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THE

# THE LUSITANIAN CHURCH, CATHOLIC, APOSTOLIC, EVANGELICAL.

Frei Bartholomeu dos Martyres, the indefatigable and saintly Archbishop of Braga, originator of Catholic reform in Portugal, had the gigantic courage to protest in the Council of Trent in the XVIth century against the enforced celibacy of the Clergy, simony, indulgences, public worship in a language not understood by the people, also against the admission of apocryphal books and writings into the Liturgy of the Church, and the denial of the cup to the laity in the blessed Sacrament.

The counsels of the Archbishop were not heeded, but the Pope did not excommunicate him, as no doubt he feared to offend Portugal, then a power in Europe.

The Archbishop was first advised, then threatened to withdraw his protests, and, as he did not obey, he was kept a prisoner, kindly treated, but for many months not allowed to return. Many useful reforms were effected by the Archbishop, but some only lasted his lifetime.

Padre Antonio P. de Figueiredo, classical writer of European celebrity, was the pioneer of Catholic reform in Portugal. He translated the whole Bible into the vulgar tongue with excellent evangelical notes. His literary activity was prodigious, and in all his books he attacked the innovations of modern Rome. In his *Analyse da Teologia da Fé* he not only destroys the theory of the supremacy of Rome over all the Churches, but greatly shatters the sacrifice of the Mass, as it is taught by the Church of Rome, Purgatorial fires, the worship of images, prayers to the Saints, and Transubstantiation. Of course his books were put into the *Indice Expurgatorio* and ordered to be burnt, but he himself, protected by the Marquis of Pombal, was left unhurt.

After the promulgation of the novel Vatican decrees in 1870 Catholic reform was initiated in Portugal by

D. Antonio Lopes Martins, Bishop of Viseu, Alexandre Herculano, eminent classical writer and historian, the Macaulay of Portugal, a sincere and zealous Old Catholic, and

Pe. Angel Herrerros de Mora, a Spanish Priest who was the founder of the reformed Catholic Church in Portugal.

The romantic story of his imprisonment and escape from a convent in Spain attracted attention, and his undoubted faith won the sympathy of many. On his arrival in Lisbon he had no funds and no friends, but God blessed him, so he formed a good congregation, who paid all Church expenses, and a small stipend to their pastor. Some Priests joined him, and in 1870, when religious toleration was granted in Spain, the congregation was formally acknowledged as a "Spanish reformed Church" subject to the protection of the Spanish Ambassador; but the greater portion of the congregation was Portuguese. At least three Churches in Lisbon and one near Cintra were formed by the Priests who joined De Mora, and the Lusitanian Church now possesses two Church edifices at Lisbon and one at Cintra; at Setubal there is a good congregation, but no Church edifice.

we much regret that so far no answer, favourable or unfavourable, has yet been received from them.

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 its organisation, and to rise thus to the unique opportunities now lying before her, or at least that some definite answer may be given to this Memorial.

The last Lambeth Conference, after expressing its sympathy with the Church of Holland and the other Old Catholic Churches, also expressed its continued sympathy with the Lusitanian Church, and welcomed the fact that it, as well as the Spanish Reformed Church, had been successful in bringing its Liturgy into closer accord with Catholic standards.

Of course we do not induce any one to leave the Church of their Baptism, but we have a large sphere of usefulness among those who have been excommunicated by Rome for having identified themselves with any *societe de culte*, or for having accepted a pension from Government; also among those who wish to free themselves from the unlawful terms of Communion imposed by the Church of Rome.

At the present moment there is a distinct movement in Portugal towards the Lusitanian Church. The Parochial Councils of some parishes and the Vicar of S. Bartholomeu Lourinha have sent invitations to us to conduct Old Catholic services in their parish churches.

The parishioners of Aguas Frias, a large country parish near Chaves of well-to-do farmers, closed their church for six months against an Ultramontane Priest nominated by the Bishop, and asked if the Lusitanian Church could send them a married Priest, independent of Rome, and offered to pay him a good stipend.

