BLIND RODY, THE PIPER.

Of all the Irish pipers
That have piped both far and near,
Blind Rody had the sweetest pipes
That ever charmed the ear,
With tones so rich and mellow,
So cheery light and gay
Why, he'd make an old man dance, sir,
When he played St. Patrick's Day.

In cotamore and corduroy,
Quaint figure he was seen,
At wake, or fair or market
Or on the village green,
For when he tuned his magic pipes,
To ask what he would play,
The boys and girls would laughing ery,
"Come, give us Patrick's Day."
Like Orpheus of ancient wyth,
Like Orpheus of ancient nyth,
Who charmed the lower herd,
So Rody, with his melodies,
The gaping rustics stirred,
With Garry Owen, the Shan Van Vocht,
Reel, jig and heartsome lay,
But still, the merry listeners cried:
"Oh, give us Patrick's Day."

I see you now, blind Rody,
Though long you're with the past,
I seem to hear your piping,
Re-echoed on the blast;
For blither than the linnet's song,
Those pipe tunes, sad or gay,
But he'd make an old man young, sir,
With his glorious Patrick's Day.

J. A. S.

Leo's Wonderful Pontificate.

Speaking in February last year of the Pontifical Jubilee year then about to commence, we noted that Pius IX. and Leo XIII. were the only two Pontiffs in nearly two thousand years of history who occupied in succession the Roman See for over half a century—that is, from June, 1846, to our own time. One consequence of this extraordinary fact, as we added at the time, is that during the nineteenth century only five Supreme Pontiffs have been elected to the Chair of Peter: The two Leos, the two Piuses and Gregory XVI.—for the election of Pius VII. took place in March, 1800, and therefore belongs to the eighteenth century. Now another strking fact has been added: Pius IX. and Leo XIII. are the only two of the entire series of Roman Pontiffs who have attained the limit of the Roman Pontificate of St. Peter.

This unique fact is well worth the attention of all who study the ways of Providence in its supernatural conduct of the Church. With the close of the eighteenth century began the era of Prisoner Popes. Pius VI. and Pius VII. suffered but a brief captivity through a persecution that was Neronian; Pius IX. and Leo XIII. have, on the other hand, enhe is in his ninth decade, he has ceyears in succession through a persecution that might have been devised by Julian the Apostate. The first two endured captivity through brute force, the last two through moral constraint. All four are confessors for the liberty of the Church, oppressed, whether violently or hypocritically, under the color of civil liberty.

We were the first to note the fact, and our observation attracted the attention of many, that since the inauguration of the new era of Prisoner Popes suffering for the liberty of the Church, the Pontiffs have been blessed with a new length of days and of Pontificate. The four Popes who have thus endured captivity, whether violent or moral, have occupied the Chair of Peter for one hundred and four years, and this wonderful disposition of Providence has had, among its other fruits, that of reviving faith in the divine character of the Papacy, and of strengthening the union between the Catholic world and its Supreme Head.

In 1888 Leo XIII. celebrated with great splendor the jubilee of his priesthood, in 1893 that of his episcopate, and now, advanced though he is in his ninth decade, he has celebrated, alone of all the successors of St. Peter except Pius IX., the silver jubilee of His Supreme Pontificate. Agatho I., in the eighth century, and Gregory IX., in the thirteenth, have alone surpassed him in longevity. What wonder that the eyes of the civil and religious world are fixed in admiration on him—constrained as they are to see that the hand of Divine Providence is visibly supporting him.

But what renders this supernatural assistance still more manifest and makes of Leo XIII. an altogether exceptional Pope is the fact that he has spent the whole twenty-five years of his Pontificate shut up in the Vatican—perpetual prisoner of a hostile power seeking to enslave and humiliate him in a thousand ways, thwarting him in the free exercise of his authority and leaving him a prey to outrages of all kinds; a power which he has always fearlessly resisted on behalf of that justice which he has advocated with inflexible firmness. His constancy in the face of this persistent opposition will certainly be regarded as one of Leo's brightest distinctions in the annals of Catholicism. He will go down to history as a valiant martyr of the rights of the Church as centred in its head. For it is the cause and not the penalty that makes the martyr, and his twenty-five years of painful captivity have been supported by him not for human interests, or for worldly reasons, but "for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus," of the liberty of whose kingdom he is the custodian.

