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*Price Threepence.*

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## SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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**I**F the eldest should take precedence, then surely the Pope of Rome justly claims our first attention this month, as bishop of one of the oldest Sees, and also the most veteran of popes. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, June 16—18, were kept in Rome as a festival, to commemorate the “thirtieth anniversary of the election, creation, and coronation of Pope Pius IX.” Many pilgrims came from various parts to congratulate their spiritual father on the “auspicious occasion,” and they were duly comforted by being allowed to kiss the pontifical toe, and to receive the

pontifical blessing. Among other forms of congratulation a curious one was adopted by the Ultramontane papers. On the evening of Friday they appeared with gorgeous frontispieces, the first page of each containing a congratulatory address to the Pope, surrounded with elaborate illuminated border. The style of these may be judged by the specimen given in the *Times* from the *Osservatore Romano*, which runs as follows : "The *Osservatore Romano* to Pius IX., P. O. M., this xvi. June, mdccclxxvi., the thirtieth anniversary of his glorious exaltation of his pontificate." Then follows, veiled in Latin, the following extraordinary effusion :—

"'Rome from her Seven Hills invokes thee, Oh Michael, Prince of the Angels, guardian of the Vatican Ark. To thee, Rome, with grief deep buried in her heart, appeals, that the Lernean Hydra which has caused her so many disasters, and threatens disasters still greater, may be driven by thee to the nethermost depth of Hell, or the day will never dawn upon her fraught with the joy she desires.'"

Whether "the Lernean Hydra" typifies Victor Emmanuel it is very hard to say ; if it does, is poor Victor to be driven "to the nethermost depth of hell?" for if so, that seems poor payment for the generosity he has shown to the Pope. And what may be the "joy she desires?" If she desires to see the Pope made Prince once more, Rome can scarcely couple that event with the idea of a day "fraught with joy," for with the restoration of the temporal power of the Pope would return all those miseries from which Rome is slowly emerging under the secular government. And if Rome were insane enough to desire such a restoration, the joy would certainly belong to herself alone, for Europe would grieve to see the redemption of the people put back into the far distance by the re-establishment of priestly rule, that rule which withers all it touches, and as the blast of the pestilence withers all human life on which it breathes.

The fact is that *Rome* desires nothing of the kind, for the mass of the Romans regard *i Neri* with unmitigated hatred and disgust. The only Rome that would rejoice is the Rome of monks, priests, and cardinals, Rome ecclesiastical, the mother of all evil, the dethroned tyrant, the now-chained tigress. Not less extraordinary than the address of the *Osservatore* is the address of the Pope himself to the members of the Sacred College, an assembly, one would have thought, of too grave and stately a character to listen patiently to such ravings as these:—

“They were all, he said, in a kind of slavery, but at the same time this position, which itself could not do other than inspire sad thoughts, did not prevent them from consecrating themselves with increased alacrity to the service of the Church. It was, therefore, opportune that he should remind them of the example of Tobias. Carried into slavery, the good Israelite did not abandon himself to idle grief, but, acting with energy, aided his brethren in every way.”

The Pope may well say “*a kind of slavery*,” seeing that the slavery is purely imaginary. So far as the Pope is concerned the slavery is a voluntary one, for no one keeps him a prisoner in his vast and magnificent halls. He remains there of his own free will, and it is therefore a very peculiar “*kind of slavery*.” What sort of slavery “*they all*” are in it is impossible even to guess, as few slaves could command the wealth poured out at the feet of the Pontiff, or the pomp with which was celebrated the thirtieth year of his primacy:—

“There were many, the Pope said, who were of good heart, but who fainted beneath the weight of this continuous and calculated persecution. There were others who would reconcile Christ with Belial. These had need of enlightenment in order that they might remember that the night and the day cannot advance together in two parallel lines.”

We rub our eyes and ask if we are dreaming. “Continuous and calculated persecution.” Where is the persecution, and who are the persecuted? In

Rome? But the priestly element is supreme within its own domain, and is only prevented from persecuting outsiders. In Spain? But there priestly tyranny is growing stronger and stronger, and is undermining the new-built throne. In France? But there Rome is strong, and there also priests are only curbed when they interfere with civil matters. In Germany? But there the persecution is not a persecution of religious creed; it is only the punishment of traitors who happen to be priests, the punishment of sedition that cloaks itself as religion; the priests suffer as rebels against the authorities of the State, and the fact that a man is an ecclesiastic can never be allowed to shield him when he commits breaches of the civil law. A strange and veiled threat concluded this remarkable speech :—

“ But the day of liberty and consolation came for Tobias. Sennacherib was killed by his own sons, and Tobias was able to return to his tribe, and, let them remark, not only free to his tribe, but to all those rich possessions which were his before he was carried off from his country. They might be assured that the Church *must* triumph and the revolution perish. The fathers would kill the sons, the sons would kill their fathers, and all those born of the revolution would devour each other.”

