

THE PAPACY:

ITS POSITION, POLICY, AND PROSPECTS.

By RIV. J. A. WYLIE, LL.D.\*

THESE five centuries past, the outer and inner Papacies have been running two entirely different and opposite courses. Looked at on its political side, the Papacy is seen to be undergoing a process of decay: its political props have been mouldering into dust. Looked at on its religious side, it is seen, century by century, waxing in stature and consolidating in power.

The Papacy these centuries past has been perfecting the chain of its dogmas, laying deeper and broader the foundations of its authority, and riveting its hold upon the human conscience. In short, its career has been not unlike that of man himself, when his body decays by lapse of years, while yet his mind grows in moral and intellectual strength. The body of the Papacy has been returning to the dust out of which it was taken, but its soul, loosened from the political fetters that cramped it, and relieved from the earthly burdens that weighed it down, has been shooting higher and higher into the heavens, as if to persuade men that it is instinct with an immortal life, and endowed with a god-like strength.

The Papacy attained its political noon in the days of Innocent III., in the thirteenth century. It continued to flourish in power unimpaired, and splendour undimmed, for a century longer. In the days of John Wicliffe—whose colossal figure stands at the parting of the ages, marking the point where the modern times begin to dawn—the first great blow was dealt the political power of Rome. Then it was that the famous schism fell out. There were not one but three Popes, each claiming to be the true successor of Peter, and the real Vicegerent of God, and each anathematizing the other as an undoubted impostor and a veritable Lucifer. This flagrant scandal entailed great loss of prestige on the Papacy, which it never fully recovered. The princes of Europe were now better able to make their own terms with the Tiara, and this contributed to the emancipation of the temporal from the spiritual power.

The next stroke that befel the Papacy was the Pragmatic Sanction, in France. This arrangement guaranteed the French Church in a considerable amount of independence of the Papal See, and to the same extent abridged the Pope's power in that influential kingdom.

There followed the Statutes of Provisors, of Prebend, and of Mortmain, in England. These enactments inflicted great financial as well as great political damage on the Papacy; inasmuch as in low countries of Europe had the Pope been able to reap, from year to year, so rich a revenue, or to exercise so large a measure of power, as in England. There came next the

GREAT ERA OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

The numerous and sore disasters which the Reformation brought with it to the Papacy I need not dwell upon. One-half the kingdoms of Europe revolted from under its sceptre. It was labouring to repair these immense losses, and had already recovered Bavaria, Bohemia, Hungary, and Belgium, when suddenly its sky was overcast by the darkness of the French Revolution. On the wings of that tempest came new and strange calamities to the Church of Rome. Her priests were massacred; her revenues confiscated; her dignities cast down; the very chair of her Popes was for a time suppressed—a cup all the more bitter that papal hands held it to her lips and compelled her to drink it.

The hurricane passed, and there came a pause; the wonderful recuperative energies of Rome were put forth in effacing the ravages of the tempest, and restoring the Church to something like her former estate. But the calm was treacherous. We have seen in our own days the work of despoiling the Roman Church resumed. One Italian province has been torn from the Papacy after another, and, last of all, we have seen the top-stone put upon the political humiliation of that Church in the loss of Rome, the throne of her temporal dominion, and the chief seat of her spiritual authority. And now what do we behold? A spectacle that may well fill us with amazement and awe. The political Papacy in ruins; but out of its ruins there stands up a vast spiritual colossus! Its feet more firmly planted on the earth, and its head lifted higher into the heavens than in any former age.

Let us pause and mark the great and solemn lesson taught in this to the men now living, and to the ages to come. The power of systems for good or evil lies in their hidden springs. It is eminently so with the Papacy. Its great strength lay not in the array of princes and kingdoms that stood round it, but in its inner principles. It was these, and not the swords and faggots at its service, which enabled it to blind the understanding, to affright men with imaginary terrors; to make them call evil good and good evil, to subjugate the conscience, and sink society into political and moral serfdom. But the world did not understand this; and now God is about to give us a new experience of the Papacy. He has compelled it to come out of its political organization; to stand forth naked and disembodied before the world, clothed with tremendous spiritual sanctions and attributes which enable it to awe the conscience and dominate kingdoms as much as ever. Does not this show that it was the spiritual Papacy which all along was the world's oppressor?

OUTWARD DECAY: INWARD GROWTH.

