

other grave things of the highest importance and necessity there are, on the contrary, that when required we, in point of fact, cannot do, deprived as we are, through the chains laid upon us, of the requisite liberty and independence? We would gladly have it that they who write and speak in the manner we have described should turn their eyes upon what occurs around ourself, and for a moment dispassionately judge, if it can in reality be said that the government of the Church is possible in the situation in which the Government of Usurpation has placed us. We would that they should hear the injuries and the insults which are daily launched, even in public Parliament, against our humble person—injuries and insults for which, individually, we pardon those unhappy ones who pronounce them, but which cannot do other than offend the whole Church in the person of its chief, whom they would seek to deprive of that high respect, in the minds of the faithful, which the Vicar of Christ requires for the supreme government of the Church. They would then be witnesses of the opprobrium and calumnies which, in every way possible, are vomited forth daily against your sublime Senate, and against the high dignitaries of the Church, with great disadvantages to their respective administrations.

We would that these sustainers of our pretended liberties were here in Rome to look on while all the most august rites and teaching of the Catholic Church are derided and trampled under foot day by day, to be present at the many profanations of the most august mysteries, and to see impiety and atheism honored daily with public demonstrations and solemn processions, while prohibition prevents those religious processions which the ancient piety of the Italians was always free to organize on every sacred occasion. We would that they should hear the blasphemies which, without a word of protest on the part of the authorities, are vomited forth against the Church in the Parliamentary Chamber, where they have gone so far as to qualify her as subversive and aggressive, her liberty as wicked and fatal in principle, her doctrines as perverse, anti-social, and immoral, and her influence as hurtful to society. They would themselves be able to judge of the continued, varied, and powerful opportunities offered to incautious youth to demoralize and corrupt it, and to root out from its heart the faith of its fathers. We would, in short, that they should wander through the streets of this city, which, because of the Chair of St. Peter, is the seat and centre of religion, and then judge of the temples erected to false doctrines, the schools of error found at every corner, the many houses of perdition opened at every step, the most obscene and repulsive spectacles presented to the eyes of the public, make the position tolerable of him who by the duty of his Apostolic ministry ought to prevent, and would prevent, all these disorders, but who on the contrary is deprived of every means and of all power of preventing even one and of guarding against the ruin of so many souls.

This, Venerable Brethren, is the exact and truthful description of the position to which the ruling Government has reduced us; this is the much boasted liberty and power we enjoy—liberty, it is true, to assist daily at the progressive destruction of all ecclesiastical organization, and of the certain ruin of souls, without being able to oppose the slightest remedy. After all this, is it not an atrocious irony and mockery to repeat to us, as is continually done, that we ought to come to an accord and a conciliation with the Government which oppresses us, when this pretended conciliation would be equivalent to a total abandonment on our part, not only of the rights of the Holy See, transmitted to us as a sacred and inviolable deposit by our august predecessors, but also in a more specific manner of the Divine mission confided to us for the good of souls, into the hands of an authority which puts everything into operation to destroy, if it were possible, even the name of the Catholic religion? Now, indeed, the world must be thoroughly enlightened as to the value of those pretended guarantees which, to delude the simplicity of the incautious, a show was made of giving to the Head of the Church to ensure his dignity and independence; guarantees which have no other foundation beyond the caprice and ill-will of the Government which applies, interprets, and carries them into effect, according to its desires and its particular interests.

No, the Roman Pontiff neither is nor ever will be free and independent under the dominion of an extraneous power. In Rome he must either be a sovereign or a prisoner, and the Catholic world can never be tranquil as long as the action of the Roman Pontiff shall be exposed to the agitation of parties, to the arbitrary power of the rulers, to the results of political elections, and the calculations of crafty and interested men.

But do not believe, Venerable Brethren, that in the midst of so many difficulties we lose courage, or that there is any diminution in that trust we repose in the eternal decrees of the Omnipotent. Rather than seek a tranquil asylum in a foreign country we have remained here in Rome in order to defend—like a vigilant sentinel at the Sepulchre of St. Peter—the interests of the Catholic Church. We have struggled, and struggled daily, for the preservation of her rights. We defend inch by inch the little that still remains to save it from the usurpation of the Revolution. We have, in conformity with our duty, made our voice and our reclamations heard, and you, who have shared our trouble and the dangers with us, have been witnesses of the words we have publicly spoken, whether to condemn new attempts, to protest against the insolence of our enemies, or to warn the faithful against the seductions of hypocrites and the teachings of false brethren.

Would to Heaven that these our words might in the end be heard by those whose duty and interest it should be to sustain our authority and to protect the most holy and legitimate cause of any upon the earth. And how can they be unaware that there cannot be prosperity for the nations, tranquillity and repose for the peoples, and firmness and stability for thrones, if the authority of the Church, which is the foundation of all well-ordered society, is down-trodden and outraged, and if the person of the Supreme Hierarchy is not free and independent in his elevated ministry?

For the rest, it is a cause of rejoicing that our voice has, happily, been heard by the Catholic peoples, who have with alacrity received it with filial piety and equal advantage; and the repeated and continued proofs which they give us, while they are a glory to them, and to the Church, are earnest of better days for the Church herself, and for the Apostolic See; and in truth we cannot sufficiently express to you, Venerable Brethren, the consolation which, amid the general abandonment in which we are, we experience in seeing this spontaneous and generous movement which is manifesting and diffusing itself among the peoples of even the most remote nations in favour of the Roman Pontificate and of our humble person. The generous succors which come to us from every corner of the earth to supply the most urgent needs of the Holy See, and this gathering of the nations to the Vatican to testify to the Head of the Church the sentiments of their filial piety, are facts for which we cannot enough thank Divine Providence. We wish also that all might fully recognise the value and the significance of these pilgrimages, which, being thus multiplied in the very moment of peril for the Roman Pontificate, are not so much a demonstration of simple affection and reverence towards our humble person, as a clear and eloquent manifestation of the internal uneasiness which reigns in the hearts of all Catholics as to the abnormal position of their common Father; an uneasiness which will not cease, but rather increase until the Head of Catholicity returns into the possession of his full and real independence.

We would wish that our voice, issuing from this inclosure, might penetrate to the utmost limits of the world, to attest to all the Catholics of the universe the gratitude of our soul for the generous and repeated proofs given us of their affection and filial devotion. We would thank them for the sacrifices they make to the necessities of their Father, even to the forgetting sometimes of their own straitened means, knowing that they offer to God what they give to the Church; we would wish to congratulate them for the courage they show in despising the anger and derision of the impious; we would prove to them how much we are beholden to them for that alacrity wherewith they propose to give us a new pledge of their love in celebrating the anniversary of the episcopal consecration which, albeit unworthy, we received now fifty years ago.

We would wish that our voice might reach at one and the same time all the pastors, even the most distant, of the Catholic Church, to invite them to signalise to the faithful committed to their care the ever-increasing perils of our difficult situation; we would wish that they might cause them to understand well that whatever be the fate awaiting us, we shall never cease to raise our voice against the iniquities committed under our own eyes; but it may well happen that by the recent laws, and by others which are announced as still more oppressive, our voice may not be able to reach them except rarely, and at the cost of grave and wearisome difficulties. Meanwhile, therefore, we exhort them to forewarn their flocks against the false and hypocritical insinuations of those who with insidious arts attempt to misrepresent our true and real situation, whether by concealing the gravity of it, whether by extolling its liberty and independence, while the whole situation is epitomized in these words—the Church is persecuted in Italy; and the Vicar of Jesus Christ is neither free nor independent in the exercise of his supreme power. And, this being the case, nothing seems to be more opportune, nothing do we desire more ardently, than that those same holy pastors who have given us so many proofs of union and good-will, whether in defence of the sacred rights of the Church and in obedience and affection to this Holy See, should study to rouse up their faithful flocks to act upon their Governments through the means allowed by the laws of their respective countries, in order to induce them to cast a glance upon the situation of the Head of the Catholic Church, and provide in an efficacious manner for the removal of the obstacles which prevent his full and real independence. And as it is proper to God alone to illuminate minds and turn the hearts of men, we invite not only you, Venerable Brethren, to offer warm prayers to God, but we exhort the pastors themselves of all the Catholic peoples to assemble together their faithful in the temples, that they may not cease to pray from the depths of their heart for their common mother the Church, for the conversion of our enemies, and the cessation of evils so great and universal. God will receive, we are confident, the supplications of His people who turn to Him, for He has pleasure in those who fear Him and hope in His mercy.

Meantime, Venerable Brethren, let us comfort ourselves in the Lord and in the power of His might; and, clothed in the armor of the strong, let us not cease to combat with valor and vigor, as we have hitherto done, against the powers of darkness and the perversity of this age. Already the torrent of revolution threatens to sweep away all things, and not a few of the authors and promoters of it look back terrified at their own work. God is with us, and will be with us until the consummation of the ages. Let those fear of whom it is written—"I saw those who committed iniquity and sowed troubles and reaped troubles perish at the breath of God, and they were consumed at the breath of His anger." But for those who fear God, who fight in His name, who hope in His power, is prepared mercy and aid; nor is there room for doubting that His being the cause, His the battle, He will guide the combatants to victory.

The Jesuits, according to a work annually published by them at Vienna, number 9,546, or 159 more than twelve months ago, and 4,694 more than in 1847. France has 3,001—an increase of 32; Germany, Austria, Belgium, and Holland have 2,535; Italy, 1,466; England, 1,165; Spain, 1,332; North America, 727; and South America, 334.

An Egyptian war vessel cruising off Suez for the purpose of capturing slavers, has been burnt at sea. There were 420 persons on board, of whom several were Englishmen, but 40, including all the Europeans, were saved by the Agra.