

THE  
TEMPORAL POWER  
OF  
THE POPE  
IN  
ITS POLITICAL ASPECT.

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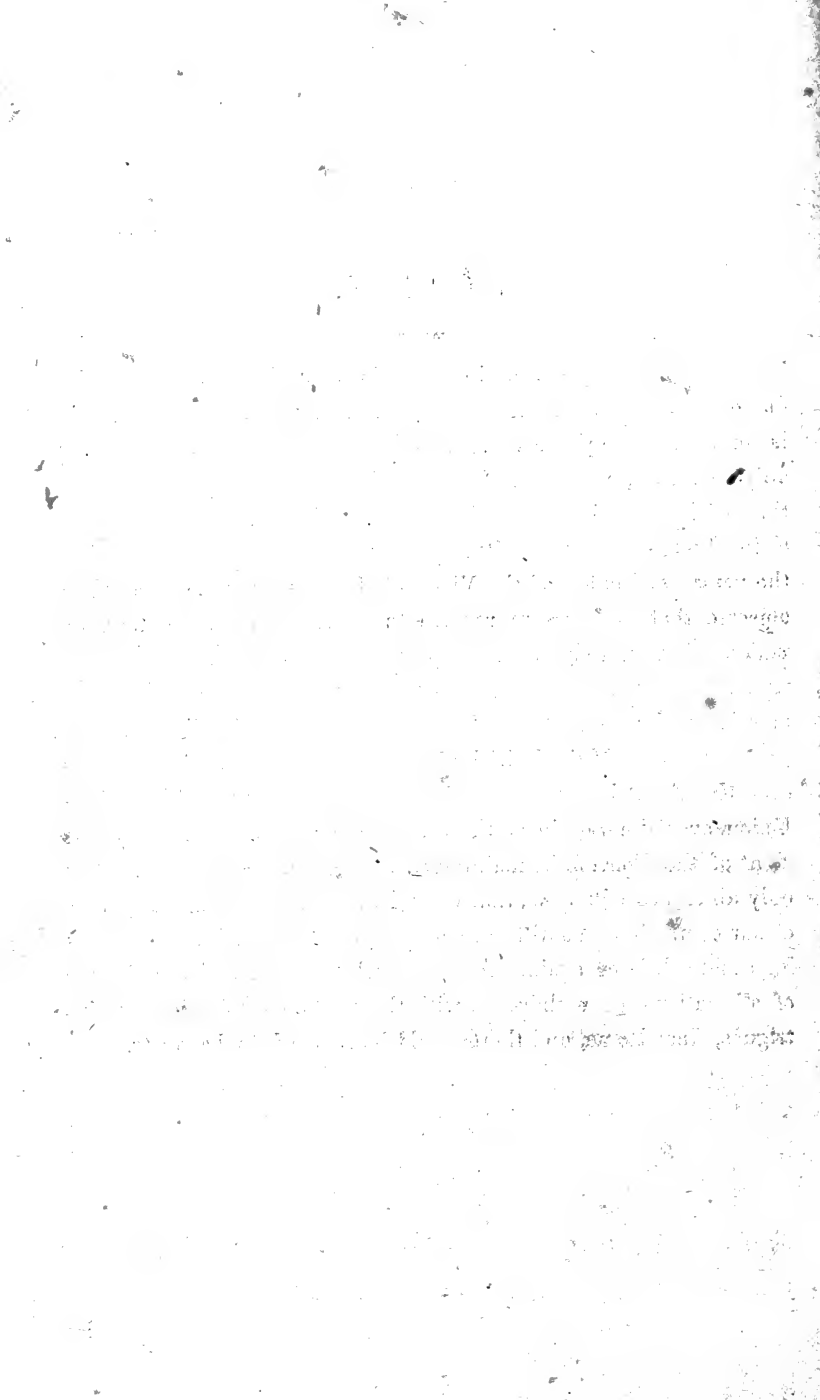
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## NOTICE.

