

however, temporary expedients to meet anticipated attempts by usurping Powers to interfere with the freedom of papal elections. In no case, however, is the beginning of the conclave delayed beyond ten days; and no Cardinal, no group of Cardinals, and not even the Sacred College of Cardinals collectively, can, unless by virtue of Papal instructions, either anticipate or defer the date of the appointment of a successor to a Pope that has passed away. A cableman in Sydney 'corrected' a few days ago the previous blunder about Cardinal Moran's right to postpone the conclave. With the serene good faith of one who believes that he has exclusive and accurate information and is anxious to impart it for the enlightenment of others, this new authority on conclaves informed the people of New Zealand that the new Pope must be actually elected within the ten days! This and a few other tit-bits of information about conclaves that have lately appeared in the secular press of New Zealand would form interesting additions to David Macrae's 'Book of Blunders.'

Leo as a Worker

We read in the life of the great painter-sculptor-architect Michelangelo that 'he was the most indefatigable of workers. A little bread and wine were all he required for the chief part of the day, when employed at his work, and very frequently he rose in the middle of the night to resume his labors. . . . Sometimes he slept in his clothes, ready to spring to his work as soon as refreshed by sleep.' Such an enthusiast for work is the aged and venerable Pontiff Leo XIII. Like Michelangelo he is a model of plain living and high thinking. Many a time the wee, sma' hours have seen his frail form bending over the desk, and the thin, bony hand guiding the flying pen. He has lived a life of crowded hours, and his motto seems to be: 'And still be doing, never done.' His love of work manifested itself in a pathetic way when, during the course of last week, he rose from what he felt was his death-bed to transact the business of the Universal Church, when, two or three days later, though apparently in extremis, he carried on a lengthy interview with his Cardinal Secretary of State, and when, later still, he expressed his determination to die on his feet. Acting on St. Paul's advice, he wearies not in doing good. While time is left to him, he works good to all men, 'but especially to those who are of the household of the faith.'

The following extract from a little poem seems to have a special application to Leo XIII.:

'If some great angel spoke to me to-night
In awful language of the unknown land,
Bidding me choose from treasures infinite,
From goodly gits and glories in his hand,
The thing I coveted, what should I take? . . .
I would choose work and never-failing power
To work without weak hindrance by the way,
Without recurrence of the weary hour
When tired tyrant nature holds its sway
Over the brain and toiling hand
Ah! if an angel came to me to-night,
Speaking in language of the unknown land,
So would I choose from treasures infinite
But well I know the blessed gift I crave,
The tireless strength for never-ending task,
Is not for this life, but beyond the grave,
It may be, I shall find the thing I ask;
For I believe there is a better land,
Where will, and strength and work go hand in hand'

'My Father worketh hitherto' (that is, unceasingly); 'and I work.' So the Savior spake. When His blessed ones were upon the earth, they were his assistants and laborers for one another. They were 'faithful in a few things' here, in heaven they are 'placed over many things.' They do not laze and daze and fritter the shining hours away. Like their Creator, they work unceasingly—worshipping Him with never-ending hosannas of praise, and—being still bound to us by a bond of affection—loving us and praying for us with a greater power than when they were clothed in the imperfections of the flesh.

A Gallant Officer

One of the most dashing and determined officers in the British army is Major Paul Aloysius Kenna, V.C. He is a Catholic, a nephew of Cardinal Moran, and an ex-pupil of the great Jesuit College of Stonyhurst. He is at present with the British troops in Somaliland, and his permanent address there is wherever the toughest

fighting has to be done, and reckless gallantry is the order of the day. His name has been conspicuously before the British public for some time past for the extraordinary skill and daring with which, on several occasions, he has rescued the British troops from positions of great and pressing danger. 'His name,' says 'T.A.T.,' a new London weekly, 'is a household word in India as that of the most accomplished sportsman the British army has recently produced; while here, there, and everywhere where the annals of the army make their way he is celebrated as a gallant and brilliant soldier. His Victoria Cross was gallantly earned, as was the Royal Humane Society's certificate for life-saving in the Liffey in 1895. That was the most eventful, the happiest, and the saddest year of his life. He married, and lost by death, within a few months, the daughter of the Earl of Abingdon. Since then he has worked hard to obliterate gnawing sorrow, and has engaged in a thousand hazardous enterprises, in pursuit of savage animals, in the hunting and polo field, in the racing saddle, and on the battlefield. His most recent exploits in Somaliland keep fresh in mind his notable soldierly qualities.'

Rotten Sticks

The assailant whose sole weapon is a rotten stick must be thankful if he comes out of the tussle with nothing worse than a pair of black eyes and a new set of phrenological bumps. Now, the rotten stick is the customary argument of the more aggressive Protestant controversialist against the Catholic Church. Over and over again our columns have demonstrated that garbled extracts, misquotations, and even downright forgeries form the staple of the usual attacks upon the Catholic Church. Some weeks ago the 'Bombay Catholic Examiner' exploded a hoax-letter which the 'Friend of Malabar' had with an intolerable deal of parade and drum-beating, falsely attributed to Pope Julius III. In the course of its remarks, our valued Bombay contemporary emphasises a point to which forcible reference has been made by us from time to time both in our own columns and in those of the secular press.

'The editor of the "Malabar Friend" says the "Examiner," seems to be entirely in good faith about the matter. That is in one way a good thing; but in another that is just the worst of it. The Protestant journalist is victimised by the second or fifth-hand sources he uses, and he has no idea how Protestant controversialist literature is just as badly honeycombed—literally riddled—with false and garbled quotations and groundless canards, as a pine plank is honeycombed and riddled with white ants. As soon as you open it up and look inside you find it a hollow shell. We have been engaged in opening it out for some years now; and so invariable is the result that one can prophesy beforehand about it, just as we can calculate an eclipse. There seems to be a sort of fatality about it. There are plenty of nasty things to be said about Catholic affairs which are true—as is natural wherever human beings are concerned, and if these are brought forward they cannot be denied, but only explained or put in a reasonable light, or condemned by us as they are condemned by them. But it seems as if Protestants never can get a grip of the proper story. Their feet always follow their hands in one way or another. They always take hold of a false story instead of a true one. Hence controversy as a rule resolves itself into a sort of hunt, with a hoax at the end of it. The constantly repeated publication of these bogus charges must be recognised by all honest men as throwing dust in the eyes of the public. A Protestant may still think that the Catholic Church does not treat the Bible fairly or according to its merits. But if so, he surely wishes to base his position on facts, not on fictions. Yet there is hardly a Protestant controversialist who exercises the least discretion as to the data he avers; and in almost every case there is a manifest falsity either in the evidence or in the interpretation of it. We have not the least dislike for seeing a case made out against us provided it is true and fair. We can accept the facts and explain ourselves to the best of our ability. But in the name of truth and fairness we do protest against the sort of thing which usually comes our way, and we are sure that if our "Friend of Malabar" realised the situation a little better he would begin to protest as loudly as we do.'