

fellow-men and for purposes of injustice and persecution. This age of ours, however, has the glory of producing one man whose name is enshrined in every Catholic heart, whose memory will still be revered when all of us present here to-day will have long since passed away and been forgotten. That man is our present Pontiff, Pope Leo XIII. How grandly does he rise before our imagination now? What a magnificent figure he makes as we look back with admiration upon the glorious firmness and the more than human endurance with which Leo XIII has for nineteen years piloted the bark of Peter through the stormy sea of this world.

We all remember or have heard of that great wave of expectation that swept over the whole Catholic world when that Bishop of Rome, who alone among 250 predecessors had held the spiritual sovereignty in St. Peter's City longer than St. Peter himself, laid it down at length in the fullness of his years with the halo of persecution around him. We all know that when his eyes closed at length in the silent slumber of death, heartless spoliators had already deprived him of all earthly power, in recompense for the faith with which he had wielded and the glory which he added to the spiritual power. Each day the political relations between the Papal See and Russia, France, and Italy, became more and more strained and he whom all Catholics were accustomed to look to for over 30 years with such confidence was now gone. Truly the result of Pius IX life had been to lay a burden on his successor to which few men could be equal. "Were shall we find a successor?" was the cry of the human in us. What heroic soul will have the courage to accept his heritage, to bear his cross, to put on his crown of thorns? But the years have shown that God guides His Church, for He gave her a pontiff who has shone like a star in the firmament, *Lumen in Caelo*, to dissipate the profound darkness that enveloped Rome and the world.

In the present Pontiff we find a man the most extraordinary in some respects of all those who have succeeded to the supreme Pontificate, and specially extraordinary in the firmness of his character and in the singleness of his devotion, a man whom the bitterest enemy of the church, the most foul-mouthed infidel of the day, has to acknowledge as a faithful and true servant of the Lord, a skilful ruler of the church and from whose countenance there beam forth upon all men the sweetness and purity of his Divine Master.

The first acts of Leo XIII were strictly in accordance with the tenor of his former life. A man whose mental and spiritual renown is not like that of so many of his contemporaries—is not one of conversions and surprises, he seems with his advance in life to have enlarged merely the scope of his operations and not to have changed any of the motives or methods which had guided him from his youth up. What the boy and the student, the nuncio and the archbishop had been, that the Pope continued to be. A man of orderly development and not of impulse, he has all his past to strengthen and support him, and the future can unfold nothing to daunt him.

To-day it is true he is a prisoner in his own palace, but from that same prison-home he issues decrees which are received from one end of the earth to the other with ready obedience, with delight and with gratitude. These decrees embrace the whole field of faith and practical action; they show the relation that should exist between the spiritual and the civil powers in every nation; they exhibit the conditions of that sacrament, without which any natural society would totter to ruins. The war which the Revolution wages attacks alike thrones and governments. It utilizes to the utmost the regrettable division between the spiritual and the temporal powers. It labours in every land to destroy the indissoluble character of the marriage contract, won