outlive time and be recorded in the book of life, and the rest will sink into oblivion.

In like manner, if we turn from the external to the internal history of any period, we will soon perceive that here also clearly discernible exponents meet us at every point. The double current of life which runs in the individual runs also in nations and in the human race, and we contend that the exponent of the main ele-

ment which characterizes the internal history of the second half of the nineteenth century is furnished by the problem "Church and State." All side issues group themselves quite naturally around it.

Emancipation of Church and State has like a watchword traversed within the last few decades every empire, every kingdom, every state of Middle Europe, and as yet the solution of this grave problem appears not to have been found. The results so far obtained are either an impossible compromise or a compulsory armistice. The struggle for absolute independence from the religious power on the part of the civil power has made the round of Europe and at last it has reached France, and risen there all the quicker to the surface, because in the French Republic the belligerent forces wear their own colors without disguise.

In France as elsewhere there are two parties. There is one which sees nothing but anarchy and irreligion to come from an education divorced from the control, or, at least, the supervision of the clergy; and another which sees an end of all intellectual and civil freedom if education remains under that control and supervision. The names of the political organizations representing these opposite views differ, it is true, in the various states of Middle Europe; nevertheless the fundamental articles of their respective political creeds remain identically the same. The question at issue is virtually not whether education is to continue under clerical supervision or whether it is to be made once for all and only secular, but it is, whether the posterity to which we bequeath our culture and civilization as patrimony is to include in that inheritance "faith" or not. Are they to believe like their progenitors in an omnipotent personal Deity? Is a Providence benignly presiding over each and every one's fate separately, and over all nations and the whole human race collectively, or is it not? Is an equalization of apparent injustices to be hoped for in an unknown realm with which death shall acquaint ourselves, or is all this a vast illusion! This, we repeat, is the real point of controversy, and time, that element which verifies all our actions, made men discover in our days that the real battleground on which the decisive victory must be won or the final defeat suffered, is the field of education.

In no country do the real issues present themselves in more typical form than in the present French Republic. For France has been and still continues to be an essentially Catholic country, and, as we shall presently see, the only object of the warfare of the advanced spirit of the age against religion is the Catholic Church. Honest-minded Protestants may still deceive themselves on this subject, and entertain the erroneous belief that their creeds are likewise exposed to the attack of modern "so-called" enlighten-

ment against religion. But this is not the case, and the sooner they undeceive themselves or are undeceived the better. Frederick Harrison in his paper, "Creeds Old and New," running through the October and November numbers of the *Nineteenth Century*, says quite truthfully :

"In a philosophical survey of religions, Protestantism no longer exists. It is not in the field; it is a mere historical expression. It is necessary to be a Protestant, actually to believe in the Protestant doctrines, in order to see anything valuable at all in Protestantism. It is nothing but the servile worship of a book, grotesquely strained in interpretation. It is neither a Church, nor a creed, nor a religion. It is only a Targum mechanically repeated by contending bands of Pharisees and Sadducees.

"Wherever it appears the power of the mother and of the woman, the perpetuity of marriage, generosity towards the weak, diminish. Its triumphs are towards divorce, personal lawlessness, industrial selfishness. It is a school of verbal disputation; when its Bible is gone it has nothing. The Protestant volcano has long been extinct. Notable as an upheaval some years ago, it is now dust and scoriæ and here and there a few fumes from its buried fire."

On the other hand, the foremost leader of the Radical party, M. Gambetta, has never concealed that behind the question of clericalism lies the question of religion in general, and that as soon as the first is settled he will raise the flag of the second. In France, therefore, the two hostile elements appear in form decidedly pronounced characters. There is arrayed on one side the most powerful Church of Christendom, the Church of Rome, and there is an enemy on the other side who honestly has thrown down the gauntlet, and with equal honesty avows that his purpose is a war of annihilation. Nowhere do Catholicity and Radicalism clash more boldly and more distinctly against each other, and France seems to be once more predestined to offer by her own fate to the world either a warning example or the prestige of leadership, as the case may be.

