

THE POPE ON THE STUDY OF LITERATURE.

THE Sovereign Pontiff has addressed the following letter on the subject of the literary studies in the Roman Seminary to Cardinal Parocchi:—

To our dear son Lucido Maria Parocchi, of the title of the Sessorian Basilica, our Vicar in Rome,

LEO XIII. POPE.

Health and Apostolic Benediction.

You are perfectly well aware of the necessity so often mentioned by us, and with such good reason, to put forth all possible application and assiduity for encouraging, day by day, a knowledge of science in the clerical order. This necessity is more keenly felt in our own day than it was in other times. In the midst of such a great movement of mind and such an ardour for learning as are now displayed, the clergy would never be able to discharge their duty and their office with right dignity and fruitful effect if they neglected those advantages of the intellect for which other men are so eager. Thus we have paid special attention to the interests of science principally among young students in the sacred calling, and we have referred them to ancient principles, under the guidance of St. Thomas Aquinas, in their theological and philosophical studies. The results already compassed have proved the opportuneness of our action. But inasmuch as a great part of science, precious as a possession and infinitely useful for life and culture, is comprised within the art of letters, we have determined upon taking a new step to give an impulse to the progress of literary study.

What we here have in view above all is the honour of the clergy, for there is nothing more noble than the literary glory. All men look upon those who win it as distinguished among their fellows; those who are without it enjoy little of the esteem of the world. Hence, it is easy to understand the malice and the treachery of the Emperor Julian, who forbade the Christians the practice of liberal studies. He felt that contempt would easily cover unlettered men, and that the Christian name would not long prosper if it were regarded as a stranger to the intellectual arts. Such, besides, is our nature that we are led through that which our senses perceive to contemplate that which transcends them; therefore nothing is more apt to aid our intellect than a scholarly and elegant literary style. The use of words showing at once nature and research persuades mankind to listen and to read; truth illustrated by a splendour of phrases penetrates the mind and dwells there. In this there is a certain analogy with the exterior rites of Divine worship, which fulfil the great object of leading the soul through outward beauty and magnificence up to the thought of Divinity itself. Saint Basil and St. Augustine, to name no others, have gloried in these fruits of intellectual culture; and our predecessor Paul the Third accomplished a work of lofty wisdom when he commanded Catholic writers to use beauty of style in their controversy with those heretics who boasted that they were the only men able to combine learning in doctrine with learning in letters. When we assert that the clergy should study modern literature with care, we do not refer to modern letters only, but also to those of antiquity. It is indeed necessary that amongst ourselves a chief part of study should be devoted to Latin authors, inasmuch as their language accompanies throughout the West the Catholic religion and serves its uses; yet in this matter students have been too few and too negligent; so that the art of writing Latin with beauty and nobleness of style seems everywhere to be passing away. Greek authors, too, must be studied with application; the models of Greek literature are so eminent and in every way so great that imagination cannot conceive a more perfect literature. Among the Orientals the Greek language still lives in the monuments of the Church and in her daily use. Those, too, who understand Greek literature are able to enter more profoundly, thanks to that knowledge—and this consideration should have its weight—into the secrets of Latinity.

Convinced of these truths and aiming at all that is civilised, lovely, and of good report, the Catholic Church has always prized literary study at its true value, and has in all times shown an extreme solicitude for its advancement. Indeed, all the holy Fathers of the Church have been men of letters according to the measure of their day. Some of them have yielded nothing in genius or art to the most renowned among the classics. And it is the Church which has conferred the great boon upon the world of saving from destruction a great part of the works of antiquity in poetry, eloquence, and history. All men know that at a time when literature was neglected or abandoned, and when the noise of arms drowned its voice in Europe, there was but one refuge for the works of the past; they were saved in the sanctuaries of the clergy. Among the Roman Pontiffs, our predecessors, several distinguished themselves by an ability in letters which guaranteed the credit of learning in their time. For this cause the memory of Damasus, of Leo the Great and Gregory the Great, of Zacharias, of Sylvester the Second, of Gregory the Ninth, of Eugene the Fourth, of Nicholas the Fifth, and of Leo the Tenth will never pass away. In the whole long line of Popes there is perhaps not one to whom literature has owed nothing. Their foresight and their liberality opened on all sides colleges and schools for the instruction of eager youth, and stored up libraries for the intellectual food of all mankind. Bishops were commanded to found in their dioceses schools of literature; learned men were overwhelmed with glory, and brilliant rewards persuaded them to surpass themselves. All this is so true, so notorious, that even the detractors of the Apostolic See have confessed that the Roman Pontiffs personally have deserved well of liberal education. A conviction of the worth of such advantages and the remembrance of the action of our predecessors have inspired our resolution to take action for setting up this kind of learning in its old honour and its old glory in the clerical orders. Your wisdom and your help, dear son, give us full confidence; and in the execution of our designs we will begin with our Sacred Seminary in Rome. We desire, then, that special courses appropriate to young students of marked intelligence may be opened there at once, so that the more proficient, after fulfilling the ordinary

cycle of Italian, Latin, and Greek letters, may, under the direction of able instructors, pass to the higher branches of study in each language. For the fulfilment of this wish of ours we charge you to choose men whose learning and zeal may best, under our authority, be directed to these ends.