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THE following pages contain the substance of what I said on the day of the general supplication in behalf of the Holy Father. It is confined to the political aspect of the Temporal Power, and deals only with the lowest ground on which it may be argued; namely, that of legal and political justice. I had already at other times claimed for the Temporal Power its higher sanctions, as related to the person and office of the Vicar of Jesus Christ. It was then objected that this was to remove the question from the tangible region of fact and law, to the impalpable region of faith. Without repeating what I have so often said before, I have here confined myself to the same field of argument, on which all legitimate powers repose. If the British Empire can be justified in its sway over the three kingdoms, and its dependencies, or the American Union over the Southern States, then far more surely may the right of the Pontiffs be maintained by the same arguments. The only difference I know is, that we and the Americans have bayonets of our own. The Pontiffs are unarmed. Foreign bayonets are a legitimate defence against foreign revolutions. Let the seditions of all nations be withdrawn, with their acts, conspiracies, and intrigues, from Rome, and there would be no need for bayonets.



# THE TEMPORAL POWER OF THE POPE,

ETC.

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“ Let every soul be subject to higher powers, for there is no power but from God; and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation.”—  
ROM. xii. 1-2.

To-day the Catholic Church throughout England and Scotland is united in supplication in behalf of the Sovereign Pontiff. The Festival of to-day is dear to the heart of every Catholic. It is full of memories of the conflicts and of the victories of the Church. We commemorate the Holy Rosary of the Immaculate Mother of God, to whose prayers we ascribe these interventions of Divine power. No doubt, to the world, the Festival and the supplication of to-day is a solemnity of folly. We go out to our warfare not even with a sling and stones out of the brook, but with a string of beads in the hands of little children. The Pastors and faithful of Ireland have led the way. England and Scotland close the procession with their united prayers.

I am conscious that I have to speak not only to those who are of the unity of the Catholic Church, but to those who are without; not only to those who

believe, but to those who do not believe the Catholic faith. To you who believe it I need say nothing; your faith and fervour anticipate all I can utter, and your instincts of filial love for the Holy Father need no words of mine. But to those who unhappily are not of the unity and faith of the Church I desire to speak frankly, appealing to the truths and principles which they hold in common with us. I trust and believe that the solemnity of to-day, if it does not change the mind of any, will at least clear away much misconception, and mitigate much hostility which springs from error. My confidence of this is founded on the justice of our cause, the force of truth, the honesty of Englishmen, and, whether they will or no, on the grace of God.

There are here, I conceive, two classes of men—some who believe in the Visible Church, and its mission to the world—and others who admit only a Divine Providence over the world, and the laws of morality.

Now to both of these I offer this declaration of the Apostle, that submission is due to the constituted authority of government, on the principle not of expediency alone but of conscience; and on this basis I trust to justify the Temporal Power of the Sovereign Pontiff. I affirm then (1) That the Temporal Power of the Pontiff is a power ordained of God. (2) That it stands at least upon the same basis as all other rightful authority. (3) That it is sacred by every right common to other powers, and by rights and sanctions which transcend all other authorities on earth;



and lastly (4) that it therefore cannot be resisted, nor can any one excite resistance against it, without sin against, not only political justice, but the ordinances of God. From all these I further affirm that the overthrow of that power, if it were possible, would be, in an exceptional and eminent sense, both unjust, and dangerous to the Christian civilization of the world.