From these considerations result the deep curiosity and attention the present state of affairs in the French Republic attracts, and these considerations make France legitimately an object deserving of our scrutinizing observation. As lightning reveals the electrical condition of the atmosphere, so has the rigorous enforcement of the memorable March decrees revealed the true nature of the political condition into which France is being plunged. The government is drifting altogether into the hands of the Radicals; hence the ascendancy which Radicalism seems to have entered upon. And apparently the prosperous career of the party in power has been inaugurated with as much *éclat* as success.

The closing of all educational establishments in the hands of the non-authorized orders followed the closing of the schools of the Jesuits and the expulsion of the members of this order from France. To what extent this measure must affect France can only be under-

stood by those who are familiar with the great number of institutes of learning supported by the Catholic clergy. No matter how hard and earnestly the government may try to open an equal number of secular schools, the attempt promises no success, since whatever the government may choose to call into life will not be received by the vast Catholic majority of the nation as an acceptable equivalent.

The dispersion of the religious orders *en masse*, and in defiance of all legal right, is a stain upon the national honor. The harmless inmates of convents and cloisters have been driven out by the government officials in a most shameless manner. The only offence of which the monks and nuns appear guilty was this, that their lives were given up to works of charity, and that they had no armed resistance to offer to the arbitrary acts of the government, which seems to reinstate again the "might is right" of mediæval times. True the press of Europe had but one cry of condemnation for these proceedings. In France, as well as in all countries where the principle of religious and civil liberty has obtained, the dismemberment of the cloisters and the *par-force* expulsion of citizens created a deep stir, for these acts surpass by far any measures which Bismarck saw fit to resort to against the Socialists in the state of blood and iron. It is not difficult to find a *raison d'être* for the measures of the Prussian Premier; nevertheless they have been stigmatized, and that quite severely, as grossly violating the spirit of liberty evolved by our civilization. In simple justice, then, the censure to be applied to the March decrees could hardly fail to be all the more severe because of the appalling despotic character they bear on their very face; besides, the way of their enforcement is far from shedding any lustre on the administration. It was an exceedingly difficult undertaking to create for them the semblance of legality on which they apparently rest. Their sole and true basis is the fiat of a political fraction and nothing else. Even if it is admitted that one enactment which dates from the commencement of the "Reign of Terror," and another belonging to the most despotic period of the reign of the first Bonaparte furnish a precedent, a sort of artificial basis, it must not be forgotten that these two enactments have remained dead letters for no less than sixty-five years, though no less than five revolutions have passed over the country in that time. All the successive forms of government found it expedient, if not necessary, to ignore them, and the substructure on which they have been erected reduces itself to a very clever but, at the same time, very ignominious production of a maleficent ingenuity of lawyers. It is shocking and disgusting to peruse the accounts rendered by the papers in which deeds of brutality against the teachers of infancy and the protectors

of poverty, decrepitude, and old age are being committed under the eyes, nay, with the sanction and by express order, of the very power which is supposed to protect the welfare and security of the masses it governs. Nor has it been possible to impart a more than at best very ambiguous popularity to the governmental proceedings. Both parties seem to be well aware of the fact that the situation of affairs is merely a state of transition. The imperative necessity of a final adjustment of the question "Church and State," which means a final solution of the pending difficulties, is clearly recognized, and the hopes of the Radicals, as well as of the Catholics, are set on the future, and that a near future. And from the aggressive spirit manifested by the Radicals in power, and the fact that they control the wires of the whole machinery called government, furthermore from the results they have obtained so far, the inference almost suggests itself that victory will remain with the powers that be. It is well, therefore, to bear in mind that there are many victories on record which prove more disastrous in the end than open defeats, and for this reason we must forbear to forestall, from success that may be very short-lived, the future events which history still holds in the mysterious folds of the morrow.

