

across the Cottian Alps into France, Italy woke as from the sleep of ages. For the five years that the Pope was captive at Grenoble and Fontainebleau, Rome's captivity was broken. Life, liberty, property, prosperity, received new guarantees and immunities. For five years civilization, unshackled, ran to catch up with the age; but when Napoleon's fall broke the Pope's captivity, and His Holiness returned to the Vatican, he put the old fetters on the feet of civilization and riveted them anew, and order and progress came to a dead halt.

When Gregory XVI. was but assuming the tiara, even Russia and Austria—themselves far from leaders in progress—urged the necessity of "great administrative and organic improvements" within the territories he ruled. But he was the stern and inflexible foe of all innovations, whether in theology, politics or popular life. His policy for fifteen years was repression and suppression. The Camaldolese monk tried to confine and cramp the world within his cell. With him every advance toward liberty was a relapse into liberalism; reform meant a revolt against the church and God, to be resisted to the last.

It has been well said that nowhere on earth could the political and social conditions of the Roman states have been maintained anywhere in Christendom, save where priestcraft ruled. There was in Rome one ecclesiastic for every ten families; it is no marvel that neither the soil nor the mind was cultivated, that scarce one in a thousand could read, that there was neither freedom for the press nor an open field for enterprise. Even vaccination was under the ban and the Pontine marshes went undrained. If Pius IX. was a man of more progressive instincts, yet he was in ecclesiastical fetters; and under his rule we find three significant and signal events which sufficiently mark the antagonism to human progress. We cannot forget the bull, "*Ineffabilis*," in 1854, when the Madonna was crowned with the diadem of the "Immaculate Conception," and all faithful souls were henceforth forbidden to think of the virgin mother as having the taint of original sin. Nor can we forget the "Encyclical" of 1864, when four-score 'heresies' fell under the papal anathema, and the position that the Pope should be "reconciled to progress, liberalism and modern civilization," to "civil liberty of worship and freedom of the press," was held up to execration. Nor can we forget that five years later the 20th Ecumenical Council met in St. Peter's, and asserted the "Personal Infallibility of the Pope," and thus completed this trinity of absurdities.

Here was the last step toward petrification. It was not enough for Rome to curse the very progress for which all the rest of the enlightened world blessed God; not enough to stamp upon and seek to stamp out the very life of this aspiring age; not enough resolutely to fight against all the attainments and achievements of this, the last in time, as it is also the first in rank, of the centuries; all the errors of the Pope