

ODE

ON THE EPISCOPAL JUBILEE

—OF—

POPE LEO XIII., FEBRUARY 19TH, 1893.

*For The Carmelite Review.*

Hail mighty Pope! Hail spiritual Sire!  
The world salutes thee on this festive day,  
And kneels before thine august throne to pay  
The highest tribute mortal can desire—  
The offering of love's perpetual fire!  
Thee have the nations gazed on from afar,  
As bright thy light, and shining like a star,  
Beam'd o'er a troubled world. Love doth inspire  
Thine every act, O Pontiff most benign!  
To thee, viceregent of the Lord Most High,  
The world doth turn expectant for a sign,  
And hails thee, beloved Leo, "light in the sky."

O Father of the Faithful! Blessed indeed,  
Yea, trebly blest is he upon whose brow  
Thou sign'st the symbol of our holy Creed.  
Priest, Bishop, Pope, all these do thee endow  
With majesty of triple power; but thou  
Art even in thy very nature blest;  
Thy soul with greatness teems, thy face imprest  
With love's sweet smile, doth win the world to  
bow,

And on this day to lift their hearts with thine  
In glad thanksgiving to the Throne divine.

How glorious record doth thy reign display!  
Thy life how bright its day!  
O orb of wisdom! ever beaming bright,  
Thou illumines the night,  
And fillest Earth with transcendental light!  
The angel of the Schools thou bid'st once more  
Bestow his precious lore  
Upon the human mind, which foes assail,  
With wisdom earthly, heedless of the soul;  
That sea of wisdom pure thou didst unveil,  
Its flood-gates yielding to thy sweet control.  
The gloomy world that lay in durance vile,  
Beneath the tyranny of Sophist minds,  
Beheld a beacon light and wore a smile,  
As mariners at sea midst treacherous winds.

Then, noble Leo! Blest guardian of the fold!  
How fondly, in solicitude for truth,  
Thou opened up that mine of wealth untold  
The archives of the Vatican, whose lore  
Is to the human intellect far more  
Than erstwhile was the fabled Fount of Youth,  
Or that most precious stone for which, as we are  
taught,  
The dreamy alchemist so vainly sought.

What time the nations, trembling in unrest,  
Beheld the ominous clouds, the surging sea,  
That threatened to engulf them in its breast  
Like Peter on the sea of Galilee;  
Cried out in agony: "Who now our guide will be?"  
'Twas thou, like Saviour blest,  
Made answer: "Come to me  
And I will give you rest."

There came a cry from Afric's gloomy shore  
Of souls that slept in bondage, and the sound  
Fell sad and solemn on thy loving heart  
But thou, benignant father, bore a part  
Of that deep wail of sorrow, and unbound  
The manacles the nations' pity wore.

Labor was prone beneath a tyrant yoke,  
When thou great Pontiff spoke,  
And, in bold burning words most eloquent,  
A glorious message to all nations sent,  
Which straight the burden broke.

Most noble-hearted Leo! whether it be  
That nations struggling in a stormy sea  
Beset by darkness, or the trodden slave,  
Thy holy and far-reaching succour crave;  
Whether from treacherous shoals of unbelief,  
Or infidelity, earth seeks relief,  
Thy mystic light leads gloriously on,  
Dispelling clouds and scattering, anon,  
The blessings of thy wisdom. Every land  
Hath felt the bounty of thy generous hand.  
Thy master mind hath led the nations out  
From the deep chaos of soul-blighting doubt.  
And still despite the dark opposing rocks  
Of unbelief, the vain unseemly shocks  
Of heresy, the barque of Peter sails  
In glorious triumph midst ungenerous gales,  
And thou, beloved Leo, bold and brave,  
Dost guide her safely o'er the troubled wave.

Hail ever loving father, may thy years  
By Heaven protected be!  
Beam brighter that "Light in Heaven" which  
nobly steers  
The barque of Peter over time's dark sea!

—JOHN A. LANIGAN, M. D.,  
Niagara Falls, N. Y.