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CURRENT COMMENT

Although the Liverpool "Catholic Times" (Aug. 14) treats the story of the veto as a "rumor," hitherto uncontradicted, the Rome correspondent of "The Tablet" (Aug. 15) has no doubt about it. He writes: "It must have been early in the afternoon of Sunday, Aug. 21 when a dramatic and wholly unexpected element was introduced into this first Conclave of the twentieth century. Strangely little had been heard about the famous veto, by which, for centuries, France, Spain and Austria have been allowed to exclude from the Papacy any one Cardinal, deemed by them obnoxious to their interests. It is stated that Austria did send a veto against the election of Pius IX., which, however, arrived too late to be effective, but it is certain that no such attempt was made by any power in the case of the election of Leo XIII. The formal exercise of the veto became a sheer anachronism with the many changes that have taken place in the position of the Papacy and in the attitude of the powers privileged. Worse than an anachronism, it became a gross impertinence. Both an anachronism and an impertinence in the case of both France and Spain, which in the present state of European politics could only be impelled by their own interests to use the veto, it became in the case of Austria, allied as she now is with a Protestant power like Germany and an anti-clerical and anti-Papal power like Italy, a tyrannous interference with the liberty of the Conclave. Yet it was from Austria that the veto now came like a bolt from the blue. Attempts have been made to deny the fact, but they are clumsy and stupid attempts. The veto was exercised against Cardinal Rampolla. Precisely how and when it was proposed has not yet been made clear, but the news began to become known among the Cardinals sometime on Sunday afternoon, and it was proclaimed more or less formally by an Austrian Cardinal before the second voting on Sunday. He had scarcely delivered his message when murmurs of disapprobation rose from the Fathers of the Conclave. It is said that Cardinals Oreglia and Ferrata made a solemn protest, and it is certain that Cardinal Rampolla made a dignified declaration on the matter, part of which I have reason to believe consisted of the words: 'I am deeply grieved that this deep wound should have been inflicted on the liberty of the Catholic Church. As for me nothing more welcome could have happened. . . .'" This last remark is quite in keeping with what the same correspondent relates elsewhere about Cardinal Rampolla. It appears that, from the beginning of the conclave, he feared that he might be elected Pope, "and it was obvious to those who lived near him in the Vatican that he was besieging heaven to choose somebody more worthy. Certain secrets are hard to keep in the Vatican, and it has since become known to a few of us that the great Cardinal began to fast from the day Leo XIII. died, that he spent most of his time before the Blessed Sacrament, that he was depressed."

Cardinal Rampolla's words were heartily approved by his colleagues, who then proceeded to give him 30 votes, one more than he had obtained before the veto. "The voting was extremely significant," continues the Tablet correspondent. "On the one hand it contained a formal repudiation of the veto, which has now probably been exercised for the last time; and on the other it showed that the Fathers of the Conclave had come perilously near a deadlock. Yet no

deadlock occurred. Cardinal Rampolla renewed his entreaties among his colleagues to transfer their votes to Cardinal Sarto, and he was now aided by the strong argument that his own election would evidently trammel the work of the Church. His eloquence persuaded only six of his supporters, three of whom cast their votes for Cardinal Sarto, while the other three voted in favor of Cardinal Gotti. The Patriarch of Venice now led with 27 votes, Cardinal Rampolla had 24, Cardinal Gotti came next with 6, and the rest were scattered in ones, with one blank paper. In the evening seven other supporters of Cardinal Rampolla transferred their votes to Cardinal Sarto, who gained also one of the scattered votes; one supporter of Cardinal Rampolla voted for Cardinal Gotti, with the result that Cardinal Sarto had 35, Rampolla 16, Gotti 7, Oreglia 2, Capececiatti 1. On Tuesday morning the Fathers assembled half an hour earlier than usual in the Sistine, when Cardinal Sarto was elected Supreme Pontiff by 50 votes, 10 papers still bearing Cardinal Rampolla's name, and two being in favor of Cardinal Gotti."

The arms of Pope Pius X.—chosen, of course by himself, since he inherited no coat of arms—are a triple anchor resting on the sea, a brilliant star just above it, and, on the top of the shield, the winged Lion of St. Mark, with his forepaws resting on the open Bible on a field of gold. Most of these emblems recall the city that Turner painted as the Bride of the Sea; but not one of them suggests the pseudo-prophetic "ignis ardens." To be sure, the "brilliant star" must represent some burning fire, but it is out of court, as it has already done duty in the arms of Leo XIII. as "lumen in coelo."

