

less certain that our aim is the same, and that it can be summed up in the Biblical words: 'Glory to God and peace unto men!'

"Pray accept the renewed assurance of my deepfelt and religious attachment in this Supreme Truth which governs the defective systems of mankind, which leads them to correct each other, and will, some day, reconcile them in one pure and living synthesis.

"HYACINTHE LOYSON."

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## STATE AND CHURCH.

### A REPLY.

In that great work, entitled *Le XIXe siècle mouvement du monde* (The XIXth Century Movement of the World) published under the direction of Monsignor Pechenard with the approval of the pope, we read in an article on "The Struggles of the Church" (*Les luttes de l'église*):

"Two great facts are opposed to the doctrine of Catholic truth: first, the coexistence of several religions in countries of equal civilization; and second, the proclamation of the independence of philosophical thought."

What do these words mean, if not that the Catholic Church can not stand controversy? Has it prospered under it in the United States? According to certain documents which I have analyzed in my volume *Le bilan de l'église* (The Balance of the Church) there ought to be twenty-five million Catholics in the United States, if it were not for the defection of the descendants of Catholic emigrants; while in fact there are less than twelve millions.

In France religion is only an insignificant factor; it interests but a small minority of the people, and is regarded from the view-point of temporal benefits rather than in relation to questions of faith. Most of the people go to church three times in their life, and once after death: for baptism, first communion, marriage, and burial. It is a question of social policy—nothing more.

PARIS, FRANCE.

YVES GUYOT.

### EDITOR'S REJOINER.

We take pleasure in giving publicity to the letter of M. Yves Guyot, the distinguished French deputy, whose article on "France and the Vatican" appeared in the June number of *The Open Court*. His comments are made in reply to the editorial view which was expressed in the same number, to the effect that the Roman Catholic Church could only gain by the separation of Church and State, which is now lamented by many ecclesiastics. We are pretty familiar with the conditions in France, and it is true enough that religion "interests but a small minority of the people." But it is our opinion that exactly the cure for many evils of church life in France will be its separation from the government. This division will deprive certain high ecclesiastics of much of their influence, but what they lose in one line, they will fully gain in others.

M. Guyot's claim that the Roman Catholic Church in the United States ought to count twenty-five millions, if Catholic immigrants had not abandoned their faith, may be true although the figures do not seem to me reliable. But granting the correctness of his statistics, I consider that the Church of twelve millions of real Catholics is stronger than a Church of twenty-five million

members who are forced into it against their will. The truth is that the Roman Church and its clergy are more respected in the United States than in such Catholic countries as Spain, Italy, and France.

I am told that what is true of America will not apply to Europe, but I claim that the psychological laws of mankind hold good universally. We would lower the standard of religious life in this country at once if we were to change any one of the Churches into a State Church, and religion can be purified only by being absolutely freed from political complications.

I will add incidentally, that when Church and state are separated it does not imply that religion itself must be ousted from political life. The people will retain their religious convictions when they go to the polls, and there is no need for the politicians themselves to suppress their religious ideals. On the contrary, if Church life is not implicated with politics the morality inculcated by religion will have a better chance to tell upon the legislature, institutions, and public life in general.

That the Roman Catholic Church in Europe is opposed to the coexistence of several religions is well known. That it claims the dependence of philosophy on Church doctrines is also a leading idea of the papal government. Both have been highly injurious to the development of the Church, and there are many serious Roman Catholics who are aware of the fact that the Church will never prosper, that it will never be a truly spiritual power in the world, unless it abandons its presumption to enthrall humanity in its doctrines.

In the United States these pretensions are void, and we Americans (I unhesitatingly include the intelligent Roman Catholics) all hope sincerely that they may never be enforced, or even thought of, here. They would not only be ruinous to our nation, but would mark the beginning of the decadence of the Church in this country.

From all I know of the Roman Catholic Church in Europe and America I do not hesitate to say that the life of the Roman Church in this country reaches a considerably higher level than that in the old world; and I find one main reason for it in the coexistence of several religions, which exercises a wholesome discipline and raises the standard of morality among both clergy and laity.

It is still a habit of Roman Catholic institutions wherever philosophy is taught to make theological students pray at the end of each lesson that if they have considered anything which is contrary to the tenets of their holy Church, it may be blotted out from their minds. I will not enter here into a discussion of the harm done by this practice; but I maintain that the growth of the Church is hampered thereby, and when the independence of philosophical thought will be recognized by Church authorities it will open a new era of religious development, promising a progress which so far has only been forced upon the Roman Church from the outside. At any rate the Roman Catholic countries have fallen to the rear in the progress of civilized nations. Even in this country a Roman Catholic education (though it might be better than to leave children to the hap-hazard of irreligious surroundings) is a decided drawback to young men and women in comparison to the more vigorous, more liberal, more critical, and liberty-loving Protestant methods. It is noticeable that Roman Catholics as a class show less ability, less independent judgment and also less enterprise than others, and this can only be due to their

training of "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" who is identified by them with the Church.

The free air of competition with other thought can never do harm to any religious institution, provided its adherents are earnestly seeking the truth. We see in a separation of the Church from the State only one important step in the religious development of a country towards purifying itself and developing its truly religious nature which can only be darkened by a too intimate connection with political affairs. That those to whom Roman Catholic ceremonies are most congenial will then be more enthusiastic and more deeply interested in the affairs of their Church than they were before, must *a priori* be expected, and has actually proved true in the United States. We have no reason to think that human nature is different in Europe and America.

It is possible that for a few generations the French people may fall away from the Church, but let them be deprived only a little while of religious comfort so as to feel an intense hunger for it, and they will gladly revert to their old faith. It is true that the age of transition will naturally afford other religious bodies a splendid opportunity for missionary work, but we repeat our conviction expressed before, that the religious life will not be obliterated, and that though the separation has been forced upon the Vatican by the State, it lies within the power of the Church to change this apparent defeat into a decisive victory.

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#### A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

Miss A. Christina Albers of Calcutta, the author of the article on India in this number, at our urgent request has furnished a few notes in regard to her life and work from which we extract the following data, regretting that very limited space forbids us giving the sketch in her own words.

Miss Albers was born in Northern Germany "of a father with a powerful will, a kind heart, but of materialistic tendencies," and a mother of a delicate spiritual nature who died at Christina's birth. As a lonely child she took life and its problems very seriously, seeing visions and pondering upon the mysteries of existence. She was not interested in her school work, but her mind wandered from the lesson in hand and she was judged stupid and obstinate by her teachers who did not realize that what was lacking was the love and appreciative sympathy of a mother's comprehension.

Even as she grew older any attempts to express her emotions or to state the doubts and queries that arose in her mind were checked by rebukes, until finally she left home and fled to the United States. Here too she was disappointed and allied herself with one sort of association after another (at one time she even joined her interests with those of anarchists) in unsuccessful efforts to find sympathetic spirits.

"A happier day did dawn at last. That was like the budding of spring when in the inner consciousness dawned the truth that within himself must man redemption find." From that time she had but one desire—to go to India "the land whence came the message that gave me peace," and this wish was accomplished four years ago. But she lived in America long enough to grow to love it and appreciate its high ideals and inherent possibilities.

In regard to her life and work in India we quote literally from Miss Albers' letter: