

# THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC QUARTERLY REVIEW

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## THE THIRD FRENCH REPUBLIC AS A PERSECUTOR OF THE CHURCH. ✓

“**T**HE republican form of government is that which divides us the least,” said Thiers in the first days of 1871. A bitter enemy of the legitimate royalty, and therefore unwilling to play the game of a Monck; an inveterate skeptic, and therefore unable to pose as a Washington; entertaining a velleity in favor of the younger and traitorous branch of the Bourbons, because its cause was that of an alliance between the Revolution and a veneer of respectability; the ex-Orleanist Minister should rather have avowed that he advocated the republican system, because it alone then furnished him an opportunity of becoming the head of the State. During the entire political career of this chameleon-like statesman, if the grandeur and prosperity of France ever engaged his attention, it was after a merely secondary fashion; power for himself, to be attained by any and every means, was the sole end of his policy. With reason did Lamartine thus apostrophize him: “In you there is no principle; but there is a passion—the passion to govern, to govern alone, to govern always, to govern with and against all, to govern at any price.” It was this unscrupulous lust of power, too ignoble to merit the name of ambition, that led Thiers to associate himself with men whom he had hitherto termed “furious madmen”—men whose alliance, as he said, “could be nothing else than a cheating game on both sides; a game in which each player was a liar in the mind of his neighbor; a compromise which rendered all engaged in it unworthy of public respect.” No wonder, therefore, that when,

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on May 24, 1873, Thiers tendered his resignation of the presidency to the National Assembly, hoping that it would not be accepted, this truly able man, after forty years of governmental experience which could not endow him with the faculty of organization, was relegated to private life.<sup>1</sup> When the reins of power were assumed by Marshal MacMahon, eleven hours after the retirement of Thiers, the lovers of law and order conceived great hopes for France, and the ever-sanguine partisans of Legitimacy fancied that Henry V. would soon mount the throne of his ancestors. The trust of the Legitimists seemed indeed to be well founded when, on August 5, the Comte de Paris, head of the hitherto rebellious Orleans branch of the Bourbons, repaired to Frohsdorff, the residence of the Comte de Chambord, and formally acknowledged that Prince as King of France and of Navarre, thus tendering an *amende* for the treachery of Philippe-Egalité, and for the usurpation of Louis Philippe. It is generally supposed that the failure of these royalist anticipations was due to the too straightforward letter in which the Comte de Chambord declared that he would never ascend the throne of St. Louis as "King of the Revolution;" that he would decline a sceptre which would be a symbol of principles which he detested. It is certain that this letter caused a division in the royalist ranks; that the nondescripts who are styled "Liberal Catholics" could not bring themselves to place principle above fancied utility. But it is more than probable that the failure of the royalist restoration was chiefly due to the machinations of Bismarck and of the Masonic Order. The publication of the Arnim documents showed that Bismarck regarded it as the interest of Germany to prevent a coronation of Henry V. as King of France; that the astute and phenomenally unprincipled chancellor felt that with the restoration of her legitimate monarchy France would recover her ancient glory. In the despatches revealed by the Arnim affair we read that "Germany need fear nothing from either the Republic or the Empire;" that "it is for the interest of Germany that France should remain weak and without allies;" that "the Republic, and if not the Republic, the Empire, will furnish the least probability of a resurrection of France," and that "a monarchical France would be a danger for Germany." Dr. Busch tells us that one day at table Bismarck exclaimed to him: "There must be no Bourbons or Orleans in

<sup>1</sup> Thiers died suddenly, while seated at dinner with his wife, on September 3, 1877. Whether he had ever made his First Communion is doubtful. Certainly during the greater part of his life he was an avowed Deist, somewhat after the fashion of Voltaire. However, in his later years he frequently insisted on his Catholicism, and at the beginning of his last will and testament these words were found: "I am a Catholic, and intend to die a Catholic." Therefore, when Mme. Thiers requested that a Christian funeral should be accorded to her husband, no objection was made by the ecclesiastical authorities. VILLEFRANCHE: "Adolphe Thiers," in the "Illustrious Persons of the Nineteenth Century." Paris, 1882.