1. First, then, I affirm that the overthrow of the Temporal Power of the Sovereign Pontiff would be unjust, because it is sacred as a power existing *de facto* by the ordinance of God. St. Paul declared that even the heathen empire of Rome was ordained by God, and that every one owed subjection to it. He laid it upon the conscience of Christians to obey it in all things lawful, "not only for wrath," that is, for fear of punishment, "but also for conscience' sake." And yet the empire of Rome was not only heathen, but persecuting. It was steeped in Christian blood. Nevertheless, he declares it to be a power constituted by God. As such, the Christians obeyed it with an obedience limited only by the divine law of faith. And this law of civil obedience is of universal and perpetual obligation. It is this on which, as subjects of the British Empire we bear allegiance to our own Sovereign. As Catholics, we obey not for wrath only, but for conscience' sake; it is a part of our religion to be loyal: it is a dictate of our moral sense to be obedient to the law and faithful to the Throne. If it were not so, civil obedience would be degraded from its dignity as a moral virtue, and treason would be

divested of its highest guilt. There would be no such sin as heresy, if there were not a divine authority teaching among men ; nor such a sin as schism, if there were not a divine law of unity. Heresy would be mere error of opinion, and schism a lawful freedom of separation, if it were not for the divine authority of truth and the divine law of unity. So with treason, rebellion, sedition, disaffection ; if there were not a divine sanction for authority, they would be offences against society, but not sins against God : breaches of conventional laws, but not of christian morality towards God. On what other principle is the British Empire held together ? Like the empire of Rome of old, it is heterogeneous, widespread, made up of elements the most diverse, and even conflicting, and yet bound together by one sovereignty, and by an universal bond of allegiance to the supreme power. Britain was once an anarchy of uncivilised Saxon hordes—then a heptarchy of conflicting kingdoms—then a monarchy of many peoples fused in one ; then it became an empire of three kingdoms under one Sovereign, with colonies and dependencies, and islands in every sea ; and all these dominions, in many things so opposite, are held together by one common head, to whom obedience is a duty not only for fear of punishment, but also for the law and will of God. Upon what other law can the duty of obedience be imposed by England upon Scotland and Ireland, upon India, and upon Malta ?

It is precisely upon this basis, I affirm, that the Pontiffs have claim upon the obedience of their sub-

jects, and that their subjects owe them allegiance for conscience' sake. The Temporal Power of the Popes is as manifestly and as fully ordained of God as the power of Queen Victoria. Neither the one nor the other came by *Plebiscite*, or universal suffrage, or votes of inorganic masses, but by the gradual and watchful providence of the Divine Author of human and political society. The British Empire succeeds to the Roman Empire in Britain by a direct law of Divine Providence. When the last Roman legion left the shores of Britain, it began to gravitate to a centre within itself. The British Empire of to-day is formed round that centre, and rests upon it. So, when the Emperor of Constantinople ceased to be able to protect Rome, the Vicar of Jesus Christ became its centre. The Emperor had ceased to rule, and the throne was vacant by the visitation of God. The Pontiffs reigned as pastors and as rulers, and unconsciously and by force of necessity filled the vacant throne. They have reigned in Rome, first with an informal and pastoral sovereignty, and afterwards with a full and explicit sovereignty from that time to this. On what ground then, can obedience to the sovereignty of Great Britain be claimed, if obedience to the sovereignty of the Pontiff be denied? Every sanction of Divine Providence, and of christian morals, and of political justice, confirms the Temporal Sovereignty of the Pope.

2. But further, the Temporal Power is not only a power *de facto* but *de jure*. It not only exists, but it exists by a perfect title. It is a rightful authority in

its origin, in its formation, and in its claims upon its subjects. The foundation of it is not in the donation of man, but in the ordinance of God. The donation of Constantine is a fable; but it rudely represents the divine action whereby Rome and its provinces were transferred from the Cæsars to the Pontiffs. In like manner the alleged donation of Pepin to Stephen II., is equally fabulous. The restoration of Ravenna, and other cities of the patrimony, to the Pontiff, is declared to be a *restitution*.\* Pepin required of Astolphus the

