

ly promised to the faithful, who perform the supplications for mercy and compassion to Ireland, and who approach the Sacraments with the necessary faith and dispositions.

Subjoined we give a translation of the letter together with which, in transmission to the Archbishop of Dublin, it was graciously accompanied:—

“Pope Pius the Ninth, to the Most Rev. Doctor Murray, Archbishop of Dublin.

“Venerable Brother.—Health and Apostolical Benediction.

“It is sufficiently known to you, Venerable Brother, that the present calamities of Ireland have filled our heart with affliction, and excited our solicitude to relieve your suffering country.

“Accompanying this letter you will receive a new proof of our affection towards the Irish people, in a copy of our Encyclical Letter, addressed to the entire Catholic world, appointing prayers to be everywhere poured forth for the purpose of imploring the Divine Assistance for Ireland, and recommending the Faithful to contribute by their charitable donations towards the succour of the Irish people. The intensity of your sufferings, and our paternal feelings towards you, demanded so much at our hands.

“For your greater consolation we deem it right to add, that we ourselves, especially in the oblation of the Divine Sacrifice, will not fail most earnestly to implore God, who is rich in mercy, to look down from heaven, and to behold, and to visit benignly his own vineyard, so that grief and sorrow might be succeeded in Ireland by gladness and joy; and that circumstances would bring about a favorable result to those measures which her most serene Majesty the Queen had graciously designed for the good of that Kingdom. To effect this purpose with facility, and without delay, you are aware, Venerable Brother, that nothing can be of greater advantage to your country than that both Clergy and People should unite in promoting public concord, and strictly regulate their lives according to the laws of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the Catholic Church.

“We know with certainty, that you Venerable Brother, and the other Bishops of your Province, have hitherto used all diligence in this matter, and we feel persuaded you will continue to do so for the future.

“In the meantime, we impart to you most affectionately from our heart, our Apostolical Benediction.

“Given at Rome, at St. Mary Major's, in the first year of our pontificate, on the 10th of April, in the year of our Lord 1847.

(Signed)

“PIUS P. P. IX.”

“Encyclical Letter of our Most Holy Father Pope Pius the Ninth to all Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops

—to implore Divine Assistance for the Kingdom of Ireland.

“POPE PIUS IX.

“Venerable Brethren.—Health and Apostolical Benediction.

Being fully acquainted with the history of the Church, you are well aware, Venerable Brethren, that the Sovereign Pontiffs our Predecessors, have at all times manifested the tenderest and most anxious solicitude towards these Christian nations that in anywise stood in need of aid. You are equally well aware, that this salutary and most laudable anxiety embraced not merely the spiritual necessities of such people, but, extended, besides, to the relief of those public calamities where-with they were afflicted. Hereto the records of ancient (1) and modern times, as well as the recollections of our own and preceding ages bear ample witness. But who should or ought to be more conspicuous in showing forth this paternal solicitude towards every class of Christians who may require it, than they whom Catholic Faith proclaims to be the Fathers and teachers of all Christians (2)—or to whom should the people in their

calamities more naturally fly, than to those who are appointed the supreme Pastors of the Church—and whom the experience of all ages has proved to be inflamed with the charity of Christ that has pressed them?

“Moved, therefore, by the generous example of those who have preceded us, though yielding at the same time to the dictates of our own inclination—as soon as we had been first apprized that the Kingdom of Ireland had been suffering greatly for want of food, as well as for want of means to procure it, and that the people were oppressed with a frightful mass of disease, which the famine had engendered, we took every pains without delay, as far as in our power, to come to the aid of this suffering people. On which account in the City of Rome, we appointed Public Prayers to be poured forth to God, and we exhorted the Clergy and the People of Rome, as well as all those sojourning at Rome, to contribute to the relief of the Irish People. Whereupon a sum of money (of which a part was most cheerfully contributed by ourselves, and the remainder collected at Rome,) was forwarded to our venerable Brethren, the Archbishops of Ireland, to be distributed according to the exigencies of time and place, amongst their suffering fellow countrymen.

“But we have lately received, and daily still receive, such letters and accounts from Ireland, not only announcing the continuance of these calamities, but their frightful and alarming increase, that our heart has been afflicted with unspeakable grief and our exertions imperatively called for, again to afford them assistance, And in effect what exertions could be too great towards the succour of this nation, now labouring under such distress, when we remember and know, how great and lasting has ever been the reverence of the Irish Clergy and People towards the Holy See—how conspicuous their constancy, during times of greatest difficulty, in professing the Catholic religion—how untiring the zeal and labours of the Irish Clergy in propagating the Catholic religion, even in the most distant parts of the world—and with that religious devotion and ardent piety the Irish People even in our humble person revere and venerate Saint Peter, whose dignity, (to use the words of the Great Saint Leo,) does not fail, even in his unworthy successor. (3)

“Wherefore, having maturely considered this afflicting case, and having conferred with some of our Venerable Brethren, the Cardinals, thereupon we have resolved, Venerable Brethren, to forward you this letter, and to unite with you in best providing against the calamities of the Irish nation.

“On which account we recommend, that in the diocesses or districts under your controul, you should appoint three days for Public Prayers, in Churches or other holy places (as had been done in Rome) whereon the Father of Mercies would be sought to avert this dreadful calamity from Ireland as well as from the rest of Europe. And that this may be the more cheerfully and the more advantageously effected, we hereby grant an Indulgence of seven years to all those who will have been present at these Prayers even once: but to those who will have attended on each of the three days, and within that week devoutly receive the Holy Sacrament of Penance, and the Eucharist, we, impart, in virtue of our Apostolical authority, a Plenary Indulgence

“At the same time that we recommend you, Venerable Brethren, to exercise your charity in exhorting your several flocks to contribute towards the relief of the Irish people, we feel persuaded that you have no need to learn from us the power or efficacy of alms deeds, in obtaining from God the blessings of His mercy. You have, in the writings of the Holy Fathers of the Church, and particularly in the Sermons of St. Leo (4) the Great, many learned and well timed eulogies on the virtue of alms-deeds. You are, besides, aware of the celebrated letter (5) of St. Cyprian Martyr, Bishop of Carthage, written to the Bishops of Numidia, and containing a splendid testimony of the singular zeal of his faithful people, who contributed largely towards the relief of their indigent Christian brethren. You may, in like manner, remember the letter of St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, (6) to St. Constantius, Bishop, in which he writes;—that the advantage of riches should not consist in