

ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF OUR MOST HOLY LORD LEO XIII., BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE POPE.

TO ALL OUR VENERABLE BRETHREN THE PATRIARCHS, PRIMATEs, ARCHBISHOPS, AND BISHOPS OF THE CATHOLIC WORLD IN THE GRACE AND COMMUNION OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE.

LEO PP. XIII.

VENERABLE BRETHREN, HEALTH AND THE APOSTOLIC BENE-
DICTION :—Last year, as each of you is aware, We decreed by an Encyclical Letter that to win the help of Heaven for the Church in her trials, the great Mother of God should be honoured by the means of the most holy Rosary during the whole of the month of October. In this We followed both Our own impulse and the example of Our predecessors, who in times of difficulty were wont to have recourse with increased fervour to the Blessed Virgin, and to seek her aid with special prayers. That wish of Ours has been complied with, with such a willingness and unanimity that it is more than ever apparent how real is the religion and how great is the fervour of the Christian peoples, and how great is the trust everywhere placed in the heavenly patronage of the Virgin Mary. For Us, weighed down with the burden of such and so great trials and evils, We confess that the sight of such intensity of open piety and faith has been a great consolation, and even gives Us new courage for the facing, if that be the wish of God, of still greater trials. Indeed, from the spirit of prayer which is poured out over the house of David and the dwellers in Jerusalem, We have a confident hope that God will at length let Himself be touched and have pity upon the state of His Church, and give ear to the prayers coming to Him through her whom He has chosen to be the dispenser of all heavenly graces.

For these reasons, therefore, with the same causes in existence which impelled Us last year, as We have said, to rouse the piety of all, We have deemed it Our duty to exhort again this year the people of Christendom to persevere in that method and formula of prayer known as the Rosary of Mary, and thereby to merit the powerful patronage of the great Mother of God. Inasmuch as the enemies of Christianity are so stubborn in their aims, its defenders must be equally staunch, especially as the heavenly help and benefits which are bestowed on us by God are the more usually the fruits of our perseverance. It is good to recall to memory the example of that illustrious widow, Judith—a type of the Blessed Virgin—who curbed the ill-judged impatience of the Jews when they attempted to fix, according to their own judgment, the day appointed by God for the deliverance of His city. The example should also be borne in mind of the Apostles, who awaited the supreme gift promised unto them of the Paraclete, and persevered unanimously in prayer with Mary, Mother of Jesus. For it is, indeed, an arduous and exceeding weighty matter that is now in hand : it is to humiliate an old and most subtle enemy in the spread-out array of his power ; to win back the freedom of the Church and of her Head ; to preserve and secure the fortifications within which should rest in peace the safety and weal of human society. Care must be taken, therefore, that, in these times of mourning for the Church, the most holy devotion of the Rosary of Mary be assiduously and piously observed, the more so that this method of prayer being so arranged as to recall in turn all the mysteries of our salvation, is eminently fitted to foster the spirit of piety.

With respect to Italy, it is now most necessary to implore the intercession of the most powerful Virgin through the medium of the Rosary, since a misfortune, and not an imaginary one, is threatening—nay, rather is among us. The Asiatic cholera, having, under God's will, crossed the boundary within which nature seemed to have confined it, has spread through the crowded shores of a French port, and thence to the neighbouring districts on Italian soil.—To Mary, therefore, we must fly—to her whom rightly and justly the Church entitles the dispenser of saving, aiding, and protecting gifts—that she, graciously hearkening to our prayers, may grant us the help they besought, and drive far from us the unclean plague.

We have therefore resolved that in this coming month of October, in which the sacred devotions to Our Virgin Lady of the Rosary are solemnised throughout the Catholic world, all the devotions shall again be observed which were commanded by Us this time last year.—We therefore decree and make order that from the 1st of October to the 2nd of November following in all the parish churches (*curialibus templis*), in all public churches dedicated to the Mother of God, or in such as are appointed by the Ordinary, five decades at least of the Rosary be recited, together with the Litany. If in the morning, the Holy Sacrifice will take place during these prayers ; if, in the evening, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for the adoration of the faithful ; after which those present will receive the customary Benediction. We desire that, wherever it be lawful, the local confraternity of the Rosary should make a solemn procession through the streets as a public manifestation of religious devotion.

That the heavenly treasures of the Church may be thrown open to all, We hereby renew every Indulgence granted by Us last year. To all those, therefore, who shall have assisted on the prescribed days at the public recital of the Rosary, and have prayed for Our intentions—to all those also who from legitimate causes shall have been compelled to do so in private—We grant for each occasion an Indulgence of seven years and seven times forty days. To those who, in the prescribed space of time shall have performed these devotions at least ten times—either publicly in the churches or from just causes in the privacy of their homes—and shall have expiated their sins by confession and have received Communion at the altar, We grant from the treasury of the Church a Plenary Indulgence. We also grant this full forgiveness of sins and plenary remission of punishment to all those who, either on the feast day itself of Our Blessed Lady of the Rosary, or on any day within the subsequent eight days, shall have washed the stains from their souls and have holly partaken of the Divine banquet, and shall have also prayed in any church to God and His most holy Mother for our intentions. As We desire also to consult the interests of those who live in country districts, and are hindered, especially in the month of October, by

their agricultural labours, We permit all We have above decreed, and also the holy Indulgences gainable in the month of October, to be postponed to the following months of November or December according to the prudent decision of the Ordinaries.