\* That the Emperors of the East forfeited, in the eighth century at latest, all authority over Rome and its provinces, and that the Pontiffs remained in sole and supreme possession; and that the Emperors of the West never possessed or pretended to sovereignty over Rome and the Pontiffs, are facts as clear as any in history. The heretical and schismatical Emperor Leo made war upon Italy, and sent a fleet to seize the person of Gregory III. He invaded and seized the patrimonies of the Holy See in Sicily and Calabria. At that time the Lombards besieged Rome. The Emperors, so far from defending it, openly declared war against it. Gregory III wrote to Charles Martel, imploring his protection; and in his own name and that of the Roman people, offered him the dignity of Consul, on the condition of assuming the office of Protector. Charles Martel and Gregory III died the same year. The Lombards seized Ravenna and the Exarchate. Pope Zachary prevailed upon the King of the Lombards to restore Ravenna and the Exarchate, which he demanded, not in the name of the Emperor, but in his own and that of the Roman Commonwealth, The King of the Lombards restored them. It is declared to be a *restitution*. Throughout the history, the words *redonavit, reconcessit, restituit*, are everywhere employed. Pope Stephen succeeded to Zachary, and in his time the Lombards, under Astolphus, once more seized the Exarchate. Stephen, in A.D. 753, sent into France to Pepin, imploring protection. Pepin and his sons,

restitution of the cities and territories taken by his predecessors from the Roman Church and commonwealth. He thereby recognises, and recites in the very document by which he made restoration, the antecedent rights which had been violated by the Lombard invaders. He gave back possession of the invaded provinces to their rightful owners, as in our day Rome was restored by the armies of France to its rightful Sovereign. When I say that Rome and its provinces were given to the Pontiffs by the donation of Divine Providence, I speak as strictly as when I say that the throne of England was given by Divine Providence to our reigning Sovereign. I will not, nor indeed in this brief time can I, trace out the gradual formation of the Temporal Power, from the time of

Charles and Carloman, bound themselves by an engagement to restore to the Holy See, the Exarchate of Ravenna and the cities seized by the Lombards. The Pope conferred on Pepin and his sons the dignity of Patrician or Protector. Pepin fulfilled his engagement. Anastasius relates the event as follows: "The most Christian prince Pepin, King of the Franks, as a true defender of the Blessed Peter (the Roman Church), and in obedience to the wholesome counsels of the Holy Pontiff, sent his envoys to Astolphus, the wicked King of the Lombards, to obtain treaties of peace, and the *restitution of rights* to the before-named Holy Church of God, and the Commonwealth." Finally, Pepin was compelled to exact the restitution by force of arms. This is called by French writers the *donation* of Pepin: the word donation being used for *restoration*. Neither Pepin, nor any of his predecessors, had ever so much as laid claim to Rome. For the full detail of these events and the quotations of the original documents, see Gosselin's *Power of the Popes, etc.* Vol. I, pp. 212—228, and the notes especially at p. 216.

the liberation of the Pontiffs from all civil subjection, through the period of inchoate government to the formal sovereignty which they have borne for a thousand years. In the five centuries which intervened between the ceasing of persecution and the full sovereignty of the Pontiffs, they held the temporal possession of their three-and-twenty patrimonies in Italy, Sicily, and Gaul, and over those patrimonies they exercised a true temporal power of government. Such was the origin of their sovereignty. Round about these patrimonies, kingdoms and commonwealths arose—the first expanding outlines of Christian Europe. Over these also the Pontiffs exercised a supreme spiritual authority in all matters of divine faith and of the moral law. The confederation of Christendom is only the full corn in the ear, the harvest which springs up from the first blade to its ripeness under the hand and eye of the Pontiffs. How could they who had received from the Pontiffs both their Christianity and their civilisation, regard them otherwise than as their fathers and guides? The light of faith taught them that the Vicar of Jesus Christ was the supreme interpreter of the truth, and the supreme expositor of the law. How could they regard them in any way as subject to the authority of their princes? The doctrines of faith, the Sacraments of grace, the unity of the Church, the supreme authority descending from one fountain of jurisdiction, bound all christian nations in one, round the patrimonies of the Pontiffs and the person of the Vicar of Jesus Christ. How could they

regard him as in any way dependent on human power, and not as superior to them all? As supreme ruler, legislator, and judge, the Pontiffs hold their sovereignty not only by a title equal to all temporal princes, but in a way eminent and singular. If there be on earth a sovereign right complete in every condition of its perfection, it is theirs.