The parishioners of Reguengo Grande have lately seceded from Rome (population 1,221 souls), claimed possession of the parish church, and ask for a Priest independent of Rome; but this is a poor parish township of Lourinha, unable to do much to support their pastor. The Rev. Gil Formozinho, ex-R.C. Priest, married, but who retains his position as Chaplain and Treasurer of the important hospitals and asylums of the city of Evora, where he is much respected, seeks to identify himself with an essentially National Church, independent of Rome or of any other foreign authority, and does not ask for any remuneration.

Several others of the parochial Roman Catholic Clergy have made 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.

When we have a Bishop of our own, familiar with the needs of the country, the Church will be consolidated, and will become a nursing mother to tens of thousands of our fellow-countrymen, and then it is certain that all the isolated Catholic congregations free from the yoke of Rome will join us. The country people are often superstitious, but they cling to the great mysteries of the Catholic Faith.

De Mora visited Gaya in 1868, soon after his arrival at Lisbon, and founded a Church in the house of a young man, then a calico printer, administered the Communion to several persons to whom this Holy Sacrament had been denied by their parish Priests only because they attended a Bible-class at the printer's house after hearing Mass at their parish church. The result was a fiery persecution, many were cast into prison for days, weeks, and months, one was subjected to a long and expensive lawsuit, tried several times, first condemned to six years' banishment, but finally acquitted.

The final result of this persecution was the formation of three Churches and two Missions at Gaya, the erection of three Church edifices, school-houses, &c., the formation of at least one Church, and the erection of a chapel in the city of Oporto.

The Bishop of Viseu was a worthy successor of Frei Bartholomeu dos Martyres, the saintly Archbishop of Braga, and although he never openly left the Roman Church, he had the courage with Bishop Strossmayer and a few others to protest strongly against the novel dogma of Papal Infallibility at the Vatican Council itself in 1870, and succeeded, not without difficulty, in leaving Rome and returning to his Diocese, in which he never promulgated the new dogma.

A hope filled the Priests in Portugal who left the Church of Rome in consequence of the novel dogmas that the Bishop of Viseu would himself head the Reform movement. Politico-ecclesiastical influences, however, proved too strong for him, and he did not openly ally himself with these Clergy, although he continued to give them the benefit of his counsel and protection, whilst he assured the writer that he might be counted upon to defend Catholic reform and religious toleration in Portugal, and fully kept his promise on this point. When eleven ex-Roman Catholic Priests saw that the Bishop of Viseu would not openly head the movement of Catholic Reform, they unanimously elected the Rev. Angelos de Mora as their Bishop, thoroughly understanding that his consecration might be delayed for many years, but anxious to prove thereby their devoted attachment to Apostolic Order and Catholic truth. De Mora died in 1874.

Several of these Priests, and especially Pe. Henrique Bibeiro and Pe. José Nunes Chaves, who were classical scholars, did excellent service in the preparation of our Liturgy and formulæ, and Pe. Joao da Costa Almeida, a plain man, amidst much persecution, as there was then but very meagre toleration in Portugal, opened a reformed Church in the same parish where he had been the Roman Catholic Vicar, and was its most esteemed and respected pastor until his death in 1897.

In 1880 the Lusitanian Church was organised, and the Rev. T. G. P. Pope, D.D., an eminent theologian of a broad Catholic spirit, was elected President of the Synod.

In the year 1894 Canon Pope, D.D., was unanimously elected Bishop, but he refused to accept the position because, to quote his own words in a letter to Archbishop Plunket, "the native Church should have a native-born Bishop, and I laid much stress upon the importance of avoiding anything that might make the movement look like an Anglican plantation." In 1897 Dr. Pope (who had the full confidence of all our Clergy and laity), being urgently pressed by the Lusitanian Synod to reconsider his original decision, consented to allow a petition for his consecration as Bishop to be sent to the Bishops of the Church of Ireland. To this the following answer was sent in 1898 through the Lord Primate of Ireland to Diogo Cassels, who acted as Deputy and Secretary to the Memorialists.

