

# The True Witness



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## THE POPE AND FRANCE

(Translated from the French for the Freeman's Journal.)

For the first time since the establishment of the Church among the Gauls the people of France have been made to realize the role enacted by the Papacy, the head and heart of Catholicism. Thanks to the press, which carries to the remotest hamlet the news of events affecting the national life, and thanks especially to the revival of the religious sentiment due to the ill-advised methods of taking the Church inventories, there is no spot on French territory where it is not known to-day that the Pope alone is the head of the Catholic religion and that with him alone rests the decision whether the law of December 9, 1905, will have the force of law so far as the Catholics of this country are concerned. Popes, of course, on many occasions in the course of our history, in their character of supreme head of the Church, have intervened in the political and religious affairs of France. The election of Poppin the Short, the coronation of Charlemagne, the dispute with Philip the Fair, the concordat with Francis I., the disagreements with Louis XIV., the condemnation of the civil constitution of the clergy, and, finally, the concordat with Napoleon, all these great events shed light on the sovereign role enacted by the Papacy.

And now, eighteen hundred years after this historical event, the Successor of those ancient Popes in the Episcopal See of ancient Rome, Pius X., with the whole world looking on, summons fourteen French priests and after consecrating them, bishops before the tomb of St. Peter sends them in his name and in the name of Jesus Christ to govern the churches of modern France.

What changes have taken place in the world's history during those eighteen centuries! The Roman Empire has disappeared; the barbarians have invaded the West; Gaul has become France; Clovis, Charlemagne, St. Louis, Louis XIV. and Napoleon have passed off the stage; Mahomet has been conquered; Protestantism has rent Europe in two; the discovery of America, the invention of the printing press and the French revolution have displaced for the people of every land their economic, intellectual and political axis; science and democracy are still at work bringing about this gigantic transformation. Of the Rome of the Caesars what remains? What catastrophes, what ruins, what upheavals and what progress!

But the people, the great mass of citizens, the workmen in their shops, the peasants in their fields, have they ever had a clear perception of the authority so necessary for the Bishop of Rome? Have they ever realized the supreme position he holds in our Catholic life? Up to the present for the great body of the faithful the Pope has been a person living at a great distance from them, a foreigner whose residence is a palace in the capital of Italy, a prelate clothed in white, who, they were told in their catechism, in the pastorals, in their Bishops and in the sermons of their parish priests, holds on earth as head of the Church the place of Jesus Christ. Once or twice a year the priests made a collection for Peter's Pence. In certain cases it was necessary to apply to the Pope for dispensation to marry. The people knew little more than this about the exercise of the religious sovereignty of the Roman Pontiff. The parish priests placed over them were named by the Bishop. The Bishop, according to the newspapers, was appointed by the government. The part enacted by the Pope was never brought home to the people. The reading in the pulpit of an occasional Pontifical Encyclical did not give a clear, well-defined impression of the true position of the Church of him who is rightly called the Vicar of Christ. This indifference of a Catholic people in respect to the supreme pastor of the fold of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Redeemer of the World, was often for us a cause of sorrow and sometimes of religious apprehension.

One power alone survives which has witnessed all these changes and which has played no unimportant part in all the great dramas, a power which, despite all these cataclysms, has ever remained the same. That power is the Papacy of the poor Galilean fisherman of Bethesda surviving to-day in the humble son of the Innkeeper Sarto.

In the person of Pius X., Simon Peter once more, over the ruins of an old world that has disappeared forever, uplifts the standard of the Divine One crucified on Calvary. It is he who, assembling the bishops of republican France, in the world-wide known city that in ancient time was called Lucretia, will speak the decisive word in regard to the law of December 9, which will determine whether that law will be a rule of conduct for French Catholics or whether, thanks to the blind hatred of sectarians, it will be an instrument for religious persecution, the cause of countless disasters and perhaps even of the loss of life, and, finally, through God's mercy, the means of our deliverance.

Thus looms up the Pope to-day in the Church of God. He will speak. In the discharge of the obligations imposed by his apostolic office he devotes himself to the safeguarding of the interests of the Universal Church. As he views it the Church of France is not the only Church affected. The question of principle involved in the French law of December 9 affects the churches of the Catholic States that are bound to the Holy See by concordats.

What is that principle? The French Parliament, by its own authority and in utter disregard of the concordat of 1801 and of the rights and liberties of the Catholic Church, has abolished the budget for public worship (Art 2 of the Separation Law); it has confiscated a part of the property of the Church Boards (Article 5); it has sanctioned the nationalization of ecclesiastical edifices (Article 12); it has instituted special associations which are intended to take the place of Church Boards (Article 18); it has, at its own sweet will, formulated rules regulating the manner in which Catholic worship shall be conducted (Article 25 and following articles).

This manner of proceeding suggests the question can the Pope consent to such sacrifices? Can he tolerate such attacks? Can he submit to such unjust encroachments on the part of the civil power? Again, can he adapt the new regime established by the associations for religious worship to the legitimate and indispensable exigencies of the constitutional laws of the Ca-

tholic Church? The Holy See is confronted by another question. At this time, when Free Masonry is putting forth all its energies to bring about a separation of Church and State in all Catholic countries, ought the Pope, in view of the insolent and brutal attitude assumed by the French Government, confine himself to a merely formal protest, however energetic it may be, and then in practice permit the divine rights of the Church to be overridden by the violence of this so-called law? Ought he by this paternal benevolence incur the risk of encouraging the audacity of the enemies of Christ in neighboring countries? Ought he by this apparent weakness compromise the diplomatic position of the Holy See? These assuredly are grave questions.

Once more, is there any reason for hoping that the law of separation will complete the cycle of French anti-clericalism and will mark the limits of hostility between the republic and the Church? On the contrary, are we not told that the supporters of the "Bloc" are becoming every day more audacious? Are they not threatening to abolish in a short time the liberty of teaching? Are they not proclaiming a bitter and relentless war upon the Catholic religion? Consequently, what good purpose is served by always temporizing, by always yielding ourselves that we shall be able to obtain peace? Would it not be much better to wait no longer, but from this time forth carry on a vigorous campaign with a view of forcing the French Government to have recourse to the Holy See to re-establish religious peace and compelling it to treat with the Pope as the Vicar of Christ, the Sovereign Head of the Catholic Church?

No doubt these are cruel questions which will pain the paternal heart of Pius X. and which will suggest to the Bishops of France anxious thoughts as to their country and make them grieve over the religious situation. But what of the honor of the Church? What of the good of souls? What of the triumph of the faith? What of the welfare of Catholic France? What of peace conjoined with liberty?

When Pius X. speaks the final word the situation will be cleared up. On the words that fall from his lips will depend the future of religion, and perchance even the future of France herself. Whilst nations are arming themselves against one another prepared for the bloody onset with its ghastly human hecatombs, the moral power of the idea, of the word, of conscience, of right, appears more majestic and more divine in consequence of the feebleness of the means it employs, and, humbly speaking, of the weakness of the agents at its command. May God deign to listen to the supplications of the patron saints of Christian France and inspire His Vicar with bold and heroic words which will bring to our country safety and peace.

### THE ALLELUIA OF THE PASCH

(Eleanor C. Donnelly.)  
Alleluia! the choirs are singing,  
Up, high up, in the golden dawn,  
Alleluia! the choirs are singing,  
Passiontide and its sorrows gone.  
Alleluia! the birds are trilling  
Over the eggs in their new-made  
nests;  
Field and meadow and garden filling  
With 'th' joy o'erflowing feathered  
breasts.  
The world of nature round us rises  
Clad in resurrection green;  
The world of grace all heav'n surprises  
With risen glories, earth unseen!  
Alleluia! chants the river  
To hill and mountain, sky and sea!  
Evermore and still forever,  
Float the echoes back to me!  
Echoes of an Angel-chorus  
(White-robed in the garden-gloom),  
Shouting to the welkin o'er us:  
"Christ hath risen from the tomb!"  
All my heart springs up in greeting  
To the rapture of the word:  
"Alleluia!"—glad repeating—  
"Hail, thrice hail, Thou Risen  
Lord!"

### EASTER DAY. The Hallowing and Lighting of the Paschal Candle.

The hallowing or blessing and ceremonial lighting of a candle called, from its connection with the Easter Feast, the Paschal Candle, is the chief ceremonial observance of the vigil of Easter, writes Rev. H. P. Feary, O.S.B., in the April number of the Ecclesiastical Review.

The rite undoubtedly came from the East, either from Jerusalem or Antioch. In early Christian days Eastern rites had this tendency of traveling westward. Both the persecution and the peace of the church were the means of sending numbers of devout people on pilgrimage to the holy places whose return would bring about the introduction of rites and practices seen abroad.

The ceremonial extinction of the lamps burning in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem, on Good Friday and their rekindling on Easter day is well known. The medieval Sir John Maundeville in his Travels mentions one special lamp, among others, which, burning before the sepulchre of our Lord, went out "of itself" at the hour that our Lord rose from the dead. Be this as it may, Sir John's delightful exaggerations are familiar to all, his frank declaration of disbelief in many things he heard is particularly refreshing. Here his testimony is valuable inasmuch as it gives evidence of the existence of a custom long in use among the Jews and pagans taken and consecrated to the use of the Christian Church, namely, the kindling, with particular solemnity, of fire which, from the mystery of its production, was held to be sacred.

Annually on the kalends of March, we learn from the classic writers, the Roman vestals rekindled the sacred fire, which in their temples was the representative of their goddess. On the "night of mystery" (November 1), when the Druids annually celebrated the reconstruction of the world, the continually burning holy fire was extinguished in the sacred precincts and at that signal all other fires were one by one put out. The Peruvian Virgins of the Sun relighted their sacred fire on the feast of Raymi, their great festival of the summer solstice. In the life of Saint Patrick it is told that he kindled an Easter fire on Easter eve, A.D. 433, on the hill of Slane, opposite Tara.

The primitive method of kindling fire was by the friction of two pieces of wood, suitably fashioned, known to us as the swartika, or "fylfot" cross, the ends being handled by which the sticks were worked about a common axle till it burst into a flame (III Kings, 17:12).

The sacred fire for Scandinavian altars was struck from a flint. The vestals of Rome and the Sun Virgins of Peru drew their fire from heaven by means of a concave mirror. By the same means the Anglo-Saxons caught the first spark from the sun on tow; in cloudy weather they had recourse to a flint.

The kindling of this new fire had among the northern nations a particular connection with the new birth of the sun. With them it was a time of great rejoicing, as the long days of winter were past and the earth began to be born anew. It is an acknowledged fact that the origin of several of our Christian ceremonies have been found in the rites of the Jews and pagans. The Church finding it difficult to eradicate the memory and affection for them from the hearts and minds of the converts, in many instances adopted them and sanctified them to holy uses.

This was particularly the case with the Easter celebration, so bound up was it with the great festival kept universally in honor of the sun. Anciently Easter was reckoned the first day of the Christian new year—March being considered the first month of the year beginning on the 25th. On its eve every spark of fire was devoutly extinguished to be rekindled anew with fire blessed by the church. The fire having been brought into being outside the church doors, the Paschal Candle is lighted at the words "Quam in honorem Dei rutilans ignis accendit" in the "Exultet," all the church lights being afterwards re-

kindled from this light. In pre-Reformation days the people carried some of the new fire away with them to rekindle the fires which had been extinguished on their own hearths. Chaucer, quoting Saint Isidore, makes his parson tell of anger: that like a fire it will last a year or more—from one Easter day until another Easter day.

In the early church it was customary to make and bless fire anew for daily service very similar to the lamp-lighting of the Jews as mentioned in the First Book of Samuel. Afterwards it became a weekly (every Saturday) practice. By the twelfth century it had become the special and peculiar rite of the vigil of Easter, but even then remnants of the old usage survived.

### CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN FRANCE.

A non-Catholic contemporary, long noted for its virulent hatred of the Church and blind bigotry, with its usual inaccuracy attributes the present persecution in France to the alleged fact that the religious had absolute control of the public schools. No more unqualified falsehood could be uttered. For a century there has been no freedom of teaching in France. Every successive government has endeavored to confine the education of youth to official schools and the infidel university of Paris has had a monopoly of educational authority and influence. Schools taught by religious were private institutions and they were absolutely forbidden, unless licensed and regulated by the university. The great Lacordaire declared that religion had been destroyed in his soul by university influences. "Is there," says Montalembert, "a single establishment of the university where a Christian child can live in the exercise of faith? Does not a contagious doubt, a cold and tenacious feeling reign over all these young sons whom she pretends to instruct? Are they not too often either polluted, or petrified, or frozen? Is not the most flagrant, the most monstrous, the most unnatural immorality inscribed on the records of every college, and in the recollections of every child who has passed as much as eight days there?" From 1830 to the revolution of 1848, no young Frenchman could enter for what we may call a civil service examination—that is, opportunity to enter any of the public employments—who had not been educated in one of the public schools, or at a school licensed by the University of Paris, conducted by the graduates of the university, and submitting its system and school books to the revision of that body. The youths of France were thus in a condition of bondage or servitude to the university. A well known English writer says: "The teaching of the infidel university and schools has effected to fill French light literature with abomination, and the graver works with blasphemy."

The present anti-Christian policy of France, therefore, is to be attributed not to the religious schools but on the contrary to the fact that all religious influences in the nation were paralyzed by the infidel University.

### New Statue in St. Peter's.

There has been carried out at the Basilica of St. Peter's a most interesting piece of work consisting in the raising of an enormous marble statue to one of the several vacant niches near the roof of the church. The marble represents St. Boniface, the first of the seven founders of the Order of Servites, as the niches are reserved for the founders of religious orders. It is placed on the right of the Altar of Saints Provisio and Martiniano, and is the work of Professor Aureli.

### REPAID WHAT HE HAD STOLEN.

Rev. E. J. Farmer, of St. Thomas' Church, Zanesville, O., some days ago received a New York draft for \$115 and an unsigned letter. The writer stated that twenty years ago he had cheated Father Farmer in a business deal, and the draft was restitution.

### IRISH PEOPLE, THOUGH POOR, STILL BUILD CHURCHES.

A couple of days ago a representative of this paper happened to be in the Crossna district, and whilst there his attention was attracted by the splendid new church which has so quickly arisen. We say "quickly," but use the word in a comparative sense, for although it took some years to effect its completion, the district cannot boast of an overflow of riches, and taking these circumstances into account, there appears to be every justification for the remark that the work was expeditiously done. When the great and noble project was undertaken by the reverend and devoted pastor of the parish, Rev. T. Flanagan, he must have been perfectly aware of the weight and gravity of his task, but conscious of the devotion of his faithful flock to our grand old faith, he knew that in his endeavors to provide a fitting house for the Lord of Hosts, he could rely on the whole-hearted support of his parishioners. The old church had for years shown signs of dilapidation, and to erect a church worthy of the traditions of the parish, and their holy religion, was the desire of Father Flanagan. His appeals have met with generous responses, not only from those resident in the parish, but also from the exiles throughout England and the United States, who took a legitimate and pardonable pride in subscribing to the good work he had undertaken, and contributing in some small way to erect a suitable place of worship where they first opened their lips in prayer. But there is yet a great deal to be done, as a large debt is still due on the building, and to wipe this out it is hoped the people will again come to the assistance of Father Flanagan, and place him in the happy position of having the edifice free of all encumbrances at the growing ceremony of consecration, which will take place on Low Sunday (April 22nd). The church is a credit to the district, and will ever remain as a monument to the religious zeal and devoted fidelity of the good pastor and his flock. We are sure that Father Flanagan can depend on generous support in his final effort in the erection of an appropriate house of God in a district where it was so obviously needed. As already stated, the district is a poor one, a fact which should appeal all the more forcibly to those outside the parish.—Roscommon Herald.

### Garibaldi's Grandson Studying for Priesthood.

The history of the Church in our time affords many curious illustrations of how compensation is made to her. She suffers oppression in one country and makes wondrous progress in another. Here she is attacked, there nobly defended. A great leader falls, one better qualified succeeds him. For every apostasy there are conversions. Scandal is nullified by some striking example of heroic virtue, like that of Father Damien. Renan abandons the Church, Newman submits to it. Garibaldi was an uncompromising foe of the Papacy, his grandson is studying for the priesthood, and hopes to lay down his life for the faith in some foreign land.

General Ricciotti Garibaldi does not deny that he himself is what is called an "anti-clerical," and that his son's vocation has been in every respect a bitter blow. He had hoped that the boy would gradually abandon the idea of entering the priesthood, and especially that of becoming a member of a religious order; but, like a reasonable man, he now submits with a good grace to the inevitable. Those who are acquainted with young Garibaldi remark in him all the ardor and strenuousness which characterized his celebrated grandfather, but these will now be directed to the furtherance of lofty and noble aims. The qualities formerly employed against the Church will henceforward be devoted to her cause.

Of all the riches that we hug, of all the pleasures we enjoy, we can carry no more out of this world than out of a dream.—Boswell.

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