

THE LUSITANIAN CHURCH,

CATHOLIC, APOSTOLIC, EVANGELICAL

(OPPORTUNITIES OF EXTENSION),

Is EPISCOPAL, essentially NATIONAL, truly CATHOLIC and APOSTOLIC, really independent of Rome or of any other foreign authority, and only with these features indispensable to a truly EVANGELICAL INDEPENDENT and NATIONAL Church has she any right to exist.

ON the 4th July Gaya had a visit from the Rev. Padre José do Nascimento Neves, Prior of the parish of St. Bartholomew, township of Lourinha, district of Lisbon (where we had the pleasure of preaching to a crowded congregation on Ascension Day three years ago). Padre Nascimento attended the celebration of the Eucharist at the Church of St. John the Evangelist, and, after the reading of the Gospel of the day, preached to a full congregation on the Miraculous Draught of Fishes. In the afternoon he preached an eloquent sermon on the Christian Faith as based upon pure Evangelical doctrine, which was eagerly listened to by a large and attentive congregation.

In the evening he addressed the congregation of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Gaya, on the difficulties and persecutions which a Christian must expect to encounter in this life, and the joy and peace to be found only in Jesus. After Evensong he spent the remainder of the night at the Rev. A. B. Cassels's residence.

At both churches he was congratulated by a great many of the members of the congregations, who thanked him for his visit, as for his encouraging and helpful sermons.

Padre Nascimento was also invited to speak at the Y.M.C.A. at Oporto on July 6th, but he was unable to stay away any longer from his own parish.

It is now more than four years since this Priest left the Roman Communion, and any one who has not been brought up in the Papal Church can have no idea of the many difficulties, threats and impediments placed in the way of the Clergy who contemplate this step in a Roman Catholic country; nevertheless, Padre Nascimento, with superhuman courage, resisted the persecutions, and not only protested against the abuses and innovations of modern Rome, but was followed by the great majority of his parishioners (593 souls), and formed a *société de culte* called "Egreja Catholica, Apostolica, Lusitana," and obtained the sanction of the Government to continue to hold the Parish Church where he preaches every Sunday and Saint's Day.

At first he was entirely isolated, but now his patience has been rewarded, and the parishioners of Roguengo Grande (population 1,221), of the township of Lourinha, have also seceded from Rome, claimed possession of the Parish Church, and have elected a Priest, who has a stipend from the Government of 30 escudos per month, as their pastor.

The parishioners of Aguas Frias, a large country parish of well-to-do farmers, near the town of Chaves, asked if the Lusitanian Church could send them a married priest, independent of Rome, for their pastor, but the opportunity was lost, as we had no one to send.

A zealous minister of the Lusitanian Church at Setubal has lately written in glowing terms concerning the Rev. Gil Formosinho, ex-Roman Catholic Priest, married, but who maintains his position as Chaplain and Treasurer of the important Hospitals and Asylums of the city of Evora, where he is much respected, and who seeks to identify himself with an essentially National Church independent of Rome or any other foreign authority, and does not ask for any remuneration.

of St. Juan Evangelista and Salvador do Mundo have been treated in not allowing us to have a Coadjutor of our own choice, and at our own expense, or that of the congregation, and this is most damaging to the work of God and very prejudicial to the spiritual state of the congregations under our care, as it is impossible for us, notwithstanding our best endeavours, to properly perform all our duties as pastor of two Churches, administer the Sacraments, preside at all the services, visit now nearly 200 registered communicants, daily teach in and superintend schools attended by 360 scholars, and edit the *Egreja Lusitana*, the only Evangelical paper which has been regularly published in Portugal during twenty-two years.

In September, 1899, Augusto Nogueira, who was then acting as teacher of the school connected with this Church, suddenly left his post and retired to his native parish, far from this town. Very soon after this a terrible accident occurred at his house—his father was killed, his mother died, and A. Nogueira broke his leg and was laid up for more than two years. He considered this a judgment from heaven, so the first time he was able to travel he came to Gaya, confessed his fault, and asked forgiveness.

Having come into the possession of a little property, as soon as he heard that Dr. Harden was holding theological classes here, he begged leave to attend the lectures at his own expense and without the remuneration which the other students received. Dr. Harden said as Nogueira was an educated man it would be quite sufficient if he attended the theological lectures for a few months before he left Portugal, but that this must depend on instructions he might receive from the London Committee.

Before Dr. Harden left this country A. Nogueira applied a second time, and Dr. Harden wrote to us saying he had received instructions from London that in no case whatever would A. Nogueira or any other student from a Roman Catholic seminary be ordained in the Lusitanian Church.

For at least twelve years A. Nogueira has given a good testimony, and his earnest, consistent Christian life and character have never been questioned.

He has several times been recommended by the Parochial Council of this Church for Ordination; 345 communicants and adherents of this congregation petitioned the Synod on two occasions that he might be appointed our Coadjutor.

On the 26th of January, 1910, Augusto Nogueira, an educated man with the full course of six years at the Lyceum of Oporto, and three years at the Roman Catholic Seminary of the Diocese of Oporto, and after years of trial and undisputed good character, was duly licensed by the Synod as a public preacher, and the matter of his Ordination was referred to the next meeting of the Permanent Committee in the North of Portugal.

