



## The Pope on the Riots

Eloquent Letter to the Archbishop of Milan.

NOT THE CHURCH OR CATHOLICS THAT PROMOTE OUTBREAKS.

The Authors Must Be Sought Elsewhere.

N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

ROME, May 25, 1898.—The following letter of His Holiness, Leo XIII., was published in the Osservatore Romano after the dispatch of my correspondence to the Freeman on Monday. No comment is necessary:

TO THE LORD CARDINAL,  
ANDREA FERRARI,  
ARCHBISHOP  
OF  
MILAN.

Lord Cardinal: We could not but be gravely moved in spirit on learning of the serious tumults which have taken place in different parts of Italy and of the very serious ones which brought such havoc on Milan some days ago. The spectacle of such attempts at revolution and of the shedding of the blood of citizens grieved Us to the soul, not less for the evil it revealed than for what it presaged. It was, indeed, impossible that the bad seed scattered with impunity throughout the Peninsula with such a perversion of ideas, with such corruption of morals and not less hurt to religion, could have failed to produce bitter fruit.

It might, therefore, have been expected that the eloquence of facts would teach wisdom to those who, after combating the salutary influence of the Church and removing God from society, are now face to face with the ruins wrought by the work of destruction, prosecuted with such zeal. But instead of this, we learn, not without sorrow, that they are availing themselves of the present moment to give vent to the most malignant insinuations, traducing as guilty of the culpable outbreaks honest citizens who are aimed at solely because of their devotion to the Church and the Apostolic See. They are ignorant or they feign ignorance, of the fact that it is not the Church which inculcates them or Catholics who promote them, and that the authors and accomplices must be sought elsewhere.

At such a critical moment We would have wished, Lord Cardinal, that you could have been in your beloved Milan to counsel peace and administer comfort; but to take occasion from your absence, which would perhaps, have been less noticed, but for malignant prejudice, to pour a torrent of abuse on the head of the Lord's anointed and to drag through a thousand vituperations a member of the Sacred College who is particularly closely united to Us and to the Apostolic See, as has been done for some days with an obvious party conspiracy, is an outrage which, while it afflicts Us greatly, cannot but excite indignation in every decent Christian mind. We are convinced that the rage has been kindled, not so much against the person of yourself, who have at all times given a noble example of pastoral charity, as against the

principle you represent—the principle of keeping, after the pattern of Sts. Ambrose and Charles, the flock entrusted to you closely united to this Apostolic Chair.

Besides, We do not understand what good can be effected by railing against the authority of a bishop at a time when the social authority itself feels shaken by the excesses of violence.

While such an outburst of passion, the fruit of party tyranny, cannot be other than a cause of keen regret for Us, We have been comforted by learning of the testimonies of devotion and esteem spontaneously offered you, in reparation of the abuse you have suffered, by the Metropolitan Chapter and the clergy having the care of souls in the city and suburbs. We are pleased also to hope that the Catholic laity of Milan, whose energy, constancy and attachment to the Church have been frequently praised by Us, will not allow themselves to be discouraged—that more united than ever in obedience and affection to their pastor they will continue solid in those religious principles on which the well-being of the country mainly rests.

Not long since We were consoled by the splendid demonstrations of faith and piety given by the people of Milan on the occasion of the fifteenth centenary of their Most Holy Protector, and now it is grateful to Us to renew Our sense of special benevolence toward them and their Pastor. With this view We impart the apostolic blessing, with all the effusion of Our paternal affection, to you, Lord Cardinal, and to the clergy and people entrusted to your pastoral care.

From the Vatican,  
22. May 1898.  
LEO PP. XIII.

I have said that comment on this beautiful and noble letter is unnecessary, but I am willing to risk the prophecy that the "Moderates" will find in it an ample confirmation of their views. It looks very like an impossible prophecy, but we shall see next week.

ST. KILIAN MORE.

## JEWES AND CONVERTED JEWES.

Catholic Times.

In the fiery crusade now going on in France against Jews, and of which ministers of religion are far from being unimpassioned spectators, certain facts stand forth amid the chaos. These facts are in connection with converted Jews, who loom above their fellows and are as beacons of light leading men's minds to the God of the Christians. If the typical Jew in France is corrupt and sordid, it must be admitted that the converted Jew becomes quickly idealized, and has often aims and aspirations more distinctly supernatural than those of the majority of Christians of race. The Church in France has been blessed with more than one remarkable convert Jew in this century given to her evidently to do great work. One of the principal promoters of the movement for the canonization of the Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque and for proclaiming her patron of Eastern Churches is the Abbé Léman, who, like his brother