France!" As for the action of Freemasonry in the matter of Henry V., we know that the Masonic powers scarcely regard it as a secret. The Masonic journal, *La Révolution Française*, in its issue of May 12, 1879, said that when there was a probability of an acclamation of Henry V., "Gambetta prepared and organized throughout France, and even in the army, an insurrection, in comparison with which that of March 18, 1871 (the Commune) would have been mere child's play." It was proved before the tribunals of Autun and Dijon that during the monarchical agitation of 1873 the Masons of Saone-et-Loire planned to kidnap the Marchioness de MacMahon, a relative of the marshal-president, and to hold her as a hostage for the permanence of his republicanism. The chief of this conspiracy was Boyssset, "Venerable" of the Lodge in Chalons, and a deputy in the National Assembly. This latter fact prevented his trial. In the *Echo de Saone-et-Loire*, October 15, 1874, we read that two of the conspirators, the brothers Bontemps, who were leaders in the International, were willing to further the advent of a spurious monarchy rather than the legitimate one of the elder Bourbons, and that accordingly they tendered their services and that of their fellow-sectarians to the Orleans princes. That invaluable Masonic authority, the *Chaine d'Union*, to which we are indebted for so much of our information concerning the Brethren of the Three Points, gives in its issue of July, 1882, a discourse which was pronounced in the Lodge "Free Thought" of Aurillac on the preceding March 4, and from which we cull these morsels: "You know that it is to the grand Revolution of 1789 that we owe the political reforms which have changed the face not only of Europe, but of the entire universe (*sic*). But who prepared, who directed—in a word, who made that Revolution? You, gentlemen, you—Freemasonry, the daughter of the Reformation. And after the Revolution and the Empire, Freemasonry continued the work of the liberation of the peoples. Persecuted by the Restoration, it was not unconcerned with the revolution of 1830. Then it fought Louis Philippe, who was to be, according to Lafayette, the best of republicans, but who was merely the King of the upper *bourgeoisie*. Finally, on May 16 (1877) I see you again at work. When treason had raised the enemies of the Republic to power, you Freemasons rushed into the breach, fighting the foe inch by inch, and finally forcing him to a capitulation in which you buried all hopes of a monarchical restoration."

The administration of President MacMahon, although supported by a Conservative majority in the Senate, was in continual warfare with the Radical majority in the Chamber of Deputies which followed the lead of Gambetta. And this Radical majority of the

lower House was persistently encouraged by all the Bismarckian journals of Germany and by the entire Masonico-Jewish press of the world. In 1877, when monarchical hopes were again reviving, the subsidized Bismarckian journals continually insisted that France, not yet recovered from her wounds of 1870-71, would feel the effects of another German invasion, if the imminent election should prove favorable to the policy of the marshal-president; and all these German journalistic warnings were carefully detailed to the voters by the Masonic agents. Ten days after the triumph of the Radicals at the polls, that is, on October 24, 1877, the Supreme Council of the Scotch Rite of Masons gave a grand banquet to all the brethren whom the Lodges of every land had sent to congratulate the adepts of France. Brother Jules Simon offered a toast "to the triumphant Republic advancing in the future without impediment." Brother Van Humbeek, Grand Master of Belgian Masonry and Minister of Public Instruction in his then sorely-tryed country, "congratulated France on the point to which she had arrived." And what was this point? In October, 1872, a year before there was any talk about a monarchical restoration, there had been held in Locarno a "Convent" of the representatives of Continental Masonry. The Orient of Rome was represented by Filippo Cordova; that of Naples by Franchi; that of Palermo by La Vaccara; that of Florence by Andrea Giovanelli; that of Turin by Alberto Mario, and that of Genoa by Quadrio. The Lodges of France were represented by Felix Pyat; those of Hungary by Kossuth; those of Switzerland by Klapka, and those of Prussia by General Etzel. The questions for consideration were proposed by the Prussian, who presided at the sessions: 1. Would democracy be benefited by a war between the France of Thiers and Italy? 2. How could a provisional government, under the dictatorship of Gambetta, be established in France? 3. What new religion ought to be substituted for Catholicism?<sup>1</sup> It is evident, therefore, that five years before the electoral condemnation of the policy of MacMahon, the votaries of the Dark Lantern had decreed the eventual supremacy of their *confrère* and tool, Gambetta; and certainly the phrase "provisional government under the dictatorship of Gambetta" fitted well the course of that disciplined parliamentary majority which neutralized such good intentions as President MacMahon may have entertained. After a multitude of concessions to the Masonico-Radical spirit of the Deputies, MacMahon finally refused to accept a measure which would have disorganized the army, and when his determination was met with the cry "submit

<sup>1</sup> *L'Univers*, November 12, 1872—*Chaine d'Union*, November, 1878—PACHTLER; "War Against Throne and Altar," p. 158.

or resign," he chose the latter course on January 30, 1879. With the advent of Grévy as president, the French Republic entered on a new phase of existence. The comparatively conservative Cabinet of MacMahon was dismissed, and in the new one the Ministry of Public Instruction was assigned to Jules Ferry.

On March 15 Ferry laid before the Deputies two bills which were aimed at an entire destruction of that freedom of education for which the Catholics of France had so persistently fought in the days of Montalembert, Lacordaire and Ozanam. One of these bills modified the composition and the duties of the Superior Council for Public Instruction, as well as those of the Academic Councils, inasmuch as it conferred all authority in the matter of teaching on the State. The other bill, which directly concerned freedom in the matter of imparting secondary and superior instruction, accorded to the State the exclusive right to examine candidates for academic degrees; it deprived all private institutions of the title and privileges of a university, and by one of its articles, the celebrated Article vii., it pretended to take the right of teaching from every religious organization which was not "authorized" by the government. The Ferry laws were merely the result of the work undertaken by the *Ligue de l'Enseignement* or Educational Association which had been founded in 1866 by Jules Macé, with the active support of Robert, director general under Duruy, then the imperial Minister of Public Instruction. The object of this league was to render all instruction gratuitous, obligatory and, above all, secular; the modicum of freedom of instruction then subsisting, a privilege which the laws of 1833 and 1850 had allowed the Catholic institutions to exercise in their brave endeavors to compete with a governmental university which enjoyed a revenue of fifty-eight millions of francs, was to be entirely abrogated. This association numbered among its active members not only nearly all the professors of the University, but also a majority of the imperial prefects, procurators and other functionaries. Macé proclaimed that this league "would reduce to practice the principles proclaimed in the Lodges," and it is interesting to note that three years afterward, in the Masonic Congress of Metz, it was this same Macé who moved that the name of God should be expunged from the statutes of Masonry—a project which was finally actuated by the Grand Convent held in Paris on September 14, 1877, after consultation with all the Lodges in the obedience of the French Grand Orient.<sup>1</sup> Shortly after the birth of the league, the *Monde Maçonnique*, second only to the *Chaine*