3. And yet it has a higher sacredness. It has the confirmation of the most ancient tradition in the christian world. While as yet Britain was pagan and barbarous, and France overrun by moving hordes, and Spain hardly counted as a nation, and Germany a forest of the heathen world, the Vicars of Jesus Christ reigned in Rome as pastors and as rulers. It may be said that possession pre-supposes a rightful title. True, but not always. Possession will confirm an invalid title; nay, it will create a valid one. The titles of usurpation and revolution may by lapse of time be confirmed by long possession against all claims, except that of the Church: for its possessions are sacred and cannot be usurped without sacrilege, which no length of possession can consecrate. And if lapse of time confirm a title invalid in the beginning, how much more does it confirm, and, I will say, consecrate a title rightful in its origin and its history by every condition of justice, both human and divine?

And such is the possession of the Pontiffs over the patrimony of the Church, and such the right of rule as sovereigns over Rome and its provinces. Even the violations of this right by invaders and spoilers have

only recorded it again and again in the public law of Christendom. The imperial laws from the eighth century, the laws of all European kingdoms down to the sixteenth, and of all international diplomacy down to this day have recognised the rights of the Pontiffs to their possessions, and their independent and therefore sovereign power. It was reserved for the age of revolutions, and for the inverted political philosophy of this century, to efface the record of these rights from the public conscience of Europe.

Thus far I have argued the Temporal Power upon grounds common to all temporal authorities. It rests upon the same basis, but more securely than all, and has upon it the sanction of a Divine Providence, and of a divine protection which no other sovereignty can shew.

4. But we must go further. The right by which the Pontiff holds his temporal power is not only sacred by all the sanctions which confirm it in other sovereignties; it has a special and singular sacredness which makes it exceptional and eminent above them all. The power of temporal rule in him meets and is united with the higher authority of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, which is both divine in its origin, and supernatural in its action. I know that I am now passing beyond the bounds of politics, and entering into a region where modern politicians seem to lose their calmness and their clearness of sight. Day by day, we are told that we confound together the Spiritual and the Temporal Power; that we make the spiritual



to depend upon the possession of a strip of territory ; that we proclaim the Temporal Power to be a doctrine of faith and a part of Christianity which, if the Temporal Power be destroyed, will fall. For my own part, I never yet met any Catholic either so besotted in understanding, or so base in heart, as to fall into any of these monstrous absurdities. Nevertheless, they are repeated day by day, as by the monotonous revolution of a mill wheel, which perpetually discharges the same noisy flood. It is of no use to expostulate, to correct, to refute ; over and over again, sometimes with a variation of phrase, oftener in the very same words, the same absurdities are poured over us. Of all men, they who believe that the Spiritual Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ was derived by a direct commission from our Divine Redeemer ; that it is contained in the words, “all power in heaven and in earth is given unto me, go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations,” and “I dispose unto you a kingdom as my father hath disposed unto me,” and “thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it ;” and that the Church and the Pontiffs for three hundred years in their Spiritual Power alone conquered the world by martyrdom ; and that if the powers of the world apostatise from the Church of God, the Pontiffs will once more reign in undiminished Spiritual Power, though through persecution, and not in peace :—of all men, I say, they who believe these things, and proclaim them even to provocation, as we

