

if it has been the cause of all those centuries of persecution with which they have been afflicted, has also been the secret of their national strength, has brought them untold consolation in their miseries, and has been the source of that national grandeur, the like of which no other nation can boast.

Though it is their unfaltering allegiance to the chair of Peter, that they have been stretched out on the cross of a persecution, perhaps the bitterest and most unrelenting that the world has ever beheld, yet they have never faltered in their loyalty to the Head of the Church; they have never weakened in their child-like love for him, and they have never ceased to regard that tie which binds them to Rome, as one that will never be severed, even tho' it should cost them their existence to maintain it intact.

Being a people of high ideals, a people that have always placed the spiritual above the material, a people filled with the deepest reverence for religion and everything connected with it, one of their greatest characteristics has been their devotion, and fidelity to their priests and bishops, and especially to him, who, in the place of Christ Himself, guides the destiny of our Holy Mother Church.

And so it is that to-day, when the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius X, finds himself beset on all sides by enemies, finds even those to whom the Holy See has shown the utmost consideration, solicitude and tenderness, rising up and despoiling the church of her properties and her rights,—poor, destitute, persecuted Ireland, sends message after message, to the Prisoner of the Vatican as protest against the ruthless injustice and shameless indignities that are being perpetrated against him, and as a mark of the sympathy that they bear him in the struggle that he is so nobly maintaining on behalf of the sacred charge confided to him.

Ireland, I believe, is the only nation, the public representatives of whose people have spoken boldly their indignation against the outrageous violation of the solemn compact that existed between Rome and France, and have given to the Sovereign Pontiff the pledge of whatever support it is within their power to offer him.

Throughout the length and breadth of the land, the people have spoken by the mouths of their local councils in no uncertain tone, and have given the world to understand that if Ireland possessed her national independence, Rome need have no fear whatever, that any attack would ever be made upon her with impunity by the implacable enemies of religion.