

believe that you will be happier with him than with any other of the young men who solicited your hand. The Lord will pour his blessings upon your household, and your father will intercede for you in heaven. Therefore, depart in peace for the village where your husband is known and beloved, and always place your confidence in God.

(To be continued.)

General Intelligence.

THE ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF OUR LORD BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE, POPE PIUS IX. TO ALL PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, AND BISHOPS.

PIUS PP. IX.

Venerable Brethren, Health and Apostolic Benediction.

We, who during many years past, were striving together with you, Venerable Brethren, to fulfil to the best of our powers the Episcopal charge—that charge so full of labour, so full of solicitude—and to feed that part of the Lord's flock committed to our care in the mountains of Israel, amid the streams and fruitful pastures, have been, in consequence of our illustrious predecessor, Gregory XVI., who a memory and whose illustrious and glorious deeds, written in letters of gold on the records of the Church, posterity will always admire, quite contrary to all our thoughts and expectations, and with considerable alarm and trepidation, by the hidden designs of Divine Providence raised to the Chief Pontificate. For indeed if the charge of the Apostolic Ministry is justly esteemed and even to be esteemed one of danger and importance, more particularly is it a matter of dread in these most critical times for the Christian Republic.

Hence, fully conscious of our own weakness, and contemplating the most weighty duties of the Supreme Apostleship, particularly in the present state of affairs, we should have wholly given up ourselves to sad sorrowing and tears, had we not placed our hope in God our Salvation, who never deserts those hoping in him, and who in order to display the strength of his power chooses even the weakest for the government of his Church that all may more and more learn that it is God himself who rules and defends his Church by his admirable Providence.

Our consolation is that we have, as companions and helpers, you, Venerable Brethren, who, called to share our solicitude, endeavour with every care and earnestness to fulfil your ministry and to fight the good fight.

Hence, when first, though undeservedly, placed in this sublime seat of the Prince of the Apostles, we received that important charge bestowed in the person of Blessed Peter, by the Eternal Prince of Pastors, of feeding and ruling not only the lambs, namely, the universal Christian people, but also the sheep, that is, the Bishops, nothing was more sought for, and desired by us than that we might address you all, with the deepest feeling of affectionate charity.

Wherefore, secretly have we, according to the usage and custom of our predecessors, taken possession of the Supreme Pontificate in our Basilica of St. John Lateran, than we address unto you without delay this Epistle, in order to inflame your profound piety, so that with even greater alacrity, vigilance, and earnestness, keeping the watches of the night over the flock committed to your care, and with the strength and constancy of Bishops fighting against that most hideous enemy of the human race, strenuously, like good soldiers of Jesus Christ, you may "set up a wall for the House of Israel."

None of you, Venerable Brethren, but must be aware that in this our deplorable age, a fierce and formidable war is waged

against every portion of Catholicity by those men who, linked in nefarious companionship, not enduring sound doctrine, and turning their ears from the truth, dig out from darkness every monstrous shape of opinion, and endeavour with all their might to exaggerate and disseminate them amongst the people.

We shudder indeed with horror, and are bitterly affected with sorrow, when we reflect on all the impostures of error and the various and multiform arts, snares and machinations of mischief by which these haters of the truth and of the light, and most skilful artificers of fraud, labour to quench in the minds of all men every aspiration after piety, justice, and honesty; to corrupt morals, to confound all rights human and Divine; and to rend asunder, to undermine, nay, if such a thing were ever possible to overturn from their foundation both the Catholic religion and civil society.

For you know, Venerable Brethren, that these deadly enemies of the Christian name, miserably hurried on by the blind force of a frantic impiety, rush forward with such a rash daring of thought, that with almost unheard of audacity, "opening their mouths in blasphemies against God," (1) they blush not openly and publicly to teach that the solemn sacred mysteries of our religion are fables, and mere inventions of men; that the doctrine of the Catholic Church is opposed to the good and advantage of the human society; they even tremble not to deny even Christ himself and God. And the more easily to delude the people, and particularly to deceive the unwary and hurry the inexperienced along with error, they assert that to themselves alone are known the ways of prosperity, and arrogate without hesitation to themselves the title of Philosophers; as though Philosophy whose whole scope is the investigation of Nature's truth, should reject that which God, the merciful Author of all nature, led with singular beneficence and mercy designed to manifest to men in order that they might attain true safety and happiness. Hence, with a preposterous and most pernicious species of arguing, they cease not to appeal to human reason, and to tell it at the expense of Christ's most holy faith, audaciously asserting forth that it is opposed to human reason. Then which conduct nothing certainly more insane, nothing more impious, nothing in fine more repugnant to reason itself can be fashioned or thought of. For although such be above reason, no real disagreement however, no hostility between them can ever be discovered since they both flow from one and the same fountain of immutable and eternal truth, the Most Excellent and Mighty God, and so render assistance to each other, that right reason demonstrates, protects, and defends the truth of Faith; whilst faith frees reason from all errors, and wonderfully enlightens, confirms, and perfects it by the knowledge of Divine things.

Nor is the fallacy, Venerable Brethren, less of those enemies of Divine Revelation, who catolling with loud sounding praises the progress or march of human things, would with clearly rash sacrilegious daring thrust into the Catholic religion as if that religion were not the work of God but of man, or some philosophical discovery that could be perfected by human means. On men thus miserably and the reproach of Terentian to the philosophers of his day, falls with peculiar fitness: "that they (the philosophers) published a doctrine, a doctrine, and a doctrine Christianity, (-) and certainly once the most holy religion was not invented by man, but revealed in mercy by God to man, every one must, without difficulty, see that religion in fact, must derive all its force from the authority of the same God, speaking, nor could in any way be derived from or ever perfected by human reason. It behoves human reason, indeed, diligently to inquire into the fact of Divine Revelation that it may be clear that God has spoken, and that to Him, according to the very wise teaching of the Apostle, homage-renderer "a reasonable obedience." (3)

For who is ignorant, who can be ignorant, that implicit faith is to be given to God when he speaks, and that nothing can be more consistent with right reason than a firm consent and adhesion to those things which shall be proved to have been revealed by God who can neither deceive nor be deceived!