<sup>1</sup> The statutes of the Grand Orient of France had hitherto given as the basis of Masonry "the existence of God, the study of morality and the practice of all virtues." Instead of this rather negative programme, there was now substituted "absolute freedom of conscience and human solidarity."

*d'Union* as an authority among the more intellectual of the adepts, said: "We are happy to be able to announce that the league founded by Brother J. Macé and also the project of a statue to Brother Voltaire have excited the sympathies of all our Lodges. Certainly no two subscriptions could be more in agreement than that in favor of Voltaire, which means the destruction of prejudice and superstition, and that for the league, which means a new society founded only on science and instruction. All the brethren understand this."<sup>1</sup> And in his circular of July 4, 1870, the Grand Master Babaud-Larivière said: "We are all of one mind in regard to the principle of gratuitous, obligatory and *lay* instruction." On September 24, 1878, at the banquet given by the Grand Orient on the occasion of the Great Exposition, the deputy grand-master of the Belgian Grand Orient, Bourland, thus perorated amid universal applause: "The obstacle to the intellectual development of France—that which is killing her, that which is killing us, that which is killing the entire world—is ignorance and fanaticism, the idea that the world should belong to him who is most daring in weakening the intellectual faculties of man—in brutalizing man. Let us arise against this pretension! Rome, together with Ultramontanism, ignorance and all else that comes from Rome, must perish, because of a development of an education *which will lead to morality.*"<sup>2</sup> In order to obtain funds for their campaign against all religious teaching in schools, the Masons organized the *Œuvre du Sou des Écoles* or Penny Collection for the Schools throughout the Republic, and in order to inspire the people with an enthusiasm which would result in contributions, every kind of festivity was brought into requisition. Thus at the grand festival given by the Lodges of Bordeaux in the public gardens on June 24, 1879, as we learn from the *Monde Maçonnique*, "Just as the last banners of the processions (of Corpus Christi) were re-entering their respective sanctuaries," the ceremonies of irreligion were begun, and in the evening the adepts exhibited a piece of fireworks "which presented 'The Works of Masonry' as its title, and reminded the 17,000 spectators of the object being pursued by the order." Quite properly, therefore, had Macé said in a general meeting of his league on January 18, 1879: "The destiny of our association is so intimately united with that of the Republic that the sole imminence of that senatorial majority, which was to consecrate republican institutions definitely, suffices to precipitate the movement which is directed principally by us." The movement was precipitated on March 7 by the proposition of the laws prepared by Jules Ferry, a Masonic luminary whose brutal materialism had been manifested two years

<sup>1</sup> Issue of April, 1867.<sup>2</sup> *Monde Maçonnique*, November, 1878, p. 346.

previously, when the Lodge *Clément Amitié* of Paris gave a banquet in honor of the anniversary of the reception of Littré and Wyroutboff into its bosom: "The Masonic fraternity is something *superior to all dogmas*, to all metaphysical conceptions, and *not only to all religions*, but to all philosophies. I mean that sociability is sufficient unto itself; that social morality has its guarantees and its roots in the human conscience; that it can live by itself; that now at length *it can throw away its theological crutches* and march unfettered to the conquest of the world. You are the most precious instruments for the cultivation of the social sentiment, for the development of social and lay morality. . . . *It is of the essence of Masonry to free man from the fear of death.* To this so ancient fear, to this slavery which it is so hard to crush, you oppose the strengthening and *consoling* sentiment of the continuity of the human species. . . . *When one is animated by this conviction, he has conquered for himself every liberty.*"<sup>1</sup> These remarks of Ferry remind us of the Italian sectarian utterances of Brother Mauro Macchi, Deputy in the Italian Parliament and a member of the Supreme Council of the Italian adepts, when he wrote to the *Masonic Review* in February, 1874: "The keystone of the system which opposes Masonry has always been and is the ascetic and transcendental sentiment which turns the attention of men beyond this life and induces them to consider themselves as mere travelers on earth, urging them to sacrifice everything for a happiness that will begin in the graveyard. *Until this system is destroyed by the mallet of Masonry, society will be composed mainly of poor weaklings who think of nothing but happiness in a future life.*"