The question we are dealing with does not concern the momentary, but the lasting, that is to say, the necessary issue. Does the French Republic in the hands of the Radicals contain a fair promise of duration or not? Does it possess life-giving and life-sustaining elements, or, if not in possession of them, does it at least generate these indispensable requisites? That is the question we are dealing with, and hence we must investigate the conditions under which Radicalism alone may hope to establish itself permanently on French soil.

The present open-handed war of destruction against Clericalism seems, it is true, to contain a propitious augury for an ultimate decision in favor of M. Gambetta's object. Moreover, the movement made by the March decrees, though its significance is only that of any preliminary step, is nevertheless the one without which hope itself would have had to abandon the cause of the Radicals. It is merely just and proper to acknowledge that the ground has been prepared with consummate skill. M. Gambetta displays true insight into human nature, and his adroit policy bears witness to a foresight into the future which we much rather would see coupled with true statesmanship. For, in order to carry out the programme of the Radical party, that is, in order to checkmate Catholicity and paralyze the power of religion, it is absolutely necessary to prevent the Catholic Church from planting the ineradicable seed of faith in the infantile mind. Youth must be prevented from listening to the voice of a priesthood which embodies in its life the command-

ments of obedience and charity which it teaches ; unless that is done, faith will take root in the youthful soul, and though it may err far away from the narrow path of righteousness, it will, were it but in the last moments of life, reappear again, and by its reappearance annul all that lies between the loss and the ultimate regaining of faith. A generation growing up under the protective tutelage of the Catholic Church can never be made either to part completely with the religion instilled into the child with the mother's milk, or to hate those ministers who appear whenever misfortune, or illness, or distress appear, and who, moreover, always stretch out a helping hand, revivify sunken hopes, restore the lost confidence, and thus drive away misery and wretchedness by restoring man to his full manhood. If Catholicity is permitted to gain that double stronghold on the masses, the task proposed by the Radicals is utterly hopeless. But if generations are brought up from the cradle on through all successive stages of life without a knowledge of God and knowledge of all which clusters round the personal Deity ; if the first words listened to by the child impress upon the awakening intellect this, that the ideas of God and a hereafter are idle chimeras which have lost forevermore their vantage-ground, thanks to the advanced civilization of our age ; if this can be accomplished, then it may be maintained that such generations will be ardent supporters of a government which incorporates and expresses their own convictions. On this line does M. Gambetta's policy move, and considering the end which is to be subserved, the move is decidedly and uncommonly correct.

But, let us ask, on what does the success of the Radicals depend ? It depends primarily on this : whether they will succeed or not in engendering in the mind of the people a resolute distrust of the motives and inclinations and character of the Catholic clergy and of the Catholic Church, and, next, whether they will be able to maintain this distrust if they should not fail in generating it. Now by eliminating religion from the schools, and substituting for it the creed of enlightenment, they do not attain their end, for they simply take away what nature always tells us is invaluable and *par excellence* the gift of gifts, namely, faith ; but this privation does not inspire hatred for the gift, nor does it make those into whose hands the gift has been intrusted objects of scorn and contempt. It is well known what the first fruits of the creed of despair are when this creed takes hold of the uneducated. It has been freely infused into the laboring classes in France, especially where they are massed together in large cities ; it has risen to a terrible power, dreaded alike by friend or foe,—that power is Communism. But it is also well known that the degradation and horrors, physical as well as moral, of communistic laborers is beyond description. The prin-