When Pope Leo was elected in the conclave of 1878, he turned pale and was on the point of rejecting the divine but difficult destiny in store for the successor of Pius IX., on account of his age and the state of his health, when Cardinal Donnet, Archbishop of Bordeaux, cried out: "Courage, Holy Father—and not Your Eminence any longer! This is a moment when you must consider not yourself but the Church and future of the world!" In other words, he was asked to sacrifice in a spirit of generosity. The manner in which he carried out his resolution he himself has revealed in two well known lines written by him on a photograph:

"Justitiam colui; certamina longa, labores
Ludibria, insidias, aspera quaeque tuli.
At fidei vindex, non flectar; pro grege Christi
Dulce pati, ipsoque in carcere dulce mori."

"I have loved justice, I have borne long assaults and toils, insults, wiles and troubles of every kind; but in defending the faith I will not yield—it is sweet to suffer for Christ's flock, nay even to die in prison."

These lines may be said to summarize the history of his glorious Pontificate, and to set forth its highest praise.

Immediately it became known that Cardinal Joachim Pecci had been raised to the Supreme Pontificate, the searchers of horoscopes began to seek for his, not in the stars, however, but in his family arms. The gleaming star and the indestructible cypress, his heraldic emblems, pointed to a future of brilliancy and strength—all the more since the people were repeating the alleged prophecy which designated the sucessor as "Crux de Cruce," as a Pontiff to be known from the emblem "Lumen in coelo," "a light in the heaven." But these and similar prophecies apart, it is certain that wisdom in ruling and strength in combating have been the salient characteristics of the reign of Leo XIII. Wisdom and strength in the interests of justice; wisdom and strength in the defense of the faith. No Pope has shed more illumination on the world by doctrine, and none had lasted so long in the defense of the rights of the Church and of the See of Peter. On these two heads he enjoys a preeminence in the series of Roman Pontiffs.

The range and variety of his teaching touches upon everything affecting the human and divine order, theory and practice, faith and piety, philosophy and theology, the salvation of public and family life, the rights and duties of rich and poor, the harmonies of the natural and the supernatural—in a word, everything affecting Christian civilization, of which he may be said to have been by his teaching the restorer. His acts, encyclicals, allocutions, briefs and discourses united together form a literature of many volumes which will remain in the Church as an everlasting monument of the unfailing preaching of truth and salvation, divinely committed and promised to the Papacy. In this respect the motto "Lumen in coelo" is certainly appropriate to Leo XIII., not as being fantastically prophetic but as being practical history. To our age, groping in the darkness of universal error, which ranges all the way from the negation of God to the negation of the human intellect, Providence has given, in the person of Leo XIII., a Pope who illuminates the world with the lightnings of universal truth. It prepared the way for him by the Vatican Council, which was destined to establish the authority of the successor of St. Peter, and then raised him up to diffuse abroad the light of truth through the darkness.

A veteran of the Catholic press, who had the honor of knowing Leo XIII. before he assumed the Tiara, finding himself at his feet some time ago, after referring to the Pontiff's unwearied zeal in the office of teaching, added: "Your Holiness will one day be called the Doctor Pope."

"Well," replied the Holy Father, "you know the character of the time when it has fallen to my lot to be Pope, and the condition to which I am reduced. The liberty of teaching is practically the only one that has been left me, and I make use of it—thank God, not without fruit."

"Another liberty has also been left to Your Holiness—because it could not be taken from you — that of claiming your sovereign rights and of protesting against the violation of the rights of St. Peter."

"Yes, indeed! I have done this and I shall continue to do it constantly and energetically, before all, great and small, letting them know that my situation is an intolerable one."

"Holy Father," resumed the other, "let me tell you one of my consolations. During all the time that I have been writing for the public I have defended the rights of the Holy See, and I have strenuously given expression to its protests. For this reason, if for no other, I trust Your Holiness will give me your blessing, as I hope that Jesus Christ will bless me when my time has come to be judged by him."

"Blessed art thou," said the Holy Father in Latin, and, raising his eyes and hands to heaven, "blessed art thou, and great is thy reward in heaven."

The Pope's manner was an eloquent proof of how highly he appreciates the work of those who labor for his cause, which is the cause of the Church of Christ.