Scarcely had Ferry presented his bills in the Chamber when Masonic conferences were convened throughout the Republic for the purpose of creating or augmenting a popular yearning for the blessings of irreligious education. At the conference held in Marseilles on April 5 Brother Gambini, "Venerable" of the Lodge *La Parfaite Sincérité*, drew the attention of his frenzied brethren to: "Brother Jules Ferry, Minister of Public Instruction, endeavoring to render education essentially laic, although he is surrounded by nameless intrigues and assaults on the part of the clerical hordes. . . . But if Brother Ferry is accomplishing a work which is *essentially Masonic*, it is the duty of us Masons to aid him in the fulfilment of his mission. Let him know that he is sustained by an army in reserve which, although it is calm because it is conscious of its power, is ready nevertheless to defend his work with its life."<sup>2</sup> During the summer of 1879 Ferry made a tour through the south of France, in order to enable the Brethren of the Three Points to incite popular

<sup>1</sup> *Chaîne d'Union*, 1877, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> *Chaîne d'Union*, May, 1879.

demonstrations which might neutralize the opposition of all that was sensible or religious to his projects. Having read the many addresses which were ostentatiously presented to him by the Lodges, we quote as representative of them all some passages from that of the Lodges of Toulouse: "The Masons of Toulouse extend to you a welcome, and tender the sentiments of respect which they feel for a Minister who sustains with persistent courage a combat against the eternal enemies of civil society. Democratic France, laboring France, is with you, and Freemasonry cannot forget that the Minister of Public Instruction is one of her most distinguished sons. Freemasonry will assist you, dear brother, with all the means in her power; for she well understands that . . . it is necessary that French youth be delivered from the snares of the Jesuits. . . . Inform the Government, dear brother, that especially in this matter the Masons of Toulouse are on its side."

The proposition of the second of the Ferry laws, that which practically suppressed the free Faculties and Universities established in virtue of the law of 1875, excited sentiments of horror among the Catholics of France. When it was discussed, eloquent voices pleaded for freedom of teaching and of the religious orders; but hatred of religion led the Deputies to pass Article vii. by a vote of 330 out of 515, and to pass the law as an entirety by a vote of 362 out of 521. In the Senate, however, the propriety and justice of Article vii. were fiercely contested, and the Catholic cause was reinforced by the very unclerical Jules Simon and Laboulaye. The Senatorial vote could not be taken before March 9, 1880, and then the iniquitous article was defeated by a majority of 19, the remainder of the law being accepted. The Deputies adopted the amendment of the Senate. The law concerning the Superior Council and the Academic Councils had been slightly modified, and then passed in February. The rejection of Article vii. was not borne with equanimity by the Masons and other Radicals. Determined to withdraw the youth of France from "the clutches of the Jesuits and other teaching orders," they resuscitated the memory of several laws which had fallen into desuetude—laws which were even contrary to the vaunted principles of 1789, and which had been abolished by non-use and by an enactment of 1850. On March 29, 1880, there appeared decrees of the president, based on laws of 1790 and 1792, on the Napoleonic Concordat and on the Organic Articles which Napoleon had audaciously added to that Concordat. These decrees accorded to the "non-authorized" association which "was styled 'of Jesus,'" a delay of three months, within which term it was to withdraw from all its establishments on French territory. The same delay of three months was granted to all other "non-authorized" or-

ganizations, during which term said bodies "might apply to the government for an approbation of their statutes and rules and for a legal recognition of their establishments which then existed *de facto*. The execution of these decrees began on June 30, the officers having received instructions to finish their work before November. However, in spite of these enactments, several of the affected colleges continued to exist, thanks to the zeal of wealthy Catholics, who bought the confiscated properties and installed therein professors who were not *congréganistes* or members of any order, but who were devoted to the sacred cause of religious education. By the procedure of March 29, 1880, the French Republic declared open war on the Catholic Church; and why should it not have done so, when the Lodges pronounced the incompatibility of Catholicism and Republicanism? On May 9 Courdavaux, professor in the Faculty of Letters at Douay, gave a conference on the Sacred Scriptures (!) before the Lodge *L'Étoile du Nord* of Lille, in which he said: "The distinction between Catholicism and Clericalism is purely official, a subtlety adapted to the exigencies of the platform; but here in the Lodge we may proclaim the truth that Catholicism and Clericalism are one and the same thing. And let us add this conclusion. No man can be both Catholic and Republican. It is impossible."<sup>1</sup> It is refreshing to note the attempted justification of the Cabinet to which he belonged, made by Cazot, then Minister of Justice. In an address to the Lodge *L'Écho du Grand-Orient* of Nimes he said: "According to a phrase that is familiar to you, we have entered on an era of difficulties, and it is not yet closed. We have many combats before us; for instance, the magistracy is to be reformed, so that it may be neither servile nor factious. The law must be respected by all, and especially by those who, under the vain pretext of defending a religious liberty *whose founders and apostles we are*, and of which they are the worst enemies, pretend to obey only a foreign sovereignty, refusing to bow before the sovereignty of their country."<sup>2</sup> We must not forget, however, that for a moment after the first enforcements of the decrees against the "non-authorized" teaching orders, there seemed to be promised an escape from the storm. The superiors of the afflicted communities had sent to the government a declaration couched in very moderate terms and approved by the French episcopate; and Grévy, supported by Freycinet, then President of the Council, had manifested a disposition to be contented with that declaration. The debates on this subject occupied the cabinet on September 16, 17 and 18, and precisely on those days the Grand-Orient was in session. The consequence of this coin-