do, ought to be held guiltless at least of the absurdities of confounding the Spiritual and the Temporal, or of making strips of territory, or walls of stone, the essence of Christianity, or the necessary condition of spiritual power. I doubt if men really believe these portentous figments. But they fill up space where arguments are not to be had. You who believe that the Holy Catholic Church in its unity and universality, in its supreme legislation and judicial power over the souls of men, with its perfections and gifts of indefectible life, and infallible knowledge and voice, is the kingdom of Jesus upon earth; and that the Vicars of Christ have reigned, from the hour of His ascension, over both the pastors and the flock, apart from all earthly power, and in spite of all its malice and of all its might, have no need to be told by any one, least of all by me, that we of all men distinguish the imperishable Church of God from all temporal accidents of possession and of power. Nay, more, it was the spiritual power of the Church, which, conquering all temporal antagonists, fashioned for itself by faith and law and beneficence, acting upon the reason, the conscience, and the heart of mankind, a new order, a new world with new temporal laws, and new thrones, and new tribunals of temporal sovereignty. It surrounded itself with a new apparatus for the service and welfare of men. The eternal clothed itself in the temporal, that it might mix more intimately and more effectually in the whole corporate and organic life of men and nations, with their public laws, the fountains of their

legislation, and the directions of their judges and other rulers. Such is the Temporal Power of the Pontiff; a personal freedom, and a supreme direction over men and nations in all things pertaining to the faith and law of God. And for the peaceful exercise of this supreme office, the Providence of God has formed for him a sphere into which no other sovereignty may enter; in which, therefore, because sole and supreme, he is invested with sovereign power. And of this too we are confident, that so long as a Christian world exists, so long this providential centre of its unity, the source of its Christian life will continue to exist. If the civilization of Europe ever fall back into the mere natural order, and the law and faith of Jesus Christ pass from the reason and conscience of men, then indeed the Temporal Power of His Vicar upon earth might cease. It is therefore transient only, as the Christian world may be thought to pass away. So long as it exists, the laws and relations which fashioned it will remain permanent and changeless; and he who is recognised to be Pastor and Father, Judge and Legislator over all, and Vicar of our Divine Redeemer upon earth, will hold the first place in both orders, Spiritual and Temporal, as Pontiff and as King.

5. And lastly, the temporal Power of the Sovereign Pontiff, sacred as it is by every title which consecrates the right of any ruler upon earth, confirmed by a longer possession and a more ample recognition in the law and conscience of the Christian world, and elevated by

the divine commission of the Vicar of Jesus Christ to a singular and exceptional authority, has yet this last title to the obedience of its subjects, to which no other dynasty among men can lay claim. It is a power which has never oppressed its people. In affirming the doctrine of the Apostle, that "there is no power but from God, and that whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God," I am not proclaiming what men are pleased to call the slavish doctrine of blind and immoral obedience. Rulers have their duties as well as their rights, and subjects have rights as well as duties. The ruler has a right to obedience, but he is bound by a duty to rule justly. The subject has a duty to obey, but he has also a right to justice. And the violation of the bond of their reciprocal duties is not only a crime, in both the ruler and the ruled, against society, which is an ordinance of God; but a sin against God, who is the supreme Author of society among men. It is not now the time, nor is it now my duty to define the limits of this question, or to say when or where a rightful power abdicates its claim to obedience by abuse. Tyranny, as well as rebellion, is a crime and a sin, and both have their just correction. No power can be more absolute than the law "thou shalt not kill," and yet in defence of life both an individual or a nation may take the life of a murderer or of an invading power. I am not here at this time to discuss these limits. They exist; and there are tribunals in every society of men to define them, and to try the facts both of rebellion and oppression. It is