(also, a priest), is a converted Jew. The eminent Père Drach, once a Rabbi, is another remarkable specimen of a convert Jew. And there are others who, once emerged from the mire of the Judaism, act as shining lights to their Catholic brethren. But in the present explosion against Jews, with the Middle Age war cry, "mort aux Juifs!" revived, the mind goes further back. It rests upon the figure of a Jew in this century whose conversion, as complete and instantaneous as that of Saul of Tarsus, influenced the religious spirit of his time. This Jew was Alphonse Ratisbonne. By one of the most startling conversions on record he was called upon in the designs of Providence to be a figure of mark in the new religious era that was opening in France. Young, rich, and a visitor in the Eternal City, Alphonse Ratisbonne hated not only the Christian religion, but everything Christian. Yet, strange to say, he had in his possession and on his person a medal—the one that had already come to be called the miraculous medal—reflecting Sister Catherine Labouré's vision of the Immaculate Conception, in the Paris Community of the Sisters of Charity, Rue du Bac. After much entreaty, and evidently against his wish, he had consented to accept this medal from Baron Theodore de Buisson, ridiculing the while almost overtly his friend's Catholic proclivities. His dislike of Christianity in no way abating, the two were a few days afterwards in the Church of St. Andrea della Fratte. The Baron was there on business and, passing through to the cloisters, left Ratisbonne apparently examining the objects of interest around. When he returned a few minutes afterwards the Jew was nowhere to be seen. At length he was discovered in a side chapel, prostrate and with face to the ground. His friend spoke to him and touched him, but received no sign or answer. After a while the prostrate man was raised and led outside the church.

There,

### Shaken by Emotion,

his tears rather than his words told what had happened, while he drew forth and fervently kissed the little medal which a few days before he had rejected and despised. He refused to speak unless in presence of a Catholic priest. It was at the feet of Rev. Père Villefort, of the Church of the Jesu, that he poured forth his startling recital. "I have seen her! I have seen her!" he exclaimed. "She did not speak, but I understood everything." Yes, it was the vision seen by Sister Catherine Labouré twelve years before in Paris, and reflected by the miraculous medal that had met the gaze of this hardened Jew, "Juif encroûté," as he was called, in the side-chapel of the Church of St. Andrea delle Fratte in Rome, where, as it happened, there was no statue or image of the Blessed Virgin. A few days afterwards the cream of the Roman aristocracy were present at his baptism. Present also was the Abbé Dupanloup, afterwards to be known as the illustrious Bishop of Orleans. Giving expression to a burst of heart-eloquence not the least remarkable that he has left on record, the French priest addressed the white-robed catechumen as follows:—"You, on whom all eyes are fixed with

tenderness and affection, seeing in you the work of God's mercy, tell us by what secret ways the Lord hath led you hither." He then pointed out to the neophyte the crosses which he saw marked out for him in the future, thus showing him that the law of suffering was the basis of Christianity. But the Jew had been before the preacher in this matter. In the first outburst of joy and gratitude at his conversion he had exclaimed, "May God grant me trial and suffering." It is worth mention that a brother of Alphonse Ratisbonne had previously joined the Catholic Church and was at the time to which we allude a priest at the Church of Notre Dame des Victoires in Paris and Sub-Director of the recently-established Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary for the Conversion of Sinners. It was the conversion of his brother from Judaism to Catholicism that had filled the heart of Alphonse Ratisbonne with fresh hatred on his visit to Rome in 1842. Meanwhile this was obtaining at the Paris shrine prayers for the Jew's conversion, and when the news of the COUP DE GRACE came from Rome it was told in moving language from the Paris pulpit by the Abbé Theodore Ratisbonne. In due time Alphonse Ratisbonne became a priest. Though nearly sixty years have passed his conversion is commemorated by an annual religious service in Rome.

### CURIOSITIES.

An old ceremony which links the present with an epoch nearly as distant as the Norman conquest has been duly observed in the quiet village of Biddenden, in Kent, near Ashford. Easter was celebrated by the distribution by the vicar and churchwardens of cakes of gingerbread among visitors to the place, while the residents were regaled with hunks of bread and cheese. For nearly nine hundred years these doles or gifts have been dispensed, although now all idea of charity has practically disappeared, and the distribution is used more for an occasion of conviviality and ale-drinking than for the pious commemoration of the Two Maids of Biddenden who founded the feast. These ladies were Eliza and Mary Chulkhurst, who lived at the beginning of the 12th century, and were joined together like the Siamese twins. One died a day after the other, and they left a bit of land, of which the rental is about £40 a year, to perpetuate a fund for the distribution of bread and cheese at Easter. The doles are all stamped with a likeness of the two maids, with their names and the dates of their birth and demise. Many people go to Biddenden for the express purpose of getting a cake and preserving it as a curiosity.

### THE DISTRIBUTION OF PRIZES AT THE TACHÉ ACADEMY.

Last Monday evening, the Hall at the Taché Academy was crowded with the parents and friends of the pupils, happy to assist at the closing exercise which was to crown the generous efforts of a year of application and assiduity. The programme was very simple but still it was charming to see such

a throng of pretty white robed children beaming with joy at the sight of their well earned beautiful volumes. The most distinguished in each class were as follows: 6th Division, Excellence in French and English, merited by Miss Anna Bedard prize given by Rev. Fr. Messier. 5th Division Excellence merited by Miss Itha Bedard. 4th Division Excellence in French, merited by Miss E. Richard, in English Miss R. A. Chamberland. 3rd Div. Excellence in both French and English merited by M. J. Bérubé. 2nd Div. Excellence merited by Miss A. Rousseau. 1st Div. Excellence merited by Miss A. Roy. Preparatory Course, Excellence Miss Ida Peltier.

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