Perosi, the great composer, whom Cardinal Sarto, as Patriarch of Venice, had placed at the head of the choir of St. Mark's and entrusted with the reformation of sacred music there, taking him into his own house, spoke as follows to the Tablet correspondent on the evening of Pius X.'s election: "I cannot yet realize it. I have been about the Vatican now for nearly five years, and have often been received by the Holy Father, but I never succeeded in thinking of him as a mere man. He was to me like a being who really lived away in the clouds far beyond my reach, though he could not have been kinder. I cannot get to think of the new Pope in the same way—he used to be so familiar with me at Venice, and his manners are so simple. He was my ideal of a bishop, for he was always thinking of his people, and he was so charitable that he was in a chronic state of poverty. Whenever he came to Rome, he used to be obliged to borrow the money. I remember once he was presented with a magnificent gold watch, and I think he kept it a whole month, but after that he either sold it or pawned it—pawned it, I think, and bought a nickel chronometer for five francs, which he still uses. But what is the use? I could not describe his simplicity and goodness if I were talking for a year. I am bewildered by the thought that he is now the successor of Leo XIII. and the Vicar of Christ."

The London "Daily Chronicle" recently related an incident vouchered for by its Rome correspondent.

A large party of American Catholics was sauntering through the gardens of the Vatican, when suddenly Pius X. and his escort were seen approaching. The Guards immediately prevented the party from penetrating into that portion of the gardens where the Pope is wont to walk. The Americans, nothing dismayed,

sent a deputation to hunt up Cardinal Gibbons, who soon joined the band, and despatched his visiting card, with a message, to the Pope. Pius X. at once ordered the Guards to allow them to advance, gave them a warm welcome, and blessed the pious objects they had brought. At the end of the reception Cardinal Gibbons was about to kneel and kiss the Pontiff's hand, when Pius X. forestalled him, and with open arms gave his Eminence of Baltimore an affectionate paternal embrace, kissing him on both cheeks. This act fired all the enthusiasm of the fortunate Americans, who raised a hearty "Hip, hip, hurrah!" while the ladies of the party waved their handkerchiefs and sunshades.

A later issue of "the Tablet," Aug. 22, received since we wrote our opening paragraph, seems at first sight to retract what its Rome correspondent said of the veto, in the preceding issue. But, on more careful reading of the editor's well weighed words we find that he must allude to some other correspondents, who mentioned either Cardinal Kopp or Cardinal Gruscha as having pronounced the veto in the name of Austria. The Tablet correspondent mentioned no names and spoke vaguely of "an Austrian Cardinal." The Tablet editor now writes: "On the strength of a communication received from a prelate who was present at the conclave and during the whole of its sittings, we are able to say that neither of the Cardinals named ever said one word about a veto on behalf of Austria or any other power." But four other Austrian Cardinals were present at the Conclave: Vaszary, Prince-Archbishop of Gran and Primate of Hungary; Skrbensky, Archbishop of Prague, the youngest member of the Sacred College, born June 12, 1863; Kriaz de Kozielsko Puzyna, Bishop of Cracow; and Katschthaler, Archbishop of Salzburg.

Explaining that the Pope's recent swoon was no sign of heart disease, but simply the result of overpowering emotion, the Rome correspondent of the "Catholic Times" feelingly describes the Holy Father's touching humility.

The cause of the Pope's faintness was the exhausting emotions of the preceding days. The Conclave brought many; the election more; the days intervening between this and the Coronation continued to supply them; then came the Coronation, which was all a long pain. To his surprise, against his desire, despite his entreaties and reasonings, the Patriarch of Venice had become the Pope of Rome, and the whole heritage of Christian sorrow and care was laid upon his shoulders. How he bore it we may learn from the letter of the parish priest at the Santi Apostoli at Venice, written on August 8, and therefore a day before the Coronation: "The Pope enters the throne-hall. We enter hurriedly. I, the first, throw myself at his feet. The Pope groans (singhiozza). I also am stricken with the greatest emotion. I kiss the foot and hand of the Holy Father, and so do the others. A dumb, moving, heart-rending scene; no words but tears from the Pope, from all. This scene lasts ten minutes. The Noble Guards, the Monsignori, the Chamberlains wept. The Pope made us all get up, and said with disconsolate (straziante) voice: 'Voglio vedervi tutti.' 'I wish to see you all.' Poor man, he had not recognized us at first, because tears veiled his eyes. Clapping my hand, he said to me: 'I know about the ceremony at the Santi Apostoli, and I thank

you.' Then to all: 'Make the sacrifice as I made it on my part. Pray for me, but very much, for the cross which God has given me is heavy. I love you so much, and I bless you with your families; I bless the sick and the poor.' He withdrew, and we heard his groans (singhiozzi). Oh! what an unforgettable scene. We left the Pope's room, our eyes swollen with crying. . . . 'Addio, addio.' Your most affectionate brother, Don Luigi."

Deep Sense of Responsibility. "Make the sacrifice as I made it," he said to his Venetians, as if to say, "I tore myself away, you must accustom yourself to the separation." So let us hope that the iron will of this large-hearted Pope will help him to love his cross. But its high priest Christendom never before saw so weak at his superb and joyous Coronation. Those were not tears of contentment, however holy, which marked his cheeks on Sunday, August 9, in St. Peter's, and their answering, if they left a question, was to be found in the unrelieved mournfulness of the Pope's face, the manifest effort with which he aroused himself to bless, the almost stern repression by waving of hand and setting of finger to lip by which he checked each renewed outburst of enthusiasm, the ready, or rather, the sudden heaviness with which he withdrew into himself after each effort, as the blessing or the gesture over, his expression fixed, his eyes dropped again, and his head inclined forward.

