

LEO'S INDEPENDENCE.

THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH'S LIBERTY OF ACTION.

Archbishop Vaughan's Able Discourse
—The Unrepealed Treaty of Vienna—The Pope's Great Work in Germany and France—The Three Positions Open to the Holy Father.

The following article is taken from a sermon recently delivered by Most Rev. Herbert Vaughan, D.D., in the pro-cathedral, London. The learned archbishop of Westminster treated most ably of the position past and present of the Holy Father. He spoke as follows:

It was the custom of my eminent and venerated predecessor on the first Sunday in October to address his flock upon the conditions in which the church, and especially the Vicar of Christ, are found in the present day. It is therefore not unfitting that I should bring before you some thoughts connected with the independence of the Holy See. It will be my endeavor to attempt a modest answer to some of the objections which are not unfrequently heard, not merely among non-Catholics, but sometimes among Catholics themselves, to the position which has been taken up by the Holy Father in relation to the kingdom of Italy. Surely, it is said, the Pope never exercised a greater influence than at the present day. In years past, when he possessed a temporal sovereignty, his influence was not so widely felt as it has been during the pontificate of Leo XIII. The Pope is now without a vestige of temporal power, and yet he has been requested to undertake the office of arbitrator between Germany and Spain in the matter of the Caroline Islands. The world has watched his efforts during the Kulturkampf, by which he has established a more peaceful state of things in the German Empire than has existed for many years. The Holy Father has gone far to unite the divided elements of French Catholicity so as to enable them to exercise their full rights of political influence and to bring about a better state of things in that country. The Pope, it is urged, is free from the coercion of any power, and has acted on his own initiative. But the answer is that if the Pope seems to be free in the line which he has taken, it is not because he has not been reconciled to the kingdom of Italy, because he has not been content to act as chaplain of the king, or as the subject of a great foreign power. On the contrary, he has been in opposition—in practical hostility to the existing order of things. Freedom is the first necessary condition for the use of influence and authority. Now, there are

THREE POSITIONS

in one or other of which the Holy Father might stand in relation to other powers. The first is of independent sovereignty. The treaty of Vienna in 1815 declared that the Papacy was a power of the first order in Europe, and temporal power was, by the action of Great Britain and the other powers, restored to the Popes after they had suffered exile and imprisonment, because it was seen to be for the benefit of Christendom. The Papacy was looked upon as belonging not to the people in Italy, but to the whole of Christendom. Up to the present time the great powers have not declared against the treaty of Vienna. The second possible condition is that of spoliation, in which the Holy Father is now placed. He has retired to his castle, for his territories have been invaded, and he has made himself a voluntary prisoner. He has refused to enter into negotiations with the spoiler, whose offers of wealth and protection he has declined, and, as a sovereign, entitled to the exercise of his proper functions, he has been engaged in vindicating his rights, which are those of Christendom. He has been careful to free himself from the imputation of being merely the chaplain or subject of the King of Italy. The attitude has not been maintained without immense personal sacrifices and privations which tended to impair his health and to shorten his days. A third conceivable attitude for the Holy Father is that he should be reconciled to the King of Italy and accept accomplished facts. But what would be the real meaning translated into English of such an attitude? Suppose an archbishop so placed were called upon by a German Emperor to arbitrate a matter which seemed likely to cause a war between two such nations as Germany and Spain. What would be the comment in Germany? Why, it would

be said that the English Government had brought its weight in his counsels so as to make the decision favorable to British ambition and interests. Again, suppose it was a question affecting the interests of French Catholicity upon which the archbishop was called upon to arbitrate, would it not be suspected that the decision was biased by hatred to the Bourbons, it might be, of jealousy of the Napoleons? That would be

THE POSITION OF THE POPE,

if he were to be reconciled to the King of Italy and accept the King's protection and emoluments. The great international position of the Holy Father would be annihilated if he were to accept such a destiny. The conclusion is inevitable—either the Pope must live in a condition of perpetual hostility to the kingdom and government of Italy, and so make it clear that he is not the subject of any great power, or he must be restored to the position of an independent sovereign. There is another line of objection taken to the course adopted by the Holy Father—Why does not the Pope, it is urged, or the Catholics of Italy, form a strong Catholic parliamentary party? I will ask—Would such a course be likely to succeed? I have some experiences to go back upon, for the Parliament at Rome was not the first Italian Parliament with whose history we are acquainted. There was the Piedmontese Parliament before the invasion of the states of the Church. In that Parliament there was a strong Catholic party, which numbered many honorable public men. But that party failed to curb the revolution and the dominant forces of the Parliament. Again, there was a Parliament in Florence which included a large number of Catholics devoted to the Holy See, but they were no match for the duplicity and the wickedness of the revolutionary elements. In France an attempt of the same kind has been made. But has it produced any great and noble results? It has not been able to secure freedom to priests or religion or even to protect those orders of charity who gave themselves up to the welfare and happiness of the people. On the other hand, look at Germany, which has had a strong Catholic parliamentary party. That party has done much—in a great measure it has put an end to the Kulturkampf. But in Germany the Church has had to deal with a Christian Government—Protestant it may be, but the Government of Berlin is a Christian Government, actuated not by the practice and tenets of the revolutionary school, but by Christian principles. That is not the case in Italy and France. It will not, therefore, be safe or right for the Holy Father to