enough for me to affirm that no Pontiff in the long line of a thousand, I may say of these fifteen hundred years, has ever abused his power, so as to relax the duty of obedience, or to purge the resistance of his subjects of the sin of rebellion. And this, which may be affirmed of the Pontiffs without fear, can be affirmed of no other line of rulers, of no other dynasty on earth. The Pontiffs have never made wars of aggression; they have never added a square foot of territory to their sacred patrimony by the blood and lives of their people; they have never swept away their homes by forest laws, nor plundered their inheritances, nor desecrated the sanctity of their homes, nor robbed them of the fruits of the earth to keep up a revenue and to live in luxury, nor wrested justice against any man, rich or poor, nor punished with oppressive and sanguinary codes, nor violated any laws of God or man to the hurt of their people. It is notorious as the light, that the sway of the Pontiffs has been mild even to indulgence, and beneficent even to the appearance of laxity. The very charges against it are that it does not drive on with the world, and strain in the race of material inventions. It has prisons because it hardly ever erects a scaffold; and lives that in any other country would have been peremptorily cut off are there benignly spared. Such is the character of the Temporal Power in its government. Its very clemency has emboldened those with whom it has dealt in excess of mercy, to despise it. The first amnesty was followed by the first conspiracy, and those who were conspicuous as

objects of pardon were conspicuous as the ringleaders of sedition. After a reign of twenty turbulent years, and in the midst of incessant provocations, Pius the Ninth may ask of his people in his own name, and in the name of the Pontiffs who have reigned before him: "Whom have I wronged, or on whom has the weight of my authority borne heavily? If any one be aggrieved by me let him rise up and bear his witness against me." I will be bold to say that no accuser will be found except they whose witness, as those of old, will not agree together. Men are now acknowledging that the rising against the government of the Pontiff is not because Pius the Ninth is a bad ruler, nor because his government is a bad government, nor because he has violated the law of mercy and justice, but because his subjects are resolved not to be governed by him. That is to say, "we will not have this man to reign over us." If this be not treason, if this be not rebellion, let some one tell me what rebellion and treason are. If people are to be told that they may change their government as they may change their garments, that civil allegiance depends upon their liking, or that dynasties may be overthrown and monarchies dismembered upon such causes as this, let them lay to heart what ears are listening. This is a doctrine which will find a ready faith to believe and practise it among a people not far off. And upon those who preach this gospel of revolution, I, as a pastor, am bound to declare that the sin of instigating rebellion rests, and that all who act upon such doctrine abroad or at home are rebels.

The sum then of the matter is this:—There is not a title of fact, or right, or possession, by which any crowned head holds authority over its people which does not unite in the largest and profoundest sense in the person of the Pontiff. But more than this: besides these titles common to all rightful sovereignties, there are two of a higher nature, the sacred character of the person who bears this lesser authority, and the justice, clemency, and mercy, which have marked its administration throughout the course of ages. The subjects of such a power have an inheritance of peace above all people upon earth. It is not disfranchisement to be exempted from the instabilities of the world and from the turbulence of revolution. They have a higher dignity and a nobler freedom than that of parliaments and political contentions; and they who excite them to discontent, and to rebellion, rob them of a higher inheritance, and fall under the condemnation of those who resist the ordinance of God.

So much for the injustice of this warfare against the Vicar of Jesus Christ. I said also that it is most dangerous to the peace of nations. Injustice must be dangerous: prosper as it may, its end is confusion. But time forbids me to add what I had intended to say. All I can do is to touch the mere outline of what would follow upon the dissolution, if that could be, of the Temporal Power of the Pontiffs. But first let me once for all, or rather once more for the thousandth time, sweep away the absurdity imputed to us, day by day, that we make the Temporal Power a

part of Christianity, and that if it were overthrown Christianity would fall with it. This surpasses even the extravagance of controversy. We do believe, indeed, that the dissolution of the two-fold authority of the Pontiff would strike out the key stone of Christendom ; that is, of the two-fold order of Christianity and civilization which for a thousand years has sustained the commonwealth of Europe. We believe that then Christianity would stand alone, on its own divine and imperishable basis ; and that civilization without Christianity would return to the natural order, and to the spiritual death out of which Christianity raised it to life.