The Pope and the People. But all these things will cause him to be loved the more, and already, long before his coronation, the advent of a "democratic" Pope—"un Papa democratico"—had stirred the heart of revolutionized Italy. His plebeian origin effected almost a miracle in the general feeling of heart of the new Pius has gained for the Papacy an esteem and affection with the Italian people. Every act and word reported of him has deepened the impression that he is still the admirable Bishop who pawned his ring for the poor.

Donahoe's Magazine for September has a portrait and sketch of the venerable Father Fox, O.M.I., who endeared himself to Winnipeg Catholics during his pastorate at St. Mary's. The portrait presents him with a fine white beard which he did not wear when here. We are pleased to read that Father Fox still preaches in the Oblate novitiate at Tewksbury, Mass., where he is now stationed. Lawrence Charles Prideaux Fox is one of the few Quakers who became Catholics and is said to be the only Quaker that ever became a priest. He was born in Yorkshire in 1820, was received into the Church in 1843, and made his first Communion on the Feast of the Assumption of the same year. On the eve of that same feast in 1848 he received the habit of the Oblates, was made a perpetual Oblate on Assumption day, 1849, and celebrated his first Mass in Sir Walter Scott's Abbotsford on the same feast in 1853, so that he recently completed his fiftieth year of priesthood. From 1853 to 1887, the year he first crossed the Atlantic at the advanced age of 67 and came to Winnipeg, he spent four years in Scotland, ten in England and twenty in Ireland. Thus he came to know almost all the distinguished converts of that interesting period. His reminiscences of them are most entertaining and edifying, and it is to be hoped that he may be spared to publish them some day.

John Talbot Smith contributes to the current "Donahoe's" an ar-

ticle on the Theatrical Trust, which deserves careful perusal from dramatic critics or any persons honestly interested in improving the stage. It appears that the majority of leading theatres are now controlled by a syndicate, which treats managers as well paid clerks with all independence destroyed, which reduces actors to the level of vaudeville specialists, ever repeating their most lucrative parts, without any chance of original development, which employs an army of press agents, whose business it is to keep little rills of news and vernal criticism running through all the newspapers of America. Hence "it is almost impossible to gather from the New York journals the value of any particular play, either from the viewpoint of literature or of mere entertainment. . . . In the ten years that the trust has been working the American stage has sunk several degrees below its normal level. The percentage of dirt has increased, and would have increased more but that the public turned its back upon indecent plays. The dullness of the stage at this moment surpasses any similar condition in its history."

Mr. Arthur Machen, a non-Catholic, in his new book, "Hieroglyphics," gives a new test by which we may separate literature from the mass of writing or speaking that is not literature. "Literature," he says, "is the expression, through the aesthetic medium of words, of the dogmas of the Catholic Church, and that which is in any way out of harmony with those dogmas is not literature. Catholic dogma is merely the witness, under a special symbolism, of the enduring facts of human nature and of the universe. To make literature, it is necessary to be at all events sub-consciously Catholic." A curious exemplification of this principle was witnessed last Monday in this city at the brilliant wedding of Miss Genevieve Du Val, daughter of a well known Presbyterian minister, to the Rev. H. M. Irwin, who started that same evening with his bride for Cappadocia, where he is to supervise the work of the American Board of Foreign Missions. After the marriage ceremony in Knox church, the Rev. Dr. Bryce, late Moderator of the General Assembly, a gentleman whose past record does not betray any marked Catholic leanings, but whose trend, if one may judge from the number of books he has written, is distinctly literary, made a happy speech, in which, however, the only sentences that could be called literary were the following: "It must be a great inspiration to work in the land where such fathers as Eusebius, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Nazianzen had labored." Moreover, "they were going to the land of the Turk, the land of the crescent, the land that 600 years ago had been the Mecca of the Crusaders; they were going with the same cross and the same motto." When we remember that Eusebius wrote a standard history of the Catholic Church, that Basil the Great was the founder of a religious order which endures to this day and has some of its members in the Canadian Northwest, practising fasts, confession, invocation of Saints, prayers for the dead and a host of other things abhorred by Presbyterians, that the writings of that same Basil and the two above mentioned Gregories contributed largely to the conversion of John Henry Newman, that the spirit of the Crusaders was most antagonistic to Calvinism, that Presbyterians dare not even place a cross upon their churches, we realize to the full how Dr. Bryce's literary instinct has made him, for a moment, burst the trammels of Protestant tradition, and put himself on record as a "sub-conscious Catholic," unwittingly endorsing Mr. Machen's view.