This brings us to the second branch of our subject, namely, the growth and consolidation which has been going on within, contemporaneously with decadence in the exterior of the Papacy. The increase of its spiritual forces has kept pace with the decay and waste of its political appliances. The grand aim of the Papacy from the beginning was to be as God, and to rule all men with a divine and infallible authority. It has never lost sight of this great idea, it has never parted with the hope of realizing it, it has never turned aside from the pursuit; and with a consistency and success of which there is no other example in all history, it has gone steadily onward, century after century, through defeat this hour and triumph the next, to that great consummation. But the hope of reaching that dazzling eminence it reared mainly on its spiritual, not on its earthly appliances. It knew that the fashion of the world changeth; that laws, institutions, and dynasties are mutable, that thrones may be lost by weakness or overturned by revolution, but that principles are eternal; and therefore never did it suffer check or defeat outwardly but it cast itself anew upon its fundamental and abiding principles; it refurbished and perfected those

ethereal weapons, which alone could give it such a conquest as it aimed at achieving. But for this the Papacy would have fallen long ago; it would have disappeared with the medieval kingdoms amid which it arose. But so far from this, while its companion monarchies are in the grave, the Papacy still flourishes; and here it is, engaged in a great muster of its spiritual forces, now complete in number and perfect in strength, preparatory to a more deadly encounter with Liberty and Christianity than it ever yet waged.

Let me briefly describe how this has come about, and at the same time offer a forecast of what it is likely to end in. The late pontificate—I mean that of Pius IX.—was wholly passed in recasting the dogmas of the Papacy, and in giving them their fullest possible development. Conclusions to which the Papacy had all along logically pointed, but to which no one, at least in modern times, had dared to push it, were decreed as dogmas, and marshalled in hostile array against modern society. This was the life-work of Pius IX.—I mean of the doctors and Jesuits of the Curia; for, personally the Pope himself was not equal to so great a labour. And for what end was this work undertaken? Not merely to recover the temporal sovereignty—in other words, the Papal States—a comparatively small matter; but to put the Papacy in a position to resume that far vaster temporal supremacy which the Popes of the middle ages had exercised over the whole of Christendom.

THE SYLLABUS, AND INFALLIBILITY.

In order to this it was necessary, first of all, to set full before it a world's eye, and fix deeply in the world's belief, the idea of a divine Vicegerency—a great spiritual authority on whose shoulder God had laid the government of the world, and whom He had qualified to bear so great a burden by the superhuman qualities with which He had endowed it. Hence the two great outstanding acts of the late Pontificate: I mean the proclamation of the Syllabus and the Infallibility. The first, the Syllabus, is a storehouse of the laws of the Church of Rome, as they have come at last to be stamped with the impress of perfection and unchangeableness. The second, the Infallibility, is the focus into which the whole legislation of Rome has been gathered, and whence it again radiates forth over the world in a tyranny that absorbs all rights, crushes all consciences, nullifies all laws, and dominates all kings and nations. In these two documents is presented the perfect image of that superhuman Vicegerency which, according to Papal teaching, God has set up upon the earth.

And what now is the work in hand for which this vast and careful preparation has been made? That work consists of two parts: the first is to combat the Revolution; the second is to restore the Christian State.

As regards the Revolution, which the Church of Rome declares it is one grand branch of her work to combat, it is necessary to have a correct idea of what she means by "Revolution." In the Papal vocabulary words do not mean the same things which they do in ordinary speech. The term "Revolution" in the mouth of the Pope does not denote the atheistic and destructive doctrines of Communism and Socialism, as one might suppose. Revolution in Papal phraseology is but another name for Constitutional Government. This the Pope denounces as Naturalism: because it is government on the natural principles of reason and equity, and because it brings two execrable impieties, as the Pope holds them, in its train: toleration of opinion and liberty of conscience. The German Empire is a revolution; the French Republic is a revolution; and the kingdom of Italy, with Rome for its capital, is the greatest revolution of all. This is the revolution that Rome is to combat, holding it to be a wicked and blasphemous rebellion against God, and his Vicegerent on earth.

"THE CHRISTIAN STATE."

