

FIRST FRIDAY: (Main Church)
Mass, 6:25; Adoration all
day; Benediction, 7 and 7:30.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
December 3, 1936

Don't let anything break
your Novena for Purity to
the Immaculate Conception.

Current Cant About Spain.
By Arnold Lunn.

Cant No. 4: That the Church in Spain owned a third of the national wealth.

Why "a third"? This is the figure invariably quoted by those who attack the Church in Spain, in Mexico, or in any other Catholic country. Well, I suppose they know that they could not get away with "one half" and that "one third" is about as big a lie as they can hope to put across.

The Church was in point of fact deprived of all its possessions more than a hundred years ago, in 1835 to be precise, by Mendizabal. It has been well said that "Mendizabal did not only sell the properties of the Church, but bought the consciences of the buyers." Let me quote from an excellent article by Mr. H. L. Friend which was published in The Tablet (London). (Incidentally, it is worth remarking that The Tablet has recently changed hands and that today it is edited by one of the most brilliant writers in England, Mr. Douglas Woodruff).

"Since then (1835) all these Catholics who bought lands at the lowest prices stood behind the Government against the Church. To this generation followed another, influenced by such parents, and also by liberal principles, and a certain atheism a la mode created the type of so-called intellectual, which, with few exceptions had little power of independent thought and copied from other countries anything they thought exotic and irreverent.

"Yet, in the words of the great master I have mentioned before, I may say that 'the Spaniard who ceases to be a Catholic is incapable of any other belief, if it is not his own common sense, which nearly always is bad.'

"It is true that during the reign of the last two kings of Spain, the Church seemed to be at liberty, but this same peace, which was only apparent, did little good to the Catholic cause.

"On the one hand we have the Liberal governments who passed increasingly restricted laws against the liberty of action of the Church. The Crown had the appointment of high dignitaries, and although this did not corrupt the Spanish clergy--a fact which speaks very highly for its character--it made the higher Churchmen appear, in the sight of the people, as much less free from political influence than they ought to be.

"The same apparent peace and protection of the Church made a part of the Clergy believe that the faith was as alive as before in the hearts of all Spaniards and they neglected, in some cases, their apostolic work. The Clergy were very poor. If the Church had been powerful, as many people in England believe, she would have done much more to avoid the hunger endured by many priests, and the way Churches and Convents went to ruin for lack of money for repairs."

The State undertook, in return for the possessions of the Church which it had seized, to pay the stipends of the Clergy. A bad bargain from the point of view of the Church.

Of course, since 1835 many Catholics have left money to the Church. It is not, however, an indictable offense to leave money to the Church. Nobody grumbles if an old lady leaves a fortune to a home for lost cats. And lost souls are as important as lost cats. Much of the money which was left to the Church was used to supplement the inadequate education provided by the State. And this brings me to the next installment of Current Cant About Spain, with which I shall deal tomorrow.

PRAYERS: (deceased) friend of Sister Teresa Mary, S.N.D.; friend of student. Ill, little friend of Ed Hugg (St. Ed's), seriously ill; Rev. James Drought, New York, N.Y.; uncle of Arch Gott (Walsh), serious operation.

MASS THURSDAY of St. Francis Xavier, p. 685.