In the verses above quoted the Pope declares that he is shut up in a prison, but ready to die there rather than yield one tittle of the faith of the rights of the See of Peter. On this point he has always been and always will be absolutely inflexible. His words on the subject to-day are the words he used when he first ascended the Papal throne. Two months after his elevation, on April 1, 1878, he declared: "To protect in the best way we can the rights and the liberty of the Holy See, we will never cease to demand that our authority be left full, free and independent—we will demand the restoration of the state of things which Divine Providence had long assigned to the Roman Pontiffs. It is no vain desire for rule or sovereignty that moves us to insist on the restoration of the temporal power—we insist on it because our duty and the solemn oaths we have sworn require this of us, and this not merely because it is necessary for the protection and maintenance of the full liberty of the spiritual power, but also because it is evident that the welfare and the salvation of the entire human family is closely bound up with the temporal power of the Apostolic See. Hence, by reason of our office, which obliges us to defend the rights of the Holy Church we cannot refrain from renewing and confirming in this letter all the declarations and protests repeatedly made by our predecessor, Pius IX., of holy memory, against the occupation of the civil power and against the violation of the rights of the Church." In a hundred other acts of his Pontificate Pope Leo has given utterance to the same principles.

This unshakeable firmness displayed by Pope Leo in repeating his claim to sovereign liberty, has raised up for him an implacable war on the part of the party which now rules Italy. Were one to detail the whole story of the annoyances, treachery and insult of which he has been the victim, a large volume might easily be filled, affording a striking proof of the practical inutility of the so-called Law of Guarantees which his enemies would like to have the world believe allows him in Rome a position of royal dignity, as well as of reverence and liberty.

Suffice it here to recall the fact that in the Conclave of Febrary, 1878, Francesco Crispi, for Home Affairs, actually arrogated to himself the right of introducing his civil officers to keep watch over it—and to do this relied on the seventh article of the same law. He was not allowed to do it—but how was he prevented? He was prevented by a fierce telegram from Bismarck, who was particularly concerned at the time that the Conclave should elect a Pope whose title should be beyond all question canonically legitimate. This fact is of itself quite sufficient to prove that the only guarantee Pope Leo could or can give the world that he is not under the control of the Government of Italy, which holds him in its hands, is the indomitable resistance he has always opposed to it—a resistance supported to some extent by powerful states whose interest require that Italy should not be allowed to go beyond a certain limit in its war on the Pope shut up in the Vatican.

Beyond this support, he is abandoned to the tyranny of the Italian Government. His august person has never been and is not now protected by the derisory law, which declares him to be "sacred and inviolable" as the King himself. While public insults and offenses committed against the humblest of citizens, to say nothing of the King, are punished with definite punishments, those committed against the Holy Father have been and continue to be privileged with impunity. An impious and licentious press publishes the vilest insults upon him and seeks to bring him into contempt by an uninterrupted series of gross and lurid caricatures. Shameless politicians, nay, even ministers of State, do not hesitate to exciee hatred and threats against him among their deluded followers. Everybody knows how the minister, Grimaldi, speaking at an official banquet given at Viterbo on August 15, 1886, denounced Leo XIII. as "the enemy of Italy," and how the ex-minister, Ruggero Bonghi, in a public speech, delivered in Treviso on October 3, 1886, stigmatized him as "the cancer of Italy." On September 20 of the same year the Holy Father was burned in effigy in the streets of Padua, and the court which tried the authors of this outrage acquitted them. People will not soon forget how Duke Torlonia was removed from his office as Mayor of Rome by an official decree dated December 30, 1887, for the crime of having sent congratulations to the Sovereign Pontiff on the occasion of his first jubilee, in which nearly all the powers of Europe took part. The insults heaped on the Pope last year on the occasion of the visit to Rome of the Shah of Persia are still fresh in the memory of all. No later than January, 1903, a professor of a government university, in making a panegyric of Victor Emanuel II., described the Pope as a "conquered animal," and for this pretty piece of oratory he was well paid by his masters.

These are merely a few instances—it would not be easy to exhaust the long story of outrages which have filled the last twenty-five years. No attempt has been made to protect the venerable person of the Pontiff, it is morally impossible for him to show himself in the streets of Rome, he has no security in his own residence, and even the secret of his Pontifical correspondence is not safe.

When you add to all this the sufferings he feels at the cruel war waged elsewhere on the Faith and the Church, it is easy to see that the hand of God must have constantly supported him to emerge fearless and strong from such a weight of trial.