principles of Communism denaturalize their victims; they are the very opprobrium of our civilization and the very hotbeds of every form of wretchedness and immorality. The natural ideas of right and wrong are lost; utopian impossibilities are demanded from life and from the human society, and as long as the Radical party's promise of changing all and every relation of life will meet credulous ears, so long the discontented elements will support the Radicals. But when once the discovery is made of how absolutely powerless a government under the free and untrammelled sway of even a mind like M. Gambetta is to ratify its promises, they no longer will render homage to their leaders and lend as willing instruments, nay, tools, body and mind and soul to the erection of a building which, necessarily, must bury amongst its own ruins its most ardent builders. The utilization of this terrible force in the war *à l'outrance* against the Catholic Church forms one of the main hopes of the present *régime*, and up to a certain point it is an element the destructive force of which must not be underrated. At the same time this very force is liable to turn round at any moment against those whose game of deception must sooner or later be played out. The communistic element, therefore; does not offer in its intrinsic nature a building-stone at all.

If it aids the present *régime* for the time being in striking out boldly, it will not do so in the future. Between Gambetta and Rochefort there is but one point in common, and that is their common and uncompromising antagonism towards Rome. And if we leave the cities and manufacturing establishments and inquire into the condition of the rural districts, reports of entirely different character reach us. Whenever we desire to ascertain the real condition of the people themselves, that is to say, that portion of the nation which is most numerous, which forms the bulk of the populace, and in whose hands the real issues of France will ultimately be placed, we have to go into the country. Now this element, which not only counterbalances the former, but which outweighs everything else, has not lost the heritage of ages, that faith which made France what it is and the French nation "*la grande nation.*" The Frenchman of to-day clings with the same firm tenacity to the Creator and benefactor of mankind as his ancestors did before him. If there is any change at all noticeable, the change is rather in favor of religion. An ardor is said to be displayed greater and more intense than within a comparatively recent past, as if the French Catholics of to-day meant to atone by their greater zeal and faithfulness for the prevarications of their own brethren, and thereby to appease the terrible vengeance of infinite justice, which, like a Damocles' sword, hangs threatening over the transgressors of every commandment. In the country there still lives the knowledge of an All-Father in

heaven ; there still lives the spirit of reverence of and obedience to authority ; there still lives the hope of better days without end, where labor will find its reward and virtue its fruition. And there also lives, and is treasured up in an unpolluted state, the true "honor" of the nation. And in all country districts we learn the March decrees have been received with a cold, in many with a quite discouraging reception. If the toiling peasant and the village blacksmith respected the authority which the Church had taught them to respect too highly to offer open resistance, they did at least deprecate measures which, while ostensibly only directed against priest and nun, were indirectly the means of depriving poverty and infancy of their time-honored protectors. Simple-minded as they are, and not familiar with the godless cant of half culture, they judge by realities, by the nourishment distributed at the cloisters and convents to the poor, by the obedience and the faithful discharge of duties they observe in their offspring as the fruit of the teaching of the Church ; they judge by the comfort they derive every day interiorly when, at the tolling of morning, noon, and evening bell, they stop in field and workshop, and, uncovering their heads, pause until the peaceful sound dies away. That act of lifting the hat, unaccompanied as it may be by prayer, is, nevertheless, in all its simplicity and all its littleness, the means of drawing down upon them from heaven the dews of grace, and toiling peasant and village blacksmith effect by that simple act of prayer what proud eloquence in well-studied sentences vainly attempts to produce in crowded halls ; they instil peace and contentment into their own hearts ; they wipe off the brow, and a thought of their home and family rushes, perhaps, through them, and the plough ploughs deeper until evening sinks, and livelier fly the sparks from under the hammer until the day's work is over. That peasant and that blacksmith possess the conservative instinct of blissful ignorance, and are no more inclined to part with their unlearned faith than they are to give up the short moments of repose from labor they have habituated themselves to at the sound of the village church-bell. They may not be, and in all probability are not, able to give the reasons why they are unwilling to part with the faith, and the institutions called into life by that faith, but they feel by intuition that they can extend no hearty welcome to the innovations proposed and, alas, partly enacted by the government, and hence they are as loyal and true now as in olden times.