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<sup>1</sup> The *Chaîne d'Union* published this conference in June, 1880, as "worthy of the highest praise." <sup>2</sup> *Chaîne d'Union*, 1880, p. 237.

cidence was narrated by the *Moniteur Universel* on September 22: "One of the Masons of the Convent (of the Grand-Orient) was told last Saturday about the negotiations which M. de Freycinet had held with the Vatican concerning the declaration emitted by the religious orders. He replied: 'If the President of the Council has negotiated with the Pope, he will leave the cabinet.' And on the next day, as the Mason had foretold, M. de Freycinet was forced to resign his portfolio." On September 23 a new cabinet was formed and Jules Ferry was constituted its head. The war against everything religious continued. The Sisters of Charity were expelled from the hospitals. A law establishing divorce was introduced in the Chamber. Cemeteries were secularized. It was proposed to subject seminarians to military service. Public religious processions were prohibited. New laws were enacted for the purpose of concentrating more thoroughly all instruction of youth in the hands of the State. The enforcement of the Ferry laws, primarily directed against the Jesuits, but applied also to the other orders whose members devoted themselves to teaching, was an occasion for the most revolting abuses of the governmental authority; in many instances even the honor of the army was compromised by its use in the sieges of convents and monasteries.

Under the influence of the emotions excited by these scandals, many French Catholics were then disposed to find fault with Pope Leo XIII. on account of his silence in the premises, and many blamed the Pontiff for his sympathy with, if not his instigation of the conciliatory declaration emitted by the superiors of the persecuted communities. But we must remember that from the very beginning of the anti-Catholic campaign undertaken by the Third Republic, the Holy See had realized that the circumstances were such as called for a persistent exercise of the patient prudence which is the most salient characteristic of the Roman Curia. And let us remember also, with one of the most judicious of the critics of the pontificate of Leo XIII.,<sup>1</sup> that His Holiness had deemed it wise to abstain from any demonstration which might have compromised the interests of the Church in France by throwing obstacles in the way of the relatively conciliatory advances which Freycinet seemed to be ready to make. But the Pontiff had emitted his complaints and protests in a diplomatic manner, and he was about to repeat them in a more solemn style when there appeared the semi-official proposition in regard to the declaration of the religious superiors. As for that document, well observes T'Serclaes, "there was no reason for disapproving it; not only did it contain nothing contrary to prin-

<sup>1</sup> T'SERCLAES; "Pope Leo XIII.: His Life, His Religious, Political and Social Acts." Paris, 1894.

iple, but it gave rise to a hope that the persecution would terminate. When these anticipations failed of realization, and when the Pontiff perceived that reticence was no longer a duty, he issued his eloquent letter to Cardinal Guibert, dated October 22, 1880." In this letter Leo XIII. gave great praise to the conduct of the French Catholics, both clerical and secular, and he lauded the heroism of the hundreds of French magistrates who had abandoned their positions rather than execute the decrees of the persecutors. In reference to the declaration of the superiors, the Pontiff reminded the superlatively zealous among the Catholics that it ought to be sufficient for them to know that "the declaration had been prepared by the authority, by the instigation, or at least by the permission of their bishops." Then the Pontiff recalled, for the benefit of the zealots, the principles on which the permissibility of the declaration was based; that is, the well-understood fact that the Church is opposed to no form of government—that the Church seeks only the good of religion in all of her relations with the civil power. "No one can deny," added His Holiness, "that in all things which are not unjust the powers that exist are to be obeyed, so that there may result a preservation of the order which is the source of public security." The Pontiff was careful to observe, however, that from what he had presented as the duty of Catholics toward the republican government of France, "it did not follow that in obeying the existing powers, they should necessarily approve whatever might be wrong in the constitution or administration of the government."

On March 28, 1882, there was promulgated a law concerning primary instruction which rendered that instruction obligatory in the case of all children who were between six and thirteen years of age; but the instruction was not necessarily to be received in the institutions of the State—a privilege which favored, of course, only those Catholics whose pecuniary condition enabled them to patronize the private schools which received no subsidies from the government. During the discussion of this law in the Senate the innate love of justice animating Jules Simon, ultra-radical though he was, impelled him to move an amendment to the effect that the children in the State schools should be taught "their duties to God and to their country;" but Schœlcher, the president of the commission charged with the examination of the law, exclaimed: "I cannot accept that amendment, as I am an atheist." The Catholics of the smaller towns and villages often succeeded in partially obviating the curse of the prohibition of religious instruction in their public schools, since the Municipal Councils enjoyed the right of naming the School Commissioners, and frequently they appointed ecclesiastics as such members. The cabinet of Freycinet was replaced

during seven months by one organized by Duclerc; and Duvaux, its Minister of Public Instruction, was apparently content with what his predecessors had effected to the detriment of the Church. But on February 21, 1883, President Grévy assigned to Ferry the task of forming a new Ministry, and of course the champion priest-eater hastened to resume his favorite occupation. Here we would note that as a Minister of Public Instruction, Ferry was animated by strange notions concerning the moral needs of the daughters of France. Whereas most of the giants of his school ever desired that their wives and daughters should be religious women, Ferry took care, when reorganizing the Normal School for Girls at Versailles, not only to appoint as president a Protestant (the widow of Jules Favre), but also to give the chair of moral science to Joseph Fabre, a notorious and rampant infidel. This Fabre, the trainer of so many of the future wives and mothers of France, wrote in his *Elements of Philosophy*: "Morality can and ought to be taught independently of any idea of a God. . . . The contrary doctrine would justify the poisoning of Socrates; it would renew the great scandal of the cross of Jesus; it would exalt Nero and Domitian; it would rekindle the pyre of Giordano Bruno; it would repeat the horrors of St. Bartholomew's Day. . . . The pretended demonstrations of the existence of God are insufficient."