Sennacherib must, we presume, be read as the Emperor William; but does the Pope intend to hint that the fate of the type should befall the anti-type? What is this but suggesting assassination? The words of the Pope are to thousands as the voice of God himself, and among the ignorant and fanatical these words will be read as a hint to emulate the deed of Ehud or other sainted murderers. Already the life of the hated Imperial Chancellor has been struck at by a bigot enthusiast, striking for the Church against her dreaded foe, and words such as these, spoken by the Pope, are as direct an incitement to murder as any words could be. As to the revolution perishing while the Church triumphs, the Pope sees the drama

aright but has reversed the names of the players. The Church is doomed, and her intestine divisions are slaying her, but the revolution of mind against slavery, of reason against authority, of intellect against bigotry, is triumphing in every direction, and over the ruins of the crumbled papacy shall float the banner of the Revolution, long after the ninth Pius shall have passed away from Peter's chair, and the rusted keys of heaven and hell shall have become the curiosity of the antiquary.

On the Sunday the Pope made another speech, worthy to take rank with that of the Friday. It was addressed to such of the Roman nobility who have not become imbued with Liberal ideas, and who attended to present their congratulations. The Pope began by remarking that very likely their adversaries were rejoicing as well as themselves, "inasmuch as the first lustrum of their unjust usurpation of Rome, the capital of Catholicity, has passed." After this preamble, the Pope went on to point out how all those who opposed the Church suffered for their sin in so doing :—

"Here I may be permitted for our common instruction to remind you of certain events from which it is clearly seen what are the judgments of God upon those who are unfavourable to the Holy See, and still more upon those who are against it. No one certainly has forgotten that this land, which belongs to the Church, was for several years guarded, protected, and guaranteed by two of the Catholic Powers. I do not know if political or other reasons induced those Powers one after the other to abandon us to the mercy of the fiercest enemies, the fact is they did abandon us. But when they had left the Holy See those two Powers, one after the other, had to sustain the weight of the hand of God upon them. First, they made war upon each other, and then each became subjected to those terrible evils and humiliations which all know, and which we have all lamented."

The Pope sees all through ecclesiastical spectacles. France suffered—not because she ceased to support the Pope—but because Napoleon, who had served

Rome, Napoleon, whose soldiers shot down Italy's hero, had so weakened France by keeping her in leading-strings that, when the trial-hour struck, she failed helplessly. Austria suffered because she had tyrannized over Venetia, and the shock of Italy's freedom shook her throne, and the ally of Italy crushed her in the dust. And by whom are these victories reaped? By Germany, under Bismarck, the papacy's bitterest foe! From Austria Bismarck wrenches the Imperial crown and sceptre, and gives them to Lutheran William of Prussia, enemy of Rome. From France Bismarck tears two fair provinces, and adds them to his new Empire, and chases away Emperor and Empress Eugénie, devoted servant of the Pope. If it is true that the "weight of the hand of God" falls on the Church's enemies, it is a hand weighted with gold, and land, and power, and that raises those on whom it falls to the high places of the world. The Pope further instances the fall of the Sultan Abdul-Aziz as the punishment inflicted on one who had persecuted the true Church, and who had encouraged "a handful of schismatics," and says that he "will not speak of the fearful punishment with which God has especially stricken, now one, now another, of the impious sectarians, dying in terror and fright, abandoned to the powers of infernal darkness." Thus does the Pope deal out the judgments of God on his enemies; but why does he not mete out the same measure to his friends? If fall and exile and humiliation, sent to the enemies of Rome, be a sign of the wrath of God and a punishment to them for their enmity to God's vice-gerent, are not fall, exile, and humiliation, sent to the friends of Rome, a sign of the wrath of God, and a punishment to them for their devotion to God's vice-gerent? If not, why not? Leaving Prussia on one side, the enemies of Rome have been much exalted. Victor Emmanuel has

triumphed, and has chased away the lovers of the Papacy from the petty States, and has made a united Italy. The King of Naples is an exile as much as was Napoleon; the dukes and princes of Italy have fallen, spite of their devotion to the successor of St. Peter; while his much-loved Isabella of Spain has also paid her throne as the price of her zeal for the Papacy. On the other hand, the Republic of France, which is by no means enthusiastic on the Pope's side, is flourishing mightily, and is rapidly raising France to its ancient level. On the whole, one is inclined to think that, as the judgments are so impartially distributed on both sides alike, the Pope will act most wisely in saying nothing about them, and that he had better not meddle with the meaning of the thunderbolts, lest he carry destruction among his friends as well as among his foes.