We doubt not, Venerable Brethren, that rich and abundant fruits will be the result of these efforts, especially if God, by the bestowal of His heavenly graces, bring an added increase to the fields planted by Us and watered by your zeal. We are certain that the faithful of Christendom will hearken to the utterance of Our Apostolic authority with the same fervour of faith and piety of which they gave most ample evidence last year. May our Heavenly Patroness, invoked by us through the Rosary, graciously be with us and obtain that, all disagreements of opinion being removed and Christianity reatored throughout the world, we may obtain from God the wished-for peace in the Church,—in pledge of that boon, to you, your clergy, and the flock entrusted to your care, We lovingly bestow the Apostolic Benediction.

Given in Rome, at St. Peter's, the 30th of August, 1884, in the Seventh Year of Our Pontificate.

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CANTERBURY CATHOLIC LITERARY SOCIETY.

THE evening of Monday, 6th inst., was devoted to songs, readings, recitations, and filled in between in various ways according to the individual inclinations of the members. Some, and, in fact, a goodly number, make the royal game of chess a favourite amusement, while others indulged in conversation in its various and varying moods from gay to grave and back again, taking in the latest bills before the House of Representatives, the English Franchise Bill, the French War with China, and the Parisian fashions. In this way a very pleasant and enjoyable evening was spent. Songs were sung by Messrs. Leahy, Hennessy, Loughnan ; readings by Messrs. Kennedy, Milner, and Scanlan ; and recitations by Messrs. McGill and Geoghegan.

"Extemporaneous Debates" appeared on the notice board for Monday evening, the 13th inst. This revived a practice abandoned for some time past, and provided a splendid night's neutral activity and enjoyment. Several members suggested subjects as various as could well be imagined.

The first one drawn, with Mr. McGill's name drawn at the same time, was—"Why are there so many unemployed in Christchurch ; and what remedy would you suggest to get over the difficulty?"

Mr. McGill fully recognised the fact that a large number were out of work, but failed to tell why, nor yet to suggest a means of tiding the difficulty, unless it was owing to the system of Immigration which overstocked the labour market.

Mr. Kennedy commended the brevity of the previous speaker, but differed from him inasmuch, as want of capital, and not surplus labour, was the cause of the depression generally and the large number of unemployed particularly. The influx of capitalists alone could permanently relieve us from our present condition.

Mr. Leahy disagreed with both the last theories. It was absurd to state, in a country larger than the United Kingdom, and with only half-a-million of people, that we were overstocked with labour—the very material of a country's greatness. It was equally erroneous to contend that our great want was money, while our credit was so sound in the money market. New Zealand was not exceptional in the matter of unemployed. Telegrams and newspapers showed that in the railways, and in the manufacturing districts of England thousands were out of employment. Canada had many of her foundries closed, and so on. From these facts it was clear that the cause was not a local but a general one, operating at all times and in all places in the same manner. It was the principle which gave some men, the right or power to prevent their fellow men from labouring so as to produce food and the necessities of life that was at fault. He knew that this theory was looked upon as being absurd and chimerical, but to him it was the only complete and satisfactory solution to what was one of the gravest problems of to-day, and, in fact of all time.

Rev. F. Bowers could not see what those men had done who purchased land from Government or the Natives in the early days. He had never heard the rights of property so much assailed anywhere as in this Colony. The owners of land were called landgrabbers, monopolists, land-sharks, and such opprobrious epithets, yet their only crime seems to be, in this respect, that they had lawfully secured the land, and were, he naturally supposed, more energetic and fortunate than those that are without land. Neither could he trace any connection between private ownership of land and the unemployed. He thought the fact of so many being out of work was the outcome of the depression which the community as a whole was undergoing just now, and could not be remedied by any extravagant and impracticable theories.

Mr. O'Connor said that, however those owners of large tracts of land came by them, there was no doubt they were stumbling blocks to the progress of a country, because the exorbitant price they fix on their land makes it utterly impossible for a small capitalist to purchase the land, with a prospect of making it pay. In this way, perhaps, the labour market was indirectly affected, as there was no labour to any extent engaged on these large stations. He admitted the poor we always have amongst us, but in a young, vigorous country the number out of employment was out of all proportion to the population. The prosperity of the past was in a large measure owing to the circulation of borrowed money, in constructing railways and other public works, but this could not always last, yet he believed that at present another loan was necessary to give a fresh impetus to public and commercial enterprise. He believed, too, that the construction of the West Coast Railway would be of great value to Canterbury, while giving employment to a large number of men.

The next question was, "Give the meaning of the Chiltern Hundreds." This Mr. Kennedy did satisfactorily.