The second part of the work now on hand is the restoration of the "Christian State." And what do the Popes mean by the Christian State? For Papal language and ordinary language, as I have just reminded you, are two different things. By the Christian State is meant simply a world governed by the Pope and the Canon law. In order to see this it is necessary to attend a moment to the doctrine of the Church of Rome on the head of Society. Society, say the theologians of that Church, may exist in two states: (1) in a state of nature; (2) in a state of grace. By Society in a state of nature they mean Society as God constituted it at the beginning, guiding itself by the light of nature and reason.

It is the mission of the Church, they tell us, to lift Society out of that low and corrupt condition, and to elevate it to a higher and holier sphere—to bring it into a state of grace. How do they do this? They begin by confiscating all merely civil rights and privileges, and by subordinating, if not wholly abolishing, all civil magistracy. And with what do they replace it? Why, with the magistracy of the Church. All the obligations which the subject owes to the law and the monarch of the country in which he lives, are subordinated or transferred to the spiritual authority; that is, to the Pope and the Canon law. The State governed by the Pope and Canon law is the Christian State; and this it is the grand object of the Vatican to restore. Constitutional government, says the Syllabus, is a revolt against the World's Divine King, whose seat is on the Seven Hills. The modern theories of liberty and authority are emanations from the pit; they are the promptings of Lucifer. It is the mission of the Church to dethrone that tyrant, and rescue society from the abyss in which he has plunged it, and place it upon the rock of the Church, where alone it can enjoy repose. Then will be seen the "Christian State." A faint image of this happy time was exhibited in the thirteenth century during the reign of Innocent III. That image will revive and be seen in the greater splendour and completeness of that kingdom over which the Popes of the future will sway their sceptre.

But how is this grand project to be realized? What are the instrumentalities which are to be put in operation for quelling this great revolt, and casting out that legion of demons which have taken possession of modern society, and which are known by the various names of constitutionalism, toleration, liberty of conscience, and so forth?

In the Syllabus we see the programme of what the future is to behold, realised: we see there the foundations traced out of that great babel which the builders of the Vatican are about to erect. But how, you ask, are the ideas and principles of the Syllabus to be rendered into facts? In order to this a great and various mechanism has been constructed, and is being put at this hour into busy operation all over Europe.

THE SCHOOL.

There is, first, the school. Wise for her own interests, the Church of Rome has taken into her own hands the education of youth, in some countries partially, in others entirely; she is training young Europe in the principles of the Syllabus. In France she has a staff of not less than 70,000 persons, male and female, engaged in the work of teaching youth. What are these 70,000 doing but binding down France in the chains of the Syllabus. In Italy and Spain the schools are worked mostly by priests and monks. In Belgium "Christian brothers" teach the boys, and nuns the girls. In Southern Germany the teachers in the schools are mostly clerical: it is the same in Austria. Here are millions and millions being reared in the Syllabus—being taught as the truth of God that all merely civil laws and civil rulers, so far as they are not in consonance with Canon law, are moral nullities, and that the Pope is the one God appointed and divine governor of the earth.

The generation now being so trained will soon have the affairs of Europe in their hands. They will be the cabinet ministers of monarchs, the legislators of kingdoms; the editors of newspapers, teachers in colleges and schools; generals in the army; and, especially, they will form the rank and file of the soldiery which will fight our future campaigns. It was the schools opened in Germany by the Jesuits that furnished the soldiers for the Thirty Years' War. The same tactics are being repeated, and a new generation, trained in the schools, will soon be seen legislating, writing, preaching, and fighting for the suppression of "Naturalism," that is, Civil Liberty, and the subjection of the world to the divine Vicegerency of the Pope; and when it has come to pass that no human being is suffered to form an opinion in morals and religion, unless in accordance with the Syllabus, then the Jesuits will sing their psalm over their completed work of restoring the "Christian State."

THE CONFESSORIAL.

The Confessorial is an ancient institution, suffered to languish in the last century, but which is again starting into new life, working with greater intensity and daily widening its range. Think of that tribunal, set up in every city, in every family, high and low, and in every bosom, and you will see what a power there is here to mould society, to write on the conscience of Europe the doctrines of the Syllabus. And think of the moral weakness of the men and women of popish countries, their manliness and virtue sapped by the teachings of their Church, and their patriotism and loyalty undermined by the pretended divine supremacy of the spiritual over the temporal power. Such a population is powerless to resist the organization and wiles of Rome. As clay in the hands of the potter, so are such men and women in the hands of the confessor.

