

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### FATHER HYACINTHE LOYSON.

Père Hyacinthe Loyson, the famous French preacher, formerly of Notre Dame, Paris, who many years ago left the Church, thereby creating a sensation, not only in the Catholic world but also among Protestants, has returned from the Orient, where he visited Jerusalem, and is now staying at Rome.

Father Hyacinthe is not only a great preacher and a conspicuous figure in the religious evolution of France, but he is also a man of deep philosophical interest and of a broad education. He married an American lady, a native of Philadelphia, and thus he has strong ties that connect him in sympathy with the United States.

The home of Father Hyacinthe and Madame Loyson at Rome is the rendezvous for all sorts of thinking people, believers and unbelievers. The Father is still Catholic enough to think that the eternal question of religion has its center and perhaps will find its solution in the "Eternal City." Only he thinks it is far off. He is surrounded by friends and has been invited to preach in the American Episcopal Church and also to the Waldenses, who are an Italian Evangelical denomination seven centuries old, the Israel of the Alps. He also spoke at the Centenary of the British and Foreign Bible Society and at the Italian Methodist Church before crowded congregations who broke out into enthusiastic applause. More significant still is the lecture which he delivered at the request of the members of the government and the ambassadors before a Roman audience on a neutral platform upon the social, moral, and religious questions which agitate the world.

Father Hyacinthe celebrated of late his seventy-seventh birthday by a fraternal feast in which different denominations participated.

A letter of his, published in *L'Italie*, a French paper published at Rome, sums up the Père's views of the present Pope, and as it is of general interest to hear the opinion of a prominent man who knows the Roman Church so thoroughly as does Father Hyacinthe, we here publish it in an English translation.

Father Hyacinthe says:

"I have come to Rome partly to understand the direction which the new papacy will follow, and I trust that it will be a happy one on account of its approachment to Italy. An official reconciliation is at present not possible. The whole papal power itself would be wrecked by it, but Pius X will very usefully prepare for it by the good precedents which he sets and which are practically a rupture with the intransigentism of Pius IX and Leo XIII.

"As to general politics, the new Pope gives himself credit to leave it alone but where by the nature of his duties he is obliged to interfere, as is the case with the French laws concerning the teaching congregations, he will make, honestly and sentimentally, grave mistakes.

"He may thereby prepare the separation of the Church and State in France, which, however, will — it is to be feared — lead to conditions that will be bad for both Church and State.

"As to the relations between religion and science, relations which according to my view take precedence even over those of the Church and the State, the intellectual horizon of Pius X will presumably be that of a good curé of the country or of a small town who reads the Bible in the Vulgate and preferably in the extracts furnished by his breviary. He has just given us a painful sample of it in his condemnation of the erudite writings of Abbé Loisy.

"Nothing more dangerous in a Pope than piety when it is not sufficiently supported by a broad and independent science; and if you wish to have my unreserved opinion, nothing more dangerous than a piety that is subjected to the influence of a state secretary, more or less Spanish and reactionary.

"You may think me pessimistic, and indeed I am such so far as men are concerned, but not as to God. A higher law governs history and finally leads the errors and mistakes of man, even those of popes, to a good end.

"Under its present form the Church stands condemned. She is not in need merely of a reform, as I thought myself some time ago. She needs a profound transformation, and I ought to add, a radical one. I seem to hear daily in my meditative walks in the midst of Rome's solemn and tragic ruins the voice which according to Plutarch in the decay of paganism cried out over the sea of the Greek archipelago: 'The great Pan is dead.'

"My heart which remains profoundly Catholic answers this voice with a sigh, but my reason and also my faith, my purified faith, show me in the future, at Rome and at Paris and elsewhere, the vision of a higher Christianity, similar to the one which Mazzini hoped for and which he summed up in the two words 'God and the people.'" \* \* \*

The son of Father Hyacinthe, Paul Hyacinthe Loyson, is an able and well-known French author, who, after publishing several volumes of poetry, has developed of late into a dramatist with a strong conviction that theaters should be reformed and do what the churches fail in, viz., to attract those who stand most in need of reform. His *Evangile du Sang* has been enacted in different continental cities and his *Droit des Vierges* has just had a run of a month in Paris at the New Theatre Victor Hugo. The director of the *Theatre Français*, which takes the lead over all others, has asked him to write a moral drama for that stage.

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#### A LETTER FROM THE AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE OF BEHAISM.

*To the Editor of The Open Court:*

This letter, from Mr. Ibrahim Kheiralla, the main representative of Behasim in the United States, refers to portions of our article, "A New Religion," which will appear in the next number.]

With pleasure and full satisfaction I have read the proofs of the article on Behasim. Indeed it is one of the best that I have read on this subject.