

became an integral part of the Kingdom of Italy. So have matters stood for about twenty-three years past; nor does there appear any prospect of reconciliation between the two parties. One cannot help wondering that so sagacious a man as Leo XIII. should maintain an attitude of such firm defiance. The temporal dominion is no dogma, no article *de fide*: yet it is declared (as recently by Cardinal Vaughan) to be essential to the independence of His Holiness in his character of Universal Bishop. It is not for us to arraign the worldly wisdom of Jesuit policy: yet vaulting ambition can overleap itself, and the wise are sometimes taken in their own craftiness. We cannot say that we regret the obstinacy at which we wonder. Were Church and State reconciled in Italy, the great work of evangelization would doubtless meet with serious hindrances.

The Italian clergy are often—let us hope generally—worthy men, doing their duty according to their light, although the rule of enforced celibacy, in many cases, entails evil consequences. But the light enjoyed by the priests is very feeble. The Pope, a scholarly man himself, has earnestly recommended the study of the works of Thomas Aquinas. The “angelical doctor” occupies a high place among theologians (though we may note, in passing, that he rejected the doctrine of the “Immaculate Conception”); but the teaching of the thirteenth century is a poor preparation for the requirements of the nineteenth; and, in any case, only a few can enter into the depths of the Thomist speculations. Many—we fear we must say most—of the priests are ill prepared to serve as guides to their flocks. Signore Mariano, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Naples, asserts that “their minds are sunk in servile and senile lethargy.” These men preach; but what can their teaching avail?

The Italians are not constitutionally a religious people, though they have sometimes been asserted to be so. A

sense of the unseen is not largely developed in their minds; it is only in the north that it is so to any extent. Hence the mass of the people will seldom turn to the deep musings of “the visionary Dante;” they prefer the strain of “ladye-love and war, romance, and knightly worth,” as found in the lay of Tasso and still more that of Ariosto. Among the ancient Romans religion was mainly a function of the State; outward ceremonial was nearly all in all. Modern Italians are, in this respect, like their ancestors, or should we not say their predecessors? A high *fazione* will always attract a crowd, but the mind of the seeming worshipper is occupied with the splendor and artistic character of the show. Of course some fundamental conceptions of the character of God and the duty of obeying His commandments—these things cannot be wholly absent wherever any tincture of Christianity exists. The worship of the Virgin also—which it is too much now the habit of some Protestants to excuse or even commend—though it leads the mind of the worshipper away from the sympathetic Christ, yet necessarily involves high conceptions of womanly purity and motherly love; and yet we greatly fear that there is too much foundation for the sentiment which we once heard expressed by one of Italy’s greatest men of letters—namely, that the religion of Italy cannot be rightly called Christianity at all, seeing it is little more than the ancient paganism, slightly veiled and bearing a new name.

“Happy the land that has faith; Italy has none.” So exclaimed Dr. Saffi, of Bologna, at the celebration of the tercentenary of Edinburgh University a few years ago. Atheism is often boldly avowed, even by the lower classes. Where this terrible extreme has not been reached, a childish superstition is all the faith of the people. Professor Mariano affirms that, under the teaching of Rome, religion has become—we should rather say, has remained from ancient times—“a magi-