Ferry signaled his advent to power by depriving innumerable pastors of their "salaries," merely because informers, often notorious liars, had denounced them as violators of unjust laws. The cross was torn from the gates of the cemeteries of Paris and in many of the other large cities. Since the Masonic designs were often thwarted by the "undue" moderation of some magistrates in their application or interpretation of the persecuting enactments, Ferry engineered through the Chamber a law which suspended the irremovability of the judges for three months; and immediately their office was taken from all the magistrates whose integrity and independence gave umbrage to the lodges. More than six hundred magistrates were thus dismissed. During 1884 the ecclesiastical budget, never too large, since it was equal to about the half of one per cent. on the value of the property stolen from the Church, was greatly diminished, the Chapter of Saint-Denis was suppressed, and the allowances of the Archbishop of Paris and of many other prelates were reduced to derisory amounts. The year 1885 witnessed no new persecutions other than the withdrawal of "salaries" from some hundreds of pastors, who were accused of influencing their voting parishioners at the previous elections. In 1886, however, the work of the Educational League was completed. We have seen that the Ferry laws of 1879 banished all members of religious organizations

from the teaching staff of the secondary and superior schools. It remained for Paul Bert to deliver what was perhaps the most effective of all blows against Catholicism in France, by means of an elaborate bill which completely laicized primary education. Bert had always frankly avowed his object. During the discussion on the Ferry projects in 1879 he had been appointed to draw up a report for a commission which rejoiced in such members as the Masonic luminaries, Louis Blanc, Lockroy, Lacroix, Constans, Spuller, Floquet and Duvaux. In this report he had said: "Instruction must be laic, *exclusively laic*; no teacher can be taken from among the members of any religious association, whether that association be authorized or not. . . . The commissioners have not wished to trouble themselves, as legislators, with the eternal disputes of metaphysicians (on such subjects as God, the immortality of the soul, etc.) . . . We have concerned ourselves principally with the discipline of intelligence, being sure that when natural science has taught the child how to observe; when physical science has taught him how to prove; when mathematical science has taught him how to draw consequences; we will have formed a mind which will be free from prejudices and one which will not be easily seduced by sorceries and superstitions. By the study of natural phenomena the child will be superior to foolish terrors and to unworthy credulities (such as belief in future punishment for sin.) . . . He will never hope for a sudden miracle to cure the evils of society, any more than he would look for it to cure his physical maladies. The saviors will never seduce him." When Bert's bill on primary education had been presented to the Deputies, such orators as the Count de Mun, Lamarzelle and Mgr. Freppel combatted it most vigorously, and as a last resort endeavored to draw some of its poison by apposite amendments; but the Chamber passed the measure as the lodges had drafted it. It was modified but slightly by the Senate; and when it was promulgated on October 30, 1886, it was found that all members of religious communities were to disappear from the primary schools, just as they had already been expelled from the others. Such was the remedy which Bert and his brethren prescribed for a society which was afflicted with the disease of Catholicism. Article vii. had been rejected, but the Bertian substitute was a preventative, according to its author, "against the phylloxera of modern society." Therefore it was that at a banquet given by the General Council of Yonne, Bert offered the toast: "I drink to the inventor who gave us the sulphate of carbon to banish the phylloxera of the vine, and I drink also to the framer of that Article vii., which would banish the phylloxera of Catholicism."