"The Bishops of the Church of Ireland desire to express their sincere sympathy with the members of the Lusitanian Church in their brave struggle, in behalf of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Evangelical Faith, and trust that, with the blessing of Almighty God, they may increase in numbers and influence, and become a great power in their own land. The Bishops are most anxious to assist them in any way in their power, but regret that at present they cannot proceed to the consecration of a Bishop."

On February 10th, 1911, the Permanent Committee of the Lusitanian Church unanimously passed a resolution that a third Memorial (published in *The Guardian* of 23rd July, 1914) should be sent through the members of our Council of Bishops to the Bishops of the Church of Ireland, humbly praying them to take steps for the consecration of a Bishop for the Lusitanian Church, to be elected by the Lusitanian Synod, since without a native-born Bishop it is impossible to enter the doors now being opened to our Church on every side.

We do not know whether or not this Memorial was received by the Bench of Irish Bishops at Armagh, but

We are grateful to the S. and P.C.A. Society for paying the stipends of some of our ministers and school teachers.

We are grateful to the members of our Council of Bishops for having kindly watched over the purity and integrity of our Liturgy and formulæ, and hope they will continue to do so.

We are much obliged to them for having occasionally visited us at the invitation of our Synod to ordain and confirm, but from February, 1899, to April, 1910—i.e., during 11 years—they were unable to visit Portugal to confirm.

But no foreign jurisdiction, "oversight," or "control" can be allowed.

Because it is contrary to our general basis and Liturgy:

"Neither the Bishop of Rome nor any other foreign Prelate has, or can have, any lawful jurisdiction, power, superiority, or authority—ecclesiastical or spiritual—within this nation;" so the members of our Council of Bishops have no jurisdiction or oversight in Portugal, and no authority to license preachers, nominate ministers, or annul licences in the Lusitanian Church.

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

Lord Plunket (late Archbishop of Dublin) and the venerable Bishop Stack in all their speeches at every visit to Portugal always repeated: "I neither have, nor claim to have, any authority or jurisdiction in your country; I come here solely at the request of your Synod to confer Orders and confirm, Episcopal functions which only a Bishop can perform."

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

Because it is against the wishes of the great majority of 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.

**Our Synod never has, and never can, delegate its powers to nominate ministers, to license preachers, or to cancel licences to any foreign authority.**

**We only desire that the general basis and the Liturgy of our Church shall be kept and observed. We do not wish nor desire anything more, and we cannot be content with anything less.** (The Constitution of the Lusitanian Church was approved of by ordinance of the Government of 11th January, 1913, as Regulations of the Church of S. Joao Evangelista and of Salvador do Mundo.)

Foreign oversight or control, even when exercised with the best intention, is more prejudicial to the development and enlargement of an independent and essentially a National Church than the withdrawal of any pecuniary aid. Dr. Collins, late Bishop of Gibraltar, also Professor at King's College, London, and some of the most eminent authorities of the Anglican Church have assured us: "If you maintain the Catholic organisation, national character, ancient liberties and independence of your Church, then with God's blessing you will be respected by your brethren in other lands and other branches of the Holy Catholic Church."

It would be ridiculous to suppose, and entirely contrary to the custom of all Catholic and National Churches, that a foreign Prelate, however learned, who does not speak a word of Portuguese should be able to license preachers or nominate ministers in Portugal, even with the consent of any Portuguese citizens.

We are old, and probably will not live to see the consecration of a National Bishop in our days. All the same we face the future without fear, trusting quietly in God, because we believe that only by maintaining and cherishing the national, Catholic, and independent character of our Church can we be admitted into full fraternal inter-communion with all Catholic Episcopal Churches, and only thus can we obtain the consecration of a national Bishop, which is indispensable for the development and enlargement of a Church essentially Catholic and National.

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