Again, it must be borne in mind that a strong feeling of patriotism dwells in every Frenchman, a feeling at once proud and just ; proud because it is just and just in its pride. That feeling pervades with great force the entire nation. Now this patriotic feeling allies itself against the government in the latter's attempt to discredit the

Catholic Church and clergy. Between November, 1870, and the end of 1871, no less than sixty-two clergymen received the Legion of Honor, fifty-six the minor decorations, and two were given, under special circumstances, the military medal. These facts are, of course, well known in France, and in view of them how is it possible to impose upon the credulity of the people the charge that the clergy is devoid of patriotism? Can it be reasonably hoped that Church and clergy will ever be considered as institutions inimical to the welfare of the country? Will it be believed that a Frenchman who dons the cassock is thereby deprived of those sacred feelings for the native soil which form a cherished privilege, not of Frenchmen alone, but of every true son of every nation? Will it be believed that Catholicity tries to suppress, if not to crush out altogether, that hallowed sentiment?

It seems, therefore, quite certain that the French Government, in spite of all efforts, will neither succeed in engendering, much less in maintaining, accusations discrediting religion and its votaries in the eyes of the populace. Every false accusation fails in the course of time, and the more false the charge the less time is there needed for the perception of its true character. The differences created by the present *régime* between governing and governed are already beyond conciliation, and they must necessarily grow so violent that an overthrow of the force which rules now the country is imminent. As matters stand now, anything short of a complete change seems beyond the reach of probability.

And if we choose to inquire of experience and observation what it is that makes a being which is possessed of capacities for morality and reasoning a "brute," and what it is that makes that self-same being a "man," we will find that "faith" and faith alone furnishes the answer. The object of all education consists in making a man all that his natural gifts and his divine destiny allow him to become. Under this head, then, secular education must be condemned, since that object cannot be attained if religion is eliminated from the school. The measures, therefore, enforced by the Radical clique in regard to all educational establishments under the clergy's control, denote, not a step forward, but much rather serve as means of retarding the true progress of the nation. Religious education, it is well known, seldom fails to lead to that deep and broad conception of life which looks with comparative contempt on what is only profitable. It generally raises above the narrow confines of this world; it gives birth to unselfish patriotism, and engenders, if it does not produce, a many-sided harmonious development of the intellect. The adoption of religious education wherever it is not found, but not the discarding of the same, would suggest itself as a measure calculated to promote the true interests of a progressive civilization,

for, instead of checking the intellectual advancement of a people, it has been and will ever remain the most powerful lever for it, and it would ill befit a son of the nineteenth century to predict longevity, not to say permanency, to any government which acts in opposition to true progress. Under this head, then, also there is no reason to assume that M. Grévy's execution of the March decrees will affect France as a retrogression apt to last long enough for throwing the nation on a lower plane. On the contrary, the hope is quite legitimate that France will before long abandon a policy which brings it nearer only to a fictitious and impossible progress, and return to one befitting the achievements of the country in the past, and beneficial for the future growth of the nation in prosperity, importance, and wealth. Should the power which now regulates the affairs of the land prove too strong to yield to moral pressure and persuasion, the prediction that a radical change will be enforced if necessary seems only a proper conclusion. France may for a time submit to the machinations of an unscrupulous party machinery, but France, we can rest assured, will never bend its proud neck under the yoke of a government which prepares only a vast tomb for the whole nation.

The present *régime*, in our opinion, displays already that most dangerous symptom of dissolution, a splitting up within its own ranks. M. Clemenceau, in a speech delivered at Marseilles, emphasizes the tyrannies into which France is gradually falling in the following words:

"The doctrine of to-day teaches us that the real duty of a parliamentary leader is to find some elevated and safe position, whence he can contemplate his armies fighting in the plain below. Citizens, I have arrived at a delicate point, which I will treat with all frankness. I do not reproach M. Gambetta, since he must be named, with exercising considerable influence on the Republican party. Every one exercises in his party what influence he can by reason of his merit of services rendered. What I openly and formally complain of, and against what, in my opinion, all Republicans must protect me, is that M. Gambetta, while not, in appearance at least, grasping power, has arranged matters so that, in reality, he wields a power without a counter-weight, without control, and without responsibility, which prevents public opinion from acting on the real leader, as in all government by opinion it ought to do. . . . You ask but one thing, that he should exercise the power he holds in the light of the day and under the control of public opinion. We thus see an increase of personal power to an immeasurable degree for the benefit of a personal interest and at the expense of a public power, granted out of deference to impartiality. Is not that a real fraud?"

Should Gambetta, in spite of all opposition, reach the goal of his ambition and enter upon the functions of the highest executive of the nation, events, we think, would precipitate themselves. The wide break between government and population would soon be widened to an extent when forbearance exhausted would cut loose from the *régime* of Radicalism. Untempered by moderation, as it then would be, it would be shaken off like a wild dream. Atheism

has never possessed the force to quicken and to uplift the world, and the attempt to engraft it upon a people, trained for centuries in the principles of true religion and habituated to bring religious truth to bear on the conduct of practical affairs, can, at best, obtain for a short episode as a fierce and blind protest against the doctrine of hope and charity, on which Christianity rests. A more futile effort to resist an established historical fact than Gambetta's leadership would inaugurate can hardly be conceived, nor could a more disastrous event befall the nation than a prolongation of the Atheistic period. For, on consulting history, it must be admitted that wherever we find Christianity pure, that is, Catholicity, there, as a rule, do we encounter orderly homes, well-trained children, sobriety, industry, thrift, and charity. Hence the promotion of stable and fruitful progress imposes upon a wise legislation the duty to cherish the Christian element, but not to extinguish it; to purify and elevate and enlarge it rather than to oppress it, silence its voice, and paralyze its energies. Radicalism, if obtaining on a large scale, would in the long run weaken the moral stamina of the community, waste its fibre, dissipate its resources, fetter its freedom, and lay, at last, the strength and honor of the nation in the dust.

What the much-vaunted enlightenment brings in its folds is well summed up in the following words: "Philosophy and science have given us priceless things, but we say they have given us no religion, no providence, no supreme centre of our thoughts and our lives. Science has practically taken away God and has found nothing else. Philosophy has reduced religion to a phrase, and has left things so. Science gives no unity to life, no rule of life, no support to the soul. Together, modern science and philosophy, stopping helplessly where they do, have chilled, paralyzed, and almost killed the spirit of devotion, of veneration, of self-abasement, of self-surrender to a great overruling power." That creed consequently would deprive France of the very virtues for which she has been so conspicuous. And these virtues resulted solely from the effects of true religion. As Fred. Harrison well puts it: "The first and the last business of religion is to inspire men and women with a desire to do their duty, to show them what their duty is, to hold out a common end which harmonizes and sanctifies their efforts towards duty, and knits them together in close bonds as they struggle onwards towards it." That office the Catholic faith has performed, and more than this, it placed the French nation foremost amongst the civilized nations of Christendom. All this, ignored by the frenzy of the Radicals, permeates the populace in a manner that no force and no pleading will ever succeed in stifling the unconscious instinct of Frenchmen to remain loyal to their faith and the traditions of their country.

It is, therefore, not an open question whether Radicalism will take root permanently in France. The past denies the possibility of it for the future. But what is to follow the overthrow of the tyrannies of the Radicals? That is the problem confronting our times. There are many persons who believe with Bossuet that an absolute monarchy is the natural form of government for a Catholic country. Others maintain with Veuillot that a liberal Catholic is a contradiction in terms, for they argue a Catholic cannot be liberal and a liberal cannot be a Catholic. Naturally, therefore, the French Republic would, according to these views, have to drift back into a kingdom as impossible as unpopular. But neither of the two views is correct.