Having given a succinct account of the chief causes which have

contributed to render the name of the Third French Republic so distressing to the ears of all faithful children of the Spouse of Christ, we would request the attention of the reader to the Encyclical *Notabilissima Gallorum Gens*, which Pope Leo XIII. issued in June, 1884—a document which portrays the history of the relations between the Holy See and France during the previous few years, which recapitulates in a most solemn manner the evils inflicted on the Church by those who now guide the destinies of the Eldest Daughter of the Church, and which indicates the causes of those evils and assigns their remedies. Naturally the Pontiff begins by reminding the world of the Christian glories which have pre-eminently distinguished France; of praises which, more than any other nation, France has received from the Sovereign Pontiffs; of the gifts which France has received from God in the natural order; and then His Holiness laments that “sometimes France has forgotten herself and has neglected the duties which God imposed on her.” However, the Pontiff consolingly remarks: “France has never given herself entirely to such madness, nor has she forgotten herself for a long time.” But now, we are reminded, in the entire extent of Christendom there circulates the poison of wicked doctrine—a doctrine which aims at the complete destruction of every Christian institution, and in France the evil presents itself in the guise of a heterodox philosophy which has given birth to a spirit of immoderate liberty and *in the form of a secret society which has sworn the death of Catholicism*. The Pope insists that “no State can be prosperous when virtue and religion languish;” for without the idea of God authority and law lose their force, governments become tyrannies, the governed become rebels—such are the consequences of a forgetfulness of God. Again, unless society has recourse to God, its Protector, it cannot hope for His blessing. History demonstrates this fact, and most especially is the fact shown by the history of France during the last hundred years. Then the Father of Christendom shows how for the family, the basis of society, it is necessary that a Christian education be given to the child, and how it has been on account of this necessity that the Church has always condemned the theory of a “neutral” education. Uninfluenced by a belief in a God who is Creator, Rewarder and Punisher, the young will never bend beneath a rule that commands even a decent life; habituated to a refusal of nothing to their passions, the young will easily be a source of trouble to the State. Thenceforward confining his reflections more especially to the needs of the State, the Pontiff reminds us that among men there are two societies which are thoroughly independent, each in its own sphere. These societies are the spiritual and the temporal; but we must not forget that there are certain “mixed mat-

ters" in which each of these societies naturally has an interest, and concerning a regulation of which they must come to an agreement. This need was understood in France by the civil authorities, after the subsidence of the revolutionary turmoils in the beginning of the nineteenth century; and therefore the two powers, spiritual and temporal, agreed on that Concordat, in which Pope Pius VII. condescended to such an extent in favor of the French Government. The results were happy, both for the Church in a revival of the Christian conditions, and for the State in the receipt of a promise of tranquillity. Such a result, remarks His Holiness, is much to be desired in these days of revolutionary enterprise; now, more than at any other time, the State ought to ask for the beneficent intervention of the Church. Nevertheless, the Head of the Church is compelled to admit that the acts of the French Government are now of such a nature that they indicate an imminent rupture of the Concordat; and he calls attention to his letters to the Cardinal-Archbishop of Paris in reference to the persecution of the religious orders, as well as to his letter to President Grévy on the general hostility of the Republic to the Church. Then the Pope praises the courage of the French bishops in the present circumstances, and he especially commends their efforts for the establishment of Catholic schools, despite the enormous revenues of the governmental establishments, against which they must contend. He repels as a calumny the Masonic assertion that these efforts prove that the bishops are enemies of France; he insists that when the prelates champion the interests of souls, they simply perform their duty. And the Pontiff grows warm in his commendations of the zealous and charitable French priesthood, as well as in his acknowledgment of the heroic courage of so many of the French laity. On June 27 Leo XIII. addressed a brief to the Bishop of Perpignan, accentuating the counsels given in this Encyclical, and especially deploring the political divisions among the French Catholic laymen—divisions which prevented their presenting a united front at the polls, where they might destroy the Masonic hydra which was strangling France. The so-much-needed union, says the Pontiff, will easily be consummated if Frenchmen will seek their motives in the Encyclicals issued by Pius IX. and by himself, but especially in the *Syllabus* promulgated by his predecessor. "Let Frenchmen do away with disputes, the objects of which are merely private interests—interests which are of secondary importance when compared with matters which belong to a more elevated order."

It has been well said that the history of the modern European Revolution is but one enormous lie; and one perpetual hypocrisy; and certainly the record of the dissension between the Church and

the Third French Republic does not indicate that the latter institution is an exception. Mendacity and hypocrisy were needed, indeed, for the assertion that the persecuting decrees of Ferry, Bert, etc., were merely actuations of "existing laws." The most honest among the Liberals of France manifested their disgust toward this hypocrisy. Laboulaye cried: "They exhume the edicts of the olden kings, the decrees of the Reign of Terror, those of the Cæsars, etc. . . . All is acceptable to the democrats when they desire to strangle liberty or to hunt the 'Jesuits.' As for those ordinances which recognized liberty of conscience, freedom of teaching, the right of association, all these do not exist, according to our democrats. 'All for them; nothing for any others,' but especially 'nothing for religion'—that is their war-cry." And the injustice of such procedures caused Jules Simon, the most learned and otherwise most eminent man in the Republican party of France, to thus apostrophize the majority of his brethren: "To-day the republicans imitate the adversaries whom they once combatted; it seems to me that when they attain to power, they have learned only how to proscribe. . . . Do not make us say that whenever liberty troubles you, you do not love it. You do not love liberty unless you are willing that your adversaries should enjoy it. If you love liberty for yourselves alone, you do not love it; you do not know its meaning; you are unworthy of understanding it."<sup>1</sup> It was an easy task for two veritable luminaries of French jurisprudence, M. Rousse, of Paris, and M. de Demolombe, of Caen, to demonstrate in two masterly juridical *Consultations* on the decrees of March 29, 1880, that the plea of those decrees being founded on "existing laws" was a cowardly hypocrisy; and their declaration was endorsed by more than two thousand lawyers, among whom were all of the most illustrious and most disinterested members of the French bar and magistracy.<sup>2</sup> Certainly the Masonic conspirators against the Church could not have trusted greatly in any "existing laws" when they devised their new Article vii.: and it was only when the Senate had rejected that article as too despotic, that men were informed of those "existing laws"—ordinances which "existed" with so little vitality that, in order to give any force to them, two new decrees were made as substitutes for the condemned article. In their search after "existing laws" which might crush the "clericals," the democratic despots raked among that past which they continually cursed. They seized on all the

