

But that kind of human civilisation, which is repugnant to the sacred doctrines and laws of the Church, is to be regarded but as an empty name and figure. And of this an example is afforded by those nations upon whom the light of the Gospel has not shone, in whose life, indeed, some spark of human culture can be seen, but its true and real benefits are not possessed. That, certainly, is not to be considered a truly civilised state, in which every legitimate authority is despised; nor is that to be esteemed liberty which, to the shame and the misery of all, runs riot in the unchecked propagation of error, the free indulgence of depraved desires, the impunity of outrages and crimes, and the oppression of good citizens of every class; for these, being vain and wicked things, cannot form the human family and guide it to happiness, for sin makes the people wretched; but it must needs be that, destroying alike soul and body, they drag them down by their own weight to ruin, confound all right order, and thus, sooner or later, bring the prosperity and peace of the State to final destruction.

And if we look at all that has been achieved by the Roman See, is it not monstrous to deny the great and distinguished services which the Bishops of Rome have rendered to the cause of society? Our predecessors never hesitated to undertake, for the good of their people, all manner of contests, of difficulties, and of labours; and, with eyes uplifted to heaven, they never quailed before the threats of the wicked, nor suffered themselves to be led astray from their duty by base assent to flatteries or promises. It was the Holy See which gathered and preserved the fragments of ancient society; she was the torch that shed a friendly ray upon the civilisation of Christian times; she was the anchor of safety in the fierce tempests by which the human race was tossed; she was the sacred bond of concord uniting together nations separated by distance and diversity of manners; she, finally, was the common centre where all men came to seek as well the doctrines of faith and religion as peace and counsel in their difficulties. It is the glory of the Sovereign Pontiffs that they have been a wall and bulwark against the re-