

off from the Church rotten members, without submitting the same to the humiliating ordeal of Imperial whim, or State supervision, at the risk of such documents being intercepted in their passage through the post offices. In a word, he would be powerless to perform acts conducive to the advancement of religion, or the glory of the church of God without the exequatur or approbation of the government, perhaps infidel, under which he would live. At the present day, in Russia a tyrannical autocrat assumes a dictatorship over the documents emanating from the Holy See. Our Holy Father is deprived the consolation of communication with the persecuted Catholics of the Empire, except in what may please the tyrannical Czar of Russia. Thus infidel Italy seeks to despoil the Supreme Pontiff of the temporal patrimony of St. Peter, and the infidel world at large would deprive him of the spiritual patrimony—the Divine commission to teach all nations, to feed the lambs and to feed the sheep of the flock of Christ. No wonder, then, that our Holy Father complains in his letters and encyclicals of the cruelty, injustice and sacrilege of those who inflict these wrongs.

But the Holy Father is not devoid of those consolations which always support the drooping spirits and cheer the depressed heart of the true and faithful pastor of souls.

If, on one hand, he has to deplore the action of wicked men, enemies to religion, justice, and truth, who seek to destroy the vitality of the Church, and thwart her efforts for the salvation of souls; on the other hand, he can rejoice in the success which attends the heroic efforts of her faithful sons, devoted apostolic missionaries, who teach the truths of the Gospel in the utmost bounds of the earth; if, in Italy and Russia, the strong arm of a tyrannical power seems for a moment to humble and oppress the church; in Asia, in Europe, in America, in Australia, in Africa, she goes forth conquering and to conquer; if betimes the defection of some of the children of the Church send the sharpest pang of sorrow to the heart of the Father of the Faithful, his sorrow is assuaged and his heart rejoices over the number of conversions which daily occur in the Old and in the New world, amidst civilized and uncivilized society.

A cursory glance at the present state of the Church in the Old and in the New world will show us the efforts that have been made and the success which has resulted from these efforts in gaining souls to God.