

Having taken up his residence in Perugia he commenced to show the same activity and love of personal supervision that characterized his career as Delegate and later on as Pope. In the Consistory of 1853 he was created Cardinal by Pius IX. So far his career had been rapid and brilliant. At the age of 40 he was Bishop and Cardinal, known to many as an able scholar and wise administrator. But henceforward he seemed to disappear altogether from public view, devoting himself absolutely to his diocese from the day he took possession of his See until he became Pope. He was an energetic and zealous Bishop, and his ideal was to form a holy and learned clergy. In this as in many other undertakings he was very successful, and before long his diocese was one of the most flourishing in the peninsula. On February 7th, 1878, Pius IX. died—on February 20th, Joachim Pecci was elected Pope and took the name of Leo XIII. He had always been frail, he was now an old man of 68 years. Who in that august conclave thought that he would yet live a quarter of a century to see thrones with new occupants, nations with new frontiers and regimes; that he would force those rulers and peoples to recognize in the Church the greatest moral power that the world has ever seen!

A month after his election the new Pope published the first of that series of deep and practical Encyclicals which have kept the eyes of the Catholic world turned ever Romewards. The 'Inscrutabili' treated at length of the dangers to which modern governments expose themselves by their hostility towards the Church and her dogma, and clearly pointed out that the Civil Power cannot maintain its dignity, nor the Law its authority, if the Church is hampered in her teaching of truth and morality. The practical application of this doctrine was shown in the 'Quod Apostolici' of the following December, condemning Communism and Socialism. The Civil Power was told in the plainest terms that this new and terrible danger could only be averted by the help of the Church. Let the world but recognize the Holy See with its divine right to teach, and it may then hope to settle legitimately and securely its own dynastic and economic problems. Time and again has this solemn warning been uttered, and despite the general indifference some governments were brought to listen to his voice. When