At a meeting of the Permanent Committee held in the North of Portugal on January 20th, 1912, the Rev. Andrew B. Cassels proposed that A. Nogueira, who had given sufficient proof of his zeal and Christian character during the last eight years, should be recommended to the Bishops for Ordination; all present spoke highly of Nogueira except one, who said he would not vote either way; the President spoke in favour of the candidate, who, he said, had been tried long enough, but he asked the Committee not to recommend A. Nogueira then, as it might be interpreted as want of respect to the Bishop of Clogher; however, if the Committee liked to appoint him and the Rev. A. B. Cassels as a Sub-Committee, they would do all in their power to forward A. Nogueira's case; so this was unanimously agreed to. Since January, 1912, there has been no meeting of the Permanent Committee in the North of Portugal, so we remain without a Coadjutor.

We are assured that the great majority, perhaps the total, of the Anglican and Old Catholic Bishops do not approve of sending missionaries or instructions to any Christian country or to any National Church, because, supposing that there are superstitions to abandon and abuses to remove, this does not belong to foreigners.

On 13th July, when the Rev. A. B. Cassels was returning home after a concert held in our Parochial Hall in which he very kindly took a most prominent part, he was thrown out of the carriage he was driving and seriously injured; so, although we pray and trust God that he may be able still to direct and counsel the large Church of O Ban Pastor under his care, yet we fear he will for a very long time be disabled from taking any active part.

This serious accident is not only a great blow to the Church under his care, but also to the Churches of S. Juan Evangelista and Salvador do Mundo, as the Rev. A. Cassels was an earnest and courageous defender of what he knew to be just and right, and he was always ready to give us his practical support.

The Churches of S. Juan Evangelista, Salvador do Mundo, and Ban Pastor form a decided majority of the communicants and adherents, and a large majority of the scholars and contributors of the Lusitanian Church.

The clouds look black and stormy in some parts, but God works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform, so we trust His love, His power, His faithfulness, and pray that in His own good time all things may work together for the independent and national character of the Lusitanian Church.

No foreign jurisdiction, "oversight," or "control" can be allowed:—

Because it is contrary to our General Basis and Liturgy.

Because it is contrary to the invariable use and practice for thirty years after our organisation in 1880.

Because it is contrary to the laws of Portugal, which it is our duty to obey.

Because it is against the wishes of the great majority of the lay members of our Communion and the whole of public opinion in Portugal.

Because it entirely prevents the progress and extension of an independent National Church, also prevents Priests who have left the Church of Rome for conscientious reasons, and whole congregations who are asking for a married Clergy and a vernacular Liturgy, &c., from joining us.

Foreign "oversight" and "control," even when exercised, as in the present case, with the best intentions, is more prejudicial to development and enlargement of an independent and essentially a National Church than the withdrawal of any pecuniary aid.

DIOGO CASSELS, Priest-in-Charge of the Church of S. Juan Evangelista, also of the Church of Salvador do Mundo.

Gaya, 30th July, 1915.

Several of the parochial Roman Catholic Clergy, whose names I am not at liberty at present to disclose, have spoken or written to me and to Padre Nascimento making inquiries as to the possibility of their joining us with all their parishioners, Parish Councils, and church buildings, and have expressed a desire to use our Liturgy and formulæ.

The Lusitanian Church, Catholic, Apostolic, Evangelical, is in a unique position. According to her Liturgy, Constitution, and General Basis, she is truly Catholic, sincerely Evangelical, and essentially a National Church, really independent of Rome or any other foreign authority, but her Apostolic organisation needs to be completed by the consecration of a native-born Bishop, which is indispensable for the development and enlargement of a Church essentially Catholic and National.

All friends of Catholic reform in Portugal must earnestly pray that the Irish Bishops may be able to find some way to help the Lusitanian Church to complete her organisation, and to rise thus to the unique opportunity now lying before her, or, at least, that some definite answer may be given to the Memorial unanimously voted by our Permanent Committee on February 10th, 1911.

If, unfortunately, they should be unable to comply with our petition, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of the vast Anglican Communion, in October, 1912, authorised us to inform our colleagues that if the Lusitanian Church should send him a memorial praying for the consecration of a National Bishop, the memorial would be received with great interest and sympathy, and that if the Bishops convinced themselves that the reform movement in Portugal was spontaneous and free, not of foreign origin, then we might be certain that they would be encouraged, not only to show their sympathy, but also to help us in any way consistent with our honour as a national independent Church, and that the memorial could be sent to him (the Archbishop) as soon as we wished; but it was necessary that the initiative should come from the Lusitanian Church.

When Dr. Knight, Bishop of Gibraltar, visited Oporto in the early Spring of 1913, six Priests of the Lusitanian Church called upon him, and he then told us he had seen his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury just before he left London, and he repeated to us exactly what the Archbishop had so graciously said to us in October, 1912.

Two Old Catholic Bishops of Holland and Switzerland kindly wrote and said to us:—"It is with profound satisfaction that I have read the books (Liturgy, Constitution, General Basis, Canons, &c.) which you sent me, and I do not find in them anything at all which is not also taught by our Church. I am glad to take knowledge of, and much admire the excellent order established in the internal and external administration of your Church. . . ." "We hold the faith of the undivided Church, and we are as far removed as you are from any superstitious veneration of images." These Bishops have expressed their sympathy with the Lusitanian Church and their readiness to give us any Episcopal help in their power if asked to do so.

I don't expect to see a Bishop consecrated for the Lusitanian Church while I am in the flesh, but I earnestly pray God that I may be privileged to see the way prepared for the consolidation of the Lusitanian Church before I am called to meet my Saviour.

I have very great reason to thank Almighty God for the health, strength, and energy He has given me in my old age. I trust I can sincerely say that I seek neither rest, nor pecuniary remuneration, nor honour. I esteem it a privilege to have encountered difficulties and persecution for righteousness' sake, but I confess I am much grieved at the unkind and unjust way my colleague, Augusto Nogueira, and the congregations