ENTRUST HIS CAUSE

to such a keeping as to imperil his independence by placing it in the hands of a political party. Moreover, who are they who most desired that the Pope should form a political party? Why, it is those who make up the present Italian dynasty. The Kings of Piedmont have made use of the powers of the revolution to consolidate in their own hands the seven different Italian crowns which once existed, and they are afraid that the same force which has made them may swallow them up, and they desire that the Catholics of Italy shall come to their rescue and firmly establish their precarious dynasty. Why should Italian Catholics assent to defend the power which has come into existence by the breach of solemn contracts and covenants and by every form of injustice and usurpation? Why should they form a party which may have to act with, and will be in danger of confusion and amalgamation with, the party of the revolution? Can the Pope consent to be the leader of such a party? That can in no circumstances be the course taken by the Vicar of Christ. The present condition of affairs lasted some twenty-one or twenty-three years. The Papacy represents a great principle—let them hold to that principle and work it to its legitimate ends. There is a great tendency to confuse the infallibility of the Holy See with its practical policy and administrative authority. But the two are absolutely distinct, and the doctrine of infallibility is concerned only with the dogma of the faith. In the domain of administrative authority the question of infallibility does not enter, and the Pope in that domain makes no claim to infallibility. But in that domain it is the duty of all Catholics to co-operate that the Holy Father may enjoy all that liberty of action which is necessary for the beneficent office in the Christian world.

NEWS FROM ROME.

(Gleaned from the London Universe.)

Mr. MacClean, of London, has visited the Vatican Observatory, and presented the authorities there with a delicate stellar spectroscope, which was most gratefully accepted.

The Holy Father has named the Rev. Domenico Parodi of Genoa a private Chamberlain supernumerary, an appointment which is regarded as a great honour to the press as the priest so favoured is director of the *Eco d'Italia*.

Another French *religieuse* has been decorated. The Minister of the Interior has decreed the presentation of a bronze medal of honour to Sister Marie-Hypolite a nurse at Roybon in the Isere, for the zeal and devotedness she displayed during the epidemics of diphtheria which raged in the parish in the years '90, '91, and '92.

A rumour—only a rumour, mind—is set going that the Holy Father objects to the General of the Jesuits transferring his residence from Fiesole to Rome. Irresponsible newsmongers, who are not troubled with scruples, think they are bound to invent something when it does not exist to fill out their space with.

The new Leonine Library, called sometimes the library of consultation—the gift, by the way, of the Pope—has been formally inaugurated by Cardinal Capelatro, librarian of the Holy Roman Church, in presence of the learned dignitaries of the Vatican and the representatives of foreign scientific institutes.

The *Agence Havas* now states that the Consistory has been definitely fixed for the first fortnight of January. Mgr. Dusserrre will be, preconized Archbishop of Algeria. The Primatial See of Carthage will be filled later. Ten Cardinals will be created, but we have given the names of those who are probably to be elevated more than once in these columns.

The fairy tales circulated by Protestant papers with correspondents at Rome should be accepted with due caution. The Pope has been actively occupied for some months past with Eastern questions, but from that to preparing an Encyclical inviting them to recognize the supremacy and proposing a European Conference to discuss disarmament and consider the Alsace-Lorraine and the Bulgarian difficulties is a long cry.

The Pontiff has made a present to Mgr. Morgadez y Gill, Bishop of Vich, of a superb mosaic painting of the Virgin of Ripoll, destined for that celebrated shrine in the Pyrenes. The original produced by the Spanish artist, Serra, is so good that His Holiness reserved it for himself. Leo XIII. hoped that his gifts would be agreeable to Catholic Spaniards. "The Madonna, dear brother," he said, "smiles as if she were rejoiced at the veneration of which she is the object in Spain; and the Infant Jesus, whom she carries in her arms, does He not look as if He were blessing your flock?" The aged Bishop was profoundly touched, and protested that Spain was ever faithful to the Holy See, and esteemed whatever it received from the hands of the Pope as a most precious relic. At parting the Holy Father embraced him twice in sign of peace and amity and said, "You see I am a prisoner here, but tell the faithful in your land to visit me and console me in my captivity, and they shall be welcomed with the affection I bear them."

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