The revival of Pilgrimages is another sign of our times, prognosticating trouble. Nothing is better fitted to fan into a flame the fanaticism of the masses of popish Europe than these pilgrimages. Lines of pilgrims on the roads of Europe have, in former times, been the sure prelude of the march of armies for the extirpation of heresy. Nothing is easier than to transform a band of devotees, with rosary and palmer-staff, into a host of crusaders, who recite their breviary, or sing their aves, clad in shirt of mail, and begirt with consecrated sword for the rooting out of heresy. A signal from the Vatican, and lo, where pilgrims are now seen every summer wending their way in peaceful guise to some favourite shrine, armed warriors would be seen marching to fight the battles of the Church.

ORDERS AND FRATERNITIES.

We see another yet more unmistakable sign that Rome, like Job's war-horse, scents the coming battle, in the revival of orders and confraternities. Numerous religious orders have been resuscitated of late, and almost all of them partake of a military character. Among these may be mentioned in particular the order of St. Dominic. To the order of St. Dominic was committed in an especial manner the task of rooting out heresy and heretics, their chief weapon being the sword, in other words, the Inquisition. It was the hordes of St. Dominic that overran the south of France, and swept away the young Protestantism of the thirteenth century in a tempest of fire and blood; and when we see that order again called out, we take it that it is for service, and that the possibility is not unthought of, of sweeping away the Protestant liberties of the nineteenth century by a similar stroke, and of re-enacting in modern Christendom the scenes of slaughter and rapine which were witnessed in Provence and Languedoc in the middle ages.

This vast military organization is subdivided into other orders, all of which are armed with the sword as the main instrument of their work. There is the confraternity of the "Sacred Heart," supposed to number a million of members; there is the "Militia of Jesus Christ"; there is the "Crusade of St. Peter." The very names breathe of war. They are borrowed from ages of violence, and they portend times of bloodshed. Besides the societies already named there is another in the French army, called the Legion of St. Maurice. It is an army within an army, and the priest is its general. The resuscitation of these orders plainly shows that WAR is the ultimate resort which Rome has in her eye. The one idea of all these societies is the doctrine of the Syllabus, and their one aim is the "restoration of the Christian state"—in other words, the wreck of modern society, and the subjection of the world to the rule of the Vatican.

(To be continued.)

DURING the first year's ministry, West Winchester, of the Rev. Dr. Moffat, twenty members had been added to the Church; \$27 had been given to the schemes of the Church. The Sabbath school has given \$50 for a scholarship to Pointe Aux Trembles. The stipend has been paid in advance. Over \$100 has been raised for the School library and other requisites. The church has been repaired and all the debt paid. The Ladies' Society has raised and expended \$75 on refurbishing the pulpit, etc., and have now on hand money for painting the outside of the church. The attendance is large and steadily increasing. May the spiritual results be equally encouraging.

THE presbytery of Lindsay met at Wick, on the 1st November, and had before them the resignation of the Rev. T. Johnston of his pastoral charge of Wick and Greenbank, on account of his having to remove to Florida for the health of Mrs. Johnston. The presbytery and congregations expressed deep regret in being necessitated to part with Mr. Johnston and sympathy with him and an earnest prayer for a blessing on him and his in their future home.

Sabbath School Work.

LESSON HELPS.

FOURTH QUARTER.

JOH. 1'S VISION OF CHRIST.

LESSON IX., November 28, Rev. i. 4-18, memorise verses 1, 4-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.—I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold I am alive for evermore.—Rev. i. 18.

TIME.—The Book of Revelation was written probably A.D. 95 or 96.

PLACE.—The Island of Patmos, in the Egean Sea, a small, rocky, island, six or eight miles long by one broad.

