

TO THE *COURRIER FRANÇAIS*

(12 November 1830)

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Today's *Courrier Français* contains a long manifesto against *L'Avenir* that can be reduced to this: The *Courrier Français* does not comprehend what we are demanding and about what we are complaining. It casts into doubt our love for freedom; it suspects us of *carlism*,¹ of anarchy, of everything except *jesuitism*; the latter is the only name it forgot. We will not respond to the *Courrier Français* in the same tone that, for the first time, it uses with us. We will clearly present to it what we ask for and of what we are complaining.

Here is what we demand. The absolute separation of Church and State, such as it exists in the United States — in those United States so extolled, wherein God caused the birth of men who understood the cry of freedom, whether it came from the mouth of a merchant or that of a Franciscan. The separation of Church and State such as it exists in Ireland, even under the arrogant yoke of England. The separation of Church and State, as it exists in Belgium, that Belgium which you admire every day and which we admire more than you do. Admittedly, our hopes are difficult to understand, and we have not mentioned those three countries a sufficient number of times for our thoughts to take a form visible even to those who do not want to see!

We demand the absolute separation of Church and State, because this is in the Charter that you devised. In our turn, we would like very much to have you tell us what you understand by this separation which, up to now, leaves the Catholic Church just as it was on 7 August. Are men being mocked? Are they being persuaded that between what is united

and what is separated there is no difference? For our part, we do believe there is a difference, a very great one at that, and, first, we went directly to the fact, directly to the money, so that no one would dare believe that we were claiming advantages from the separation without wanting to bear the costs.

We demand that the clergy no longer be paid by the state and you applauded us.

We demand that our churches be sacrosanct, like the residences of citizens, and you continue to tell us that this is appropriate.

We demand the freedom to join together for the defense of our rights, and you agreed to it in a display of newly-found deference.

We demand not to be forced to wear one vesture rather than another, as is required of the Jews who have neither a country nor a charter, and you no doubt share our view.

We demand the right to name our bishops and not have to receive them from a Minister who is perhaps an enemy of our beliefs. This would be absurd, because the followers of Saint-Simon named their pope without the intervention of Mr. De Broglie or Mr. Mérilhou, because the leader of prayer cannot be imposed on those who pray for him who does not pray; you yourselves recognize today that *this is probably a result of the absolute freedom of religion claimed by the Clergy*. You should have said: *claimed by the Charter*. Come now, you could have done better: the Charter is sacred, it is superior to you, it will remain after you. Once the nomination of our bishops has been freely done, as it should, as it is in the United States, in Ireland, in England, in Belgium and in the Charter, we will consider the best way to set up our episcopate according to the laws of the Catholic Church. The Pope will ratify, as he does today, the canonical appointment of those who enjoy our trust, instead of our having your confirmation or that of kings, which are of little importance.

We demand freedom of instruction because we do not want our children to be taught by you; because the monopoly of instruction is contrary to the freedom of religion, to the freedom of opinions, to domestic freedom; because freedom of instruction is contained in the Charter which you devised and swore to uphold.

We demand and have been demanding these elements, we ask for them every day. You can well say that you do not understand your own words and your own actions; you can well say that our style reflects the bombast of the Apocalypse. Sooner or later, the apocalypse of freedom will sparkle, and people will finally understand it despite the sycophants of servitude. It would have been notable of you to have understood and believed in us; we thought we had given you proof of our sincerity. But since you push us aside at the very moment when justice calls us to account for the independence of our language, we will leave at your door the walking-stick of the poor that you have broken, the money-bag of the unfortunate that your feet trampled. A sufficient number of others will receive us and grant us justice. The cry of the heart cannot be pretended, and the roar of a storm does not prevent it from being heard at a distance. Belgium is taking shape beside us and soon we will be able to display to you, up close, what a religion separated from the State is and what Catholic and liberal men are. One of those noble Belgian children already fights at our side²; you were not afraid to entangle him in your surmise of hypocrisy. The one who was banished from Holland, from Prussia, from Germany, from France, he who four months ago did not have a haven because of freedom: you outlaw him in your turn, so that all the earth will know who you are and who we are.

Here, then, you hold the totality of all that we have been demanding.

What we are now complaining about is that we have gained nothing of all that we demanded.

Patience slipped away from us when the initial episcopal nominations were made. If you seek to learn the reason why, it is because the issue of religious freedom is entirely

contained in the matter; the authorities have noticed it just as we have. We have stated similar shocking matters before: why have we not been apprehended earlier? Indeed, the *Courrier Français* makes fun of us; its feigned astonishment reveals that the whole world has understood us perfectly and this newspaper better than many others. For all that, it needs to do some more thinking on the subject; it needs to listen carefully to our feelings. The sincerity with which we recognize this morning the faults of a large part of the Church of France reveals to the *Courrier Français* men who have no need to hide themselves from anyone, and consequently, are untainted, genuine, worthy of one day grasping their freedom.

ENDNOTES

1. Followers of Charles X. - Trans.
2. Ad. Bartels, ex-banished Belgian. This is how he signed at *L'Avenir*, the newspaper.

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