Catholicity can, and as a matter of fact does, thrive under any and all forms of government based on principles of justice and equity, whether republican or monarchical. The only proviso for its growth and development is that the state does not encroach upon the spiritual power, and arrogate privileges to which it has no claim. Every government granting freedom of religious worship, and acting on the principle that every subject ought to "give to Cæsar what is Cæsar's and to God what belongs to God," has only a warm friend in the Church of Rome. Many children of the Catholic faith do not, we regret to say, breathe the true Catholic spirit. But Belgium as well as the American commonwealth furnish wonderful illustrations that true devotion to Catholicity and the most liberal views do not conflict at all, but can go hand in hand without any danger of collision. There is no reason, therefore, to exclude a republican form of government from the speculation as to what will supersede the *régime* Grévy-Gambetta. Theoretically any form stands open for acceptance. Nevertheless we incline to think that a constitutional monarchy would offer France the greatest promise of duration, and the surest prospect of increasing prosperity. For republicanism means essentially decentralization, and for a people so volatile, so impulsive, so apt to excess, and so gifted with genuine heroism and undying patriotism, a rallying-point seems an almost indispensable requisite. This centre only a throne furnishes, be it the purple of an empire or the *fleur-de-lys* of a kingdom; a hereditary chief alone transmits the dignity of rulership and can represent the nation as it will never cease to desire to be represented. The restoration of the kingdom of old is no less odious than the despotism of the empire, and the republic has never yet succeeded to establish itself as more than an ephemeral phase of transition. From this the conclusion lies near that a monarchy in the sense in which our age understands it would offer the best solution. But unless the political fractions which now pursue party issues collect their scattered forces we cannot

hope that they will acquire in a peaceful way the control of the affairs of state, and lead up to the form of government best suited for France. Behind these scattered forces lies the strength and the intelligence of the nation; as soon as they unite Radicalism must disappear. But if they fail to drop party politics for the sake of rescuing France from being plunged into a series of convulsions, then the world may witness the drama of beholding France facing catastrophe after catastrophe, until at last the country will emerge in a state worthy to enjoy and usufruct the immense resources which nature and Providence have with munificent liberality bestowed upon soil and inhabitants alike.

BOOK NOTICES.

A HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE DIOCESES OF PITTSBURG AND ALLEGHANY FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME. By *Rev. A. A. Lambing*, author of "The Orphan's Friend," "Mixed Marriages," "The Sunday-school Teacher's Manual," etc. New York, Cincinnati, and St. Louis: Benziger Brothers, Printers to the Holy Apostolic See. 1880. 8vo., 531 pp.

This large and handsome volume, with portraits of Rev. Charles P. McGuire, founder of St. Paul's Church, Pittsburg, and the three bishops of the diocese of Pittsburg, Right Revs. Michael O'Connor, Michael Domenec, and John Tuigg, is one of the most exhaustive contributions to the local Church history of this country that have yet appeared. It is evidently a work of great patience, care, and research. While a more flowery sketch of religion in Western Pennsylvania might have better suited the popular taste, the author has aimed to make it a work of permanent value as a book of reference. Rev. Mr. Lambing's work gives briefly an outline of the rise of the Church in Pennsylvania; then passes to the French occupation of the West, with a glance at the services of the Church at the frontier forts; and then takes up the history of Catholicity from the time the pioneers of our faith crossed the Alleghanies and reared the first modest chapel around the headwaters of the Ohio. He traces the history of the first church in Pittsburg till the establishment of the diocese, gives sketches of the bishops, and then gives in detail an account of all the other churches in the city and diocese down to the present time, completing his labor by chapters devoted to the colleges, academies, and charitable institutions, and the religious orders of both sexes that are or have been in that part of the State.

The author writes plainly and judiciously, without exaggeration or bias, and gives apparently a very accurate statement of the present position and prospects of the diocese and all its churches and institutions.

The early history of Catholicity in the province established by William