This same divine assistance becomes still more manifest when one considers the unwearying activity of the Pontiff in laboring for the Church and for all that regards Christian civilization. We have already alluded to the extraordinary variety of his teaching, yet his labors for the propagation of Catholicism throughout the world by extending the hierarchy and the missionary activity of the Church, is not less wonderful. During the course of his Pontificate he has erected two patriarchal sees, thirty-four archbishoprics, one hundred and thirteen bishoprics, sixty-five vicariates apostolic and thirty-five prefectures. He has sent apostles and instituted new Christian communities in the most unexplored regions of Africa, in the most distant islands of the South and in the frozen deserts of North America. He has set the schismatic churches of the East seriously thinking about the necessity of returning to the Mother of Churches and the centre of unity. He has spared no labor, solicitude or expense in sending the messengers of God's word into all parts of the world.

In addition to all this he has studiously followed the glorious traditions of the Papacy in encouraging art, literature and science; he is recognized as a distinguished benefactor to the cause of historical research; he has added his share to the artistic glories of the Vatican; he has enriched his galleries, museums, archives and libraries; he has restored to the admiration of the artistic world priceless gems of forgotten paintings; he has re-established the astronomical observatory of the Vatican, which has now taken its place among the leading institutes of this kind in the world.

The enemies of the Church have worked with all their might to cripple the Roman Pontiff—and this is the result. The whole world has vied in doing him honor, and has covered him with flowers, gems and gold. If it is true that no Pope ever equalled Leo XIII. in the duration and character of his tribulations, it is equally true that no Pope has ever received more proofs of devotion, affection and unselfish love than he. People in all parts of the earth, the faithful and those who are outside the fold, emperors, kings, princes, heads of states have lavished honor and reverence on him. His name is the name to conjure with in the world to-dday. The Vatican in world to-day. The Vactican in vity has become a sort of sanctuary for all men who admire virtue. Thither pilgrimages have succeeded pilgrimages in an unending stream for many years past. The immense palace has proved too small to receive the multitudes that crave the sight and the blessing of Leo XIII., so that it has become necessary to admit them to the vast basilica of St. Peter. In fine, the twenty-five years' imprisonment of Leo XIII. may well be called a succession of triumphs and ovations, so that his words "dulce pati," "it is sweet to suffer," are true in another sense than that intended by him.

States crumble to pieces, dynasties disappear, but the Papacy stands ever erect amid the ruins of kingdoms and empires. For thirty-three years the anti-Christian sects have been proclaiming its downfall, with the destruction of the temporal power, yet its eternal majesty stands out as a token of mysterious events sooner or later to be realized. In the course of ages more than seventy Popes have suffered imprisonment, exile or banishment from Rome—but the hand of the Almighty has always restored them to their place. To-day the two hundred and sixty-third of their series claims the temporal power of the Papacy from his prison, and the Papacy sets its face to the future with absolute confidence in the never-failing help of God.—Translation for the New York Freeman's Journal from the Civilta Cattolica, Rome.

Catholic Bureau Of Information.

We take the following from the American Catholic press:—

Your readers will be pleased to learn that the International Catholic Truth Society has now perfected arrangements with the Catholic Bureau of Information (Central-Auskunftstelle der Katholischen Presse), the headquarters of which are in Berlin and the energetic, able superintendent of which is Mr. Ernest Kley. This Bureau was established during the latter part of the year 1900 for the sole purpose of investigating the veracity of articles, dissertations, telegraphic despatches, etc., heavily charged with anti-Catholic virus, appearing in the various secular papers of Europe.

Of late years the imperative need of some such central agency has been made apparent to all thinking Catholics of Europe of an agency which would be in a position to get at the real truth of the alleged "scandals," "rebellions in clergy," etc., and which might be in a position to give the exact truth to personal inquirers, and above all to supply with authoritative information the various Catholic papers on the continent. During its brief existence this bureau has merited the highest esteem and gratitude of thinking men by its admirable spirit of justice and impartiality. Should the facts in any reported scandal in the Church be true, they are with regret but openly and plainly admitted, but the average reader has not the slightest conception of the number, variety and malice of the canards put before the reading public of every country in Europe by the anti-Catholic daily press.

With the affiliation of this bureau the efficiency of the International Catholic Truth Society is greatly increased, because not a few of these mendacious attacks upon the Church are reprinted verbatim in numberless dailies of the United States.

