

Current Topics

Blessed Robert Bellarmine

Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, who was recently beatified, was one of the most illustrious sons of St. Ignatius. He was a prolific writer and a tireless worker. As a preacher he was distinguished and as a professor his ability was world-wide in renown. His masterpiece was his work, *De Controversiis*, which was rightly described as a complete arsenal to which defenders of the Faith turned, and never in vain, for materials to refute the attacks of the Protestants of the age. By order of Pope Clement VIII. he produced his famous *Catechism*. He also wrote several treatises on historical, dogmatic and moral questions. By his zeal and learning he won the noble title of "prince of controversialists."

The Pope and Pasteur

The celebrations in honor of the centenary of Pasteur in France were taken as an occasion for inviting the participation of the Holy Father in them, and his Holiness addressed the following letter to Mgr. Cerretti; it was read on Friday evening at the Sorbonne, Paris: Venerable Brother,

Health and the Apostolic Benediction.

The invitation which has been addressed to the Holy See to join in the solemnities of the centenary of Louis Pasteur has been particularly agreeable to us, and we desire to associate ourselves with them by delegating you to represent us on this occasion.

Pasteur is too noble a figure as a Christian savant, his scientific successes have been too beneficent, his work of charity and devotion is too universal for the Holy See not to associate itself with the fêtes organised to celebrate his memory.

His studies on the origin of life, his struggles against the microbes of sickness, have been the basis and point of departure for a whole series of applications which continue to shed benefactions on the whole of suffering humanity.

But especially, amidst his studies and his magnificent discoveries he preserved the Faith, pure, simple, and confident, and his scientific studies enabled him to discover more and more at the foundation of all things the infinite God who illuminated and consoled his soul, and who inspired his charity. With this Divine help he was able, as he stated in his inaugural discourse at the Institute which bears his name, to push back the frontiers of life—which is certainly no little title to glory for a mortal. Happy to associate ourselves with the solemn fêtes of the centenary of this savant, great amidst the great, we form the wish that studious youth and men of science should be inspired by the magnificent examples of this master.

As a testimony of our special benevolence, we grant you with all our heart the Apostolic Benediction.

Rome, the Vatican, May 20, 1923.

PIUS XI., POPE.

Archbishop Mannix Rebukes the Envoys

Speaking at Melbourne, on June 24, Archbishop Mannix put plainly before his hearers the injustice and impropriety of certain recent attacks on the Pope and on the Bishops of Ireland.

There was (he said) a matter on which he would like to say a word. The Bishops of Ireland, and even the Holy Father had come in for criticism at the hands of certain persons in Australia, for their action or inaction in the recent past. It had been said that the Bishops were British in their outlook and anti-Irish. If they could trust the press reports, the Irish Republican envoys had joined in this criticism. Nothing of that kind, so far as he knew, had been said by the envoys while they were in Melbourne: but, elsewhere they had been reported to have made unworthy and unjust reference to the action of the Irish Bishops.

He knew the Irish Bishops probably better than any of those who were said to have criticised them. And he had never met in all his experience even one Irish Bishop who could be justly called pro-British or anti-Irish in his political views. (Applause.) He ventured to say that there was not even one Irish Bishop who would not wish to see Ireland absolutely free. (Applause.) But Irish Bishops are men of peace, as well as Irish patriots, and they have to reconcile their Irish aspirations with their wish for peace. It was, of course, a matter of common knowledge that since 1916 those who were struggling for Ireland's freedom had to fight their battles without help or sympathy from the Irish Bishops as a body. There were notable exceptions, but they were few.

Motives of the Bishops.

But that really meant no lack of love for Ireland, but only want of faith in the policy pursued. And, later still, when the unfortunate Treaty was signed, the Bishops threw in their lot against the Republican policy, not, he was sure, because they were satisfied with the Treaty, but because they could, at the moment, see no good issue from an appeal to force against it. And, in that case, the Bishops did not seem to have been far astray, if their only objection was to force, because force had been tried, and, according to present indications, had been abandoned as a failure. People should, therefore, be just to the Bishops. They were not bound to agree with them on political matters. They might think that the Bishops, being men of peace, sometimes leaned too much to peace, and made too little allowance for the claims of patriotism, or grasped at a kind of peace for their own day, which made inevitably for unrest and strife, and war in the future. These questions were too complicated to be settled offhand by a harsh criticism on one side or the other, and he deeply regretted if anything unfair or unworthy had been said by the Irish envoys, or by anybody else, no matter what the provocation might have been.

The Envoys and the Pope.

It was reported, too, that the Irish envoys had spoken critically not only of the Irish Bishops, but of the Pope. If there was anyone beyond criticism in regard to present Irish affairs, he thought it was the Holy Father. Benedict XV. and Pius XI. had been calm, patient, and impartial. Very likely there was strong British pressure: it was rarely wanting, and never weak. The Irish Bishops had felt bound to take strong measures. But the Pope kept himself above all political controversy. He was the Holy Father of the Irish as well as of the English; of the Free State supporters as well as of the Irish Republicans. What the personal views of Benedict XV. or of Pius XI. might be in regard to Ireland he had not the least idea. But, notwithstanding pressure of all kinds, the Popes had refused to take sides. They worked for peace, and prayed for peace, but they left the Irish people to settle their own political controversies. (Applause.) The visit of Monsignor Lauzio to Ireland, and the impartial attitude which he maintained, was an example to those friends of Ireland in Australia who might be disposed to say harsh words, or to assume an aggressive or dictatorial tone towards those in Ireland with whom they do not happen to agree. (Applause.)

The Methodists on Monte Mario

Readers of the daily papers will remember seeing a cable which informed us that the Methodists of America intended entrenching themselves on Monte Mario with the view of making an assault on the spiritual walls of Rome. Monte Mario is a hill over the Tiber, a short walk from the Roman gate known as Porta del Popolo, and almost under the hill the famous Milvian Bridge spans the river. One remembers that it was beside that gate that Martin Luther lived; that the name of the gate is from a poplar grove, from which, tradition says, ravens and sundry other black birds used to drop ignominious salutes which were conducted by the laws of gravity onto the site of the tomb of the monster, Nero; and also that it was at the bridge mentioned that Constantine routed the barbarians. Having given