<sup>1</sup> It was this plea for true liberty that made Jules Simon an object of detestation to his Masonic comrades. Smarting under their ingratitude, he said: "It is we who are defending the Republic—we who are trying to preserve it from the stain of despotism; and it is precisely because of that effort that we are, I will not say discussed, but reviled and outraged." <sup>2</sup> RIVAUX; "Cours d'Histoire Ecclesiastique," vol. III., p. 674. Paris, 1883.

arbitrary decrees and violent measures of the two Napoleons, and hailed them as proper chastisements for the slaves of Rome; thus, as some one wrote at the time, presenting a picture of "Democracy licking the mud from the boots of the Empire." They even stirred up the debris of the royalist Restoration, which they anathematized with a bitterness which did not animate their curses against the two Empires, hoping to find their hatred justified by the acts of a government which they absurdly proclaimed as "clerical." They found a number of ordinances which were hostile to freedom of education, and which the Universitarian monopoly and the threats of revolutionary Liberalism had extorted from the feeble Louis XVIII. and Charles X.; and with these testimonies they essayed to convince the world that even the government of the Restoration, "clerical" though it was, had for its own safety been compelled to restrain the "Jesuits." The lie was so barefaced, remarks a judicious historian,<sup>1</sup> that it might be considered a wicked pleasantry, a revolutionary *gaminerie*. "For the Revolution was wont to amuse itself with its victims; we all know the little chant sung by the cannibals in the Café de Foy at the Palais Royal while they squeezed the blood from the heart of Berthier and then drank it: 'There can be no feast, if the heart is absent.'" The task of the Masonic persecutors was easy when they peered into the pile of documents bequeathed to France by the men who had travestied all that was good in the Principles of 1789. Here they were rewarded by the discovery of laws which were not only sanguinary, but more despotic and irreligious than any which Satan had as yet ever breathed into the mind of man. Certainly these records, stained with the blood which, as Taine remarked, "is the soul of the Revolution," ought to have satisfied the seekers of "existing laws;" but they must needs recur to the philosophic, Masonic and Jansenistic parliaments of the eighteenth century. "These democrats," reflects Paul Féval, "experience no shame in donning the old ducal wig of Choiseul, the favorite and accomplice of the Pompadour. They applaud loudly the judicial crimes of those parliaments now styled by history 'the parliaments of Choiseul-Pompadour;' and they are happy in being able to imitate and to resuscitate those despots of the robe." When a similar enterprise, but one projected on a smaller scale, was essayed in 1825, it was no more moderate anti-clerical than Pierre Leroux, who said: "That man does not understand liberty who demands an execution of the olden parliamentary decrees against the Jesuits; I shall say more—he himself is guilty of Jesuitism." Of course, having whetted their appetites with the morsels dragged from the graves of the Second Empire, the Restoration, Napoleon I., the Revolution and

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<sup>1</sup> RIVAUX; loc. cit., p. 677.

Louis XV., the democrats of the Third Republic hastened to regale themselves with the drippings from the caldron of Gallicanism, as it had been prepared during the reign of Louis XIV. Undoubtedly these gentry had no more accurate idea of the meaning of Gallicanism than that which is entertained by ninety-nine per cent. of our Protestant scholars; but they knew that Gallicanism had been used by the Grand Monarch as an engine of war against certain temporal claims of Rome, and therefore they determined to imitate a sovereign whom they especially abhorred. Then we heard of dragoons being directed against harmless old men of prayer, and against convents of consecrated virgins, whose sole defense was the crucifix. Then we read of the siege of the Abbey of Frigolet, so bravely conducted by a republican general. Before these scenes were witnessed, that serious republican, Dufaure, had declared in full Senate: "In the programme openly displayed by an eminent republican deputy, a distinguished orator of the Chamber, I find that there are projected against the Catholics all of the measures indicated in those edicts of Louis XIV. which accompanied or followed the revocation of the Edict of Nantes." Commenting on an appropriation of weapons from a Gallicanism which his comrades could not comprehend, Jules Simon said: "The Most Christian King had at least an excuse in his faith; but you, who represent free thought, and who therefore do not claim to be the sole depositaries of absolute truth, you cannot pretend to share in a doctrinal unity. It will be said of you that you use repression for the sake of negation." But Paul Bert, the champion of the Third Republic in its deliberate contempt of logic, did not quail before this arraignment by Jules Simon. With phenomenal cynicism he accepted the allegation: "Yes; *we are the negation*. Protestantism, Jansenism, all other heresies, are merely partial negations, half-measures of days long vanished. We are a negation which is total and radical." And then, as though he had heard St. Augustine's cry: "Catholicism is integral truth," that is, a real and total *affirmation*, Bert added: "The question between us (the Church and the Third Republic) is one of life and death." No wonder that Gambetta felt that he was justified in proclaiming: "Clericalism is our enemy."

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