It is no question of what God could do, or might do, or may do hereafter, for the future of the world. We are as full of faith in the inexhaustible wisdom of Divine Providence as our adversaries ; but this we affirm, that it is by this two-fold contact that the Church acts upon the Christianity and the civilization of mankind ; that so long as Christianity acts alone, it acts upon individuals one by one, as in the ages before Constantine ; that so soon as it acts upon races, legislatures, rulers, kingdoms, upon the public law and organic life of nations, the Temporal Power is its legitimate offspring and result. To undo this, is to go backward, not onward. It is to dissolve the work of Christianity upon the world, not to advance it ; to pull down, not to build up, the intellectual and moral perfection of human society. We affirm also that this retrogression and divorce of the spiritual and civil



societies of the world would desecrate the civil powers of the world. They would cease to recognise, as they have already to a great extent, the Christian law, the unity of faith, worship, communion, or authority, as principles of their public order.

And this would speedily bring on collision between the two powers always in presence of each other, each claiming to be supreme, with no arbiter or tribunal, no third and impartial judge to define the limits of their jurisdiction or the sphere of their competence. And this conflict could end only in the worst form of human government, that is, in despotism, or the union of temporal and spiritual supremacy in the civil power, which has ever been the fountain of persecution, of heresy, and of schism. The two powers, spiritual and temporal, are providentially united in Rome that they may be separated everywhere else in the kingdoms of the world. And it is this separation which has secured the two great conditions of human happiness, the liberty of the soul from all human authority, and the limitation of civil authority in its action upon its subjects. The history of Constantinople, of Russia, of England, and of France, suffices to prove that the power of monarchs is limited while the Church is free, and is despotic when it is fettered or opposed. The civil principedom of the Pontiffs therefore is, as Pius IX. has declared, the condition of Divine Providence to ensure and perpetuate the freedom of the Church in its Head.

Lastly, nothing is more largely written in history than that despotisms generate revolutions. When civil

power becomes oppressive, men are driven to dangerous resolves. Into this I will not enter. I am no prophet; but the history of Europe reads us a lesson in the past which we shall do well to lay to heart as a warning for the future. Whosoever dissolves the bonds of christian law and unity brings in the spirit of lawlessness which is the tendency of all the national currents of this time. Society, to save itself, cowers under military despotisms which generate reactions; and reactions, unless tempered and restrained by the Christian law, are the fore-runners of anarchy. There are signs enough, not only in the sky but upon every country of the old world and of the new, warning us not to destroy the feeblest bond of our social stability, still less to strike out the key-stone of the arch which hangs tremulously over our heads.

Such then is the intention of our supplication to-day. God has so ordained that His Church should be always beaten by the water floods. The red surges of persecution were followed by the inundations of barbarous hordes; then came floods of heresy, and of Cæsarism, and of imperial tyranny and corruption; then the hosts of the infidel, which reached to all the shores of Christendom; now the revolutions which are one and universal, spreading through the nations and rising round the walls of Rome. But wave after wave has swept by, turned by the sea-wall which God has built, not man; the Rock immoveable. For this we pray, and for this we confidently wait. It is but one more of the thousand waves which are spent and gone. The

Vicar of our Divine Redeemer for these twenty years of his great Pontificate has been sitting all alone upon the hill-top, "awaiting the events" which God has permitted. The world has passed him by, wagging its head, and men have been "casting lots upon his garments, what every man should take." But the words of his Master are sure, *post tres dies resurgam*, "after three days I will rise again." Pray, then, to the Eternal Son of God reigning in the midst of us, manifested in the Sacrament of His power. The world is trying its strength with Him: armed in its might, intoxicated with its masteries over the earth which He has made. But there are powers above those of war and of destruction, greater than the laws and agencies of electricity and gravitation, which control this lower world, and of man himself even when he boasts of his mastery; there is the Word of God and the power of His might, and they are set in motion by the prayer of faith. "All things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer believing, you shall receive." St. Matt. xxi. 22. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." St. Luke, xxi. 32.

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