AUTHOR.—St. John the apostle.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION is a prophetic book, to comfort the Churches in their weakness and persecutions, with the assurance that Jesus was alive, guiding all events, and would triumph in the end, bringing complete redemption to the world.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—Seven Churches: named in ver. 11, but also typical of the whole Church. Asia: the provincial province, called Asia, in western Asia Minor. *Whi. A. 11*, etc.: the eternal Father. *The seven spirits, the Holy Spirit*: called seven as the perfect number, and representing his manifold ways of working. *5 Firstborn of the dead*: first to rise from the dead, and have a resurrection body. *6 Kings*: or a kingdom, all Christians together forming a kingdom; each one being also a king. *Priests*: to teach, to sacrifice for, to lead to God. *7 Cometh with clouds*: of attendants, or symbols of mystery. *Kinreds of the earth*: the worldly, in opposition to his kingdom. *8. Alpha and Omega*: the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. He exists from eternity to eternity. *9. Was in Patmos*. Banished there by Domitian. *10. In the spirit*: in a devotional, exalted ecstatic state of mind. *11 Smyrna*, etc.: cities of Asia, not far from Ephesus. *12. Candlesticks*: lampstands, the churches, who hold up before the world the light of Jesus. *13. Clothed*: in royal raiment. *14. Hairs white*: typical of wisdom and experience. *15. Feet like brass*: to tread down all opposition. *16. Seven stars*: the angels, ver. 20; the ministers of the Churches. *Two-edged sword*: his word. *18. He that liveth*: the Living One, the eternal God. *And was dead*: became man, and died as man dies.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The Book of Revelation.—The seven Churches.—The description of the Trinity.—Christians as kings and priests.—Patmos.—Golden candlesticks.—The seven stars.—The description of Jesus.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Who wrote the Book of Revelation? When? Where? What was its purpose? Who revealed it to John? (v. 1.)

SUBJECT. THE DIVINE JESUS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

I. THE TRIUNE GOD (vs. 4, 5).—To whom did John write? Name these seven churches. (v. 11) Where are these Churches? Was the revelation for them alone?

What two things did he ask for the Churches? From whom? How is the Father described? The Holy Spirit? Why is he spoken of as the seven spirits? Who is the third person mentioned? Prove from this lesson that he is divine?

II. THE WORK OF JESUS (vs. 5-8).—How many descriptive titles are given to Jesus in these verses? How is he the first begotten from the dead? How is he the prince of the kings of the earth? Meaning of "Alpha and Omega." How many things has he done for us, mentioned in these verses? How will he come? What is meant by his coming? (Dan. vii., 13, 14; Isa. lx., 15, 22; Rev. xxi., 1-6.) What comfort to the Church in this promise?

III. THE VOICE OF JESUS (vs. 9-11).—What troubles were upon the Churches at this time? In what three things was John their companion? What is it to be in the Spirit? What day was called the Lord's day? What did John hear? What did it say?

IV. THE VISION OF JESUS (vs. 12-18).—What is represented by the candlesticks? (vs. 20; Mat. v., 14.) Who appeared among them? What does that represent? Describe the vision of Jesus. What is symbolized by his white hair? (Rom. ii., 33, 34) By his flaming eyes? (Prov. xv., 3; Heb. ix., 13.) By his feet of burnished brass? (Dan. ix., 35) By his voice? By the two-edged sword? (Heb. iv., 12) What does all this teach us about Jesus the captain of our salvation? Why does he again declare his divinity? Meaning of v. 18.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

I. God is presented to us as the triune God, that we may have some understanding of his varied nature and relations to us.

II. Jesus Christ is (1) the witness of God's message to us; (2) the proof that there is resurrection and life for us; (3) the ruler of all earthly forces and powers; (4) our loving friend; (5) our redeemer from sin into the greatest glory.

III. He has made Christians to be kings over all earthly powers; over evil; over heavenly influences, that they may use them for the good of men.

IV. Christians are priests, to teach men, to make sacrifices for their good, to pray for them and lead them to God.

V. With a Saviour like ours, victory is certain in the end, the redemption of the whole world.

VI. Christians are light-bearers for Christ, to cause his life and teachings to shine over all the world.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole school in concert).—1. Who wrote the Book of Revelation? *ANS.* The apostle John in the Isle of Patmos, about 96 years after Christ. 2. What was the object? *ANS.* To assure the Churches that Jesus is alive, and divine, and among them, and will surely come in his kingdom. 3. What vision was shown to John? *ANS.* He saw the same Jesus who had loved us and died for us, now in his glory prepared to triumph over all evil.—*Feloulet.*

THE total contributions of the synods of New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania for the past year for home missions was \$302,962.52. New York contributed \$168,993.33 and drew out \$30,167.97; Pennsylvania contributed \$89,064.73 and drew out \$16,572.44; New Jersey contributed \$44,904.21 and drew out \$9,849.02.

\* A paper partially read at the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance at Kyoto, September 21st, 1906.