As a pledge of the Divine favour, and as a sign of our affection, we give you in the Lord, dear son, our Apostolic Benediction.

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on the 20th of May, 1885, in the eighth year of our Pontificate.

LEO XIII., Pope.

THE JEWS IN RUSSIA.

OUR Odessa correspondent writes: May 14:—A trial has just taken place at Rovno, Government of Volhynia, before a military tribunal, of 38 persons for taking part in anti-Jewish rioting at the small town of Dombrovitz in the Rovno district, on Sunday, the 22nd July, last year. The disturbance began, as usual, between a Russian peasant and a Jew trader respecting an insignificant purchase—in this instance of a few cherries. Most of the aggressors, principally strangers in the district, were labourers employed on the railway then in course of construction from Vilno to Rovno, and on the above named day entered Dombrovitz with the avowed purpose of baiting the Jews. They first attacked the spirit shop of one Perelstein, to the cry of "Hurrah," and destroyed all his furniture, wares, doors, and windows. Having served a second shop the same way, they showed an inclination to listen to the advice of the Police Commissary of the district to go home. That functionary was unable to do more than attempt persuasion because he had with him only two policemen—the whole force of the town. Notwithstanding a Russian bawled out "Let us go on destroying," the majority of the rioters were about to leave, when all at once a mob of Jews, armed with staves and choppers, appeared upon the scene, and in turn attacked the Christians. Thereupon ensued a general and desperate *melee*, during which 21 residences of Jews and 15 of their shops were totally gutted, and two persons—Stephen Belski, a rioter, and Mariyasa Spin, a Jewess, 60 years of age—were so badly treated that they died a few days afterwards of their wounds. The value of property destroyed was 11,349 roubles (over £1,100). Most of the accused were found guilty. The ringleaders were sentenced to hard labour, and the other accused found guilty to various terms of imprisonment. It may be mentioned that two Russian priests used most praiseworthy efforts to get the rioters to desist from their barbarous work, but without avail.—*Times*.

A SUPERB FUTURE.

THE *Boston Evening Traveller* contains an interesting account of an interview which one of its representatives had just had with Mr. John Boyle O'Reilly of the *Boston Pilot* as to the probable effect of a war between England and Russia. The following passages are taken from the reported interview:—

"Do you think England could satisfy Ireland by any means whatever?"

"I am sure that Ireland could be joined to the British empire, voluntarily and loyally, by fair treatment, by giving her the national government of 86 years ago. England never can control the Irish race. They are now as strong, numerically, almost as the English, and they are highly potential in many countries. England's own rapid growth in population during 50 years is largely owing to the enormous numbers of Irish within her own borders. There are, proportionately, more Irish and their descendants in England than in America. There are at least a million Irish people in London. These scattered elements have one point of contact, one principle in common—love of Ireland, and its opposite, hate of England. The future is assured for Ireland; nothing can prevent her from becoming a rich and important country."

"But Ireland is too small to be great—is she not?"

"Not at all; many of the greater countries of the earth's history have been insignificant in size. Ireland is larger than many free countries in Europe, even without the enormous strength of her exiled millions. She is larger than Norway and Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Bulgaria, or Greece. And she is the best-placed country in the world. She is set down in the mid-stream of the world's commerce. She has the Atlantic side of England, and that is the cause of the Irish question. The commerce of the Atlantic would pass into her ports if they were free. The Irish have tried for a hundred years to cut a ship canal through their country, which would drain four million acres of bog-land, thereby more than paying for the canal, and the shipping of the world going to Liverpool would be saved forty hours of sailing through the English Channel, where most of the wreckage of the world takes place. England will never let this canal be cut till Ireland has Home Rule, because it would ruin Bristol, Southampton, and the Southern English ports. You see, the Irish question is far more a material than a sentimental one. Men would not fight for a little country for nearly a thousand years, as the Irish have fought for Ireland, unless it was worth fighting for. Ireland can be and will be the richest little country in the world. Her people are capable of making her one of the most distinguished in art, learning, and every refined and exalted development. There is no nation or race with a more superb future than the Irish."

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