Our old friend, Christopher Wordsworth, Bishop of Lincoln, is to the fore again, once more burning his fingers over the Wesleyan difficulty. His lordship has issued a pamphlet, entitled 'Irenicum Wesleyanum,' which contains "some proposals for union which he had made to some leading Wesleyan Methodists at an amicable interview arranged by a former president of the Wesleyan Conference." It may be remembered that Bishop Wordsworth issued "a pastoral letter," some time since, to the Wesleyans in his diocese, and that this letter gave great offence, and was resented by most Wesleyans as an impertinence and an insult. The present attempt will probably meet with the same reception; but it is amusing to see the haughty Church of England on her knees, suing with Dissenters to help her by joining her body. It will not be forgotten, as an additional proof of the suitability of Dr. Wordsworth as a mediator, that it was this same Bishop of Lincoln who supported his subordinate in refusing to allow the

title of "Reverend" to be engraved on the tombstone of the daughter of a Wesleyan minister, and who put the whole Wesleyan body to the annoyance and expense of a long law-suit, in order that the Wesleyans might vindicate their right to the simple courtesy of a generally accepted title. After this exhibition of his Christian courtesy, the Wesleyans must be anxious to rush into his arms. Dr. Wordsworth thinks that "it might be possible to heal the breach and unite Methodism with the Church." (*Standard*.) He thinks further, that in the deed of 1784 Wesley showed his desire to use his association as a supplement to, not as a replacement of, the Church of England. The Bishop regards Church ministrations as of two kinds—the sacramental duties that can only be rightly discharged by a priest, and the simple ministerial duties that may be discharged by any duly-qualified layman :

"As unordained parsons are allowed, under certain conditions, to read the Holy Scriptures, and in some churches (as in Lincoln Cathedral) to say the Litany, to lead the chanting of the Psalms, and the singing of hymns, the Bishop thinks that a similar permission under the Bishop's licence might be extended farther, so that laymen might catechise, read homilies, and deliver lectures and sermons in the Church. The canons of 1603, the Act of Uniformity Amendment Act (1872), and the practice of the ancient Church, as stated by Bingham, seem to point in this direction."

Dr. Wordsworth then points out that Robert Leighton and Simon Patrick, Presbyterians, were both episcopally ordained, "a declaration being added to their letters of orders that such ordination was not intended to imply the expression of any judgment on such orders that might be supposed by some to have been previously conferred." What a curious confession! "Might be supposed to have been conferred." Verily the gift of the Holy Ghost conferred in ordination must be sadly inappreciable if, when he has come down on the ordained, his presence remains so doubtful that only "by some" he "might be sup-

posed to have been conferred." This ordination is suggested as suitable for the Wesleyans, and Dr. Wordsworth asks :—

"(1), Whether any Wesleyan ministers so ordained need be prevented remaining members of the Conference? (2), Would the Wesleyan Conference, if the bishops, recognising the vested rights of the chapels, licensed their ministers, allow the ministers and congregations of such chapels to remain in connection with the Wesleyan body? (3), Would the Wesleyan Conference recognise such chapels as places of public assembly for preaching according to the deed of declaration of 1784, and allow the congregations to resort to their respective parish churches for Holy Communion."

But what would the Wesleyans gain by accepting this "Irenicum"? In the first place their ministers would make a confession that they, and all their predecessors, had acted wrongly and irregularly, because by accepting ordination now they implicitly acknowledge that ordination is valuable, and that they therefore have, during their whole history, wrongfully and wilfully deprived their members of this useful assistance. Why should Wesleyans, who have built chapels and maintained ministers at their own cost, now come humbly, cap in hand, and ask for a licence from an Anglican Bishop? What is the licence to effect? Permission to officiate? but they officiate already. Permission to use the chapels? but they build their own chapels and support their own ministers. Allow the Church of England to interfere in their internal arrangements? Why should Wesleyans who, after opposition, persecution, and struggle, have won their way to a position of wealth, respectability, and influence, spite of the efforts of the Church of England, turn round now and give her the weight and strength of their numbers solely for her profit, and not for their own? Doubtless the Church would be glad enough to catch them, for though she scoffed at them when poor and despised, she would welcome them now that they are rich and respected. But the

memory of cast-out Wesley stands between them, and the Wesleyans would be traitors to the memory of their fathers if they joined hands with the Church which persecuted them. The Bishop of Lincoln must be content to add the 'Irenicum Wesleyanum' to the number of his many previous failures; but he is so thoroughly accustomed to them that he would be surprised at a success.

Among the many unpleasant ways in which pious zeal manifests itself to the annoyance of the carnal-minded, surely one of the most unpleasant is the donation of leaflets and cards, shoved into the unwilling hand with an oily smile. Torquay is pre-eminently a dwelling-place of these unpleasant Christians, and at the "Directory Office, Torquay," cards are sold at 1s. 6d. per hundred, bearing on one side the superscription, "Express Train." These are handed to travellers by the express, and printed on the reverse side we read:—

"Dear Friend,  
You are travelling by the fastest of all Express Trains,  
By one that *never* stops but once.  
It carries you to Heaven or Hell.  
No escape from your Train."

The information seems superfluous, for if the train "never stops but once," to use the elegant English of the original, and there is no escape from it, what is the use of saying anything about it? The "once," is, we presume, either in heaven or hell; then the train will go to the place in the direction of which the Almighty hand pushed it when first he set it going, and as there is no escape for the passenger, he can do nothing but get out at the terminus, wherever it may be. It would seem kinder to leave these unlucky passengers alone, and not worry them. Some of these efforts are poetical, such as "The Man at God's Right Hand." It seems that this man