It is unnecessary to dilate upon the advantages which must needs accrue to the Catholic press of this country, from this systematic intercommunication, and we ask the cooperation of Catholics at large, and particularly of the editors of our Catholic papers, to assist us in carrying out the obligations which we have assumed towards the Berlin management. As it is good for us to refute for the benefit of the Catholic people calumnies against the Catholic Church of Europe, so is it necessary for us to perform like service for the fair name of the Catholic Church of these parts frequently misrepresented in the anti-clerical organs of Europe.

The samples given in the following correspondence from Herr Kley are characteristic illustrations of the unscrupulous tactics of European papers when there is question of Catholic interests—tactics, we are sorry to say, frequently adopted by not a few editors on this side of the Atlantic.

I. C. T. S.

The anti-clerical press of entire Europe published the following incident:—

"In the small village, Coriano (Central Italy), a mad dog had bitten fourteen persons. The doctor of the village sent the head of the animal to the bacteriological institute of the University of Bologna, which found the usual indications of hydrophobia. At the instigation of the pastor, the village authorities decreed to grant those who had been bitten the sum of 1,000 lire, and to send them not to Bologna to be treated according to the Pasteur system, but to Cucullo, a place of pilgrimage, where they should be cured through St. Dominic. The pilgrims, however, returned even more sick, and one even died."

This report is an infamous calumny about the pastor and the Catholic authorities of Coriano. The pastor had nothing whatever to do with the affair. The authorities granted the victims 1,000 lire to go to Bologna for treatment. But the victims (they were eight, not fourteen, in number) of their own accord, without the knowledge of the pastor or the authorities, went not to Bologna, but to Cucullo, as their ancestors used to do in similar circumstances. All of them, without exception, returned perfectly cured, while some years ago a boy died who had been bitten by a mad dog and had been treated in proper time by the Pasteur Institute of Bologna.

(The Episcopal See of Rimini, to which Coriano belongs, sent me a declaration of the pastor, of the authorities and some local newspapers in which those who had been cured personally narrated all details.)

"Le Jour" of January 23 pictures the French Bretagne, in which at present 20,000 fishermen are in great distress, as "darkest France," claiming that it furnishes for the "Grande Republique" the largest number of spiritual congregations and of persons who can't read or write, of drunkards and criminals.

A statistical comparison between two provinces of a country can only be just if, aside from various other conditions, the comparative size of the provinces is considered. It is wrong, then, to say: In this or that country there is the greatest number of drunkards, criminals, etc., but one ought to say: In proportion to its size, such or such a country has the largest number of drunkards, etc. Taking this into consideration we may conclude:

1. That Bretagne does not contain the largest number of congregations, for there are comparatively as many in the Auvergne, in Rhone, Soire, etc. The largest number is in the department Auvergne.

2. Such as can't read or write are as numerous in the South and Southeastern France as in the Bretagne. Even in Paris there are about 30,000 children that go to no school, or do not begin to go until they are fifteen years of age.

3. The largest percentage of drunkards is found in Normandie, especially in the Department Seine inferieure; Bretagne ranks third.

4. The brooding place for crime is Paris and its suburbs, where there is little religion. The Protestant journal "Le Temps" had to acknowledge that in the good Catholic sections of France there are the best morals and the least crimes. Among such thoroughly Catholic sections of the country the "Temps" justly mentions first Bretagne, then Auvergne, Bearn, Biscaye.

During the past few months a few of the leading anti-clerical papers of every country in Europe have been endeavoring to create the impression that there exists a strong, widely developed movement among the Catholic clergy, particularly of Italy, against clerical celibacy. Thus the Berlin daily ("Berlin Tageblatt") in a recent issue gives the following despatch:

"Rome. In Apulia there has developed among the clergy a vigorous propaganda against clerical celibacy. The Bishop of Molfetta communicated with the Vatican on the subject and has suspended a number of priests from the sacred ministry."

In answer to inquiries, I have received from the Bishop of Molfetta, Mgr. Pascola Picone, the following:

1. It is absolutely untrue that there has arisen in this diocese even the slightest movement of the clergy against celibacy. 2. The Bishop of Molfetta has never communicated with the Vatican upon this subject. 3. By reason of some disciplinary offenses a few priests were recently suspended a divinis.

Can you, readers, by any stretch of imagination conceive how the above named canard could have come into existence?