

surd that 'a prophet, believing himself to be divinely inspired, should include in his visions of the future not only the lawful Popes, but the anti-Popes as well, and that he should designate by preposterous names, such as 'bellua insatiabilis' ('insatiable monster'), or 'animal rurale' ('the beast of the field') some of the gentlest and holiest of the Pontiffs.' (3) More curious still is the method of 'interpretation' of the mottoes of the Popes that preceded, and of those that followed, the publication of the supposed prophecies. Down to the then reigning Pontiff (Urban VII, who was elected in 1590, five years before Wion's work saw the light) the 'interpretation' of the mottoes was supplied by facts which preceded the election of each Cardinal in question to the Papal chair. 'But,' says Father Thurston, 'when we proceed to try to interpret the mottoes of the Popes subsequent to 1595, we find that the vast majority are uncertain, vague, extravagantly far-fetched, hardly any two commentators agreeing as to how the particular motto is to be brought into connection with the Pope it ought to fit. True it is that there seem to be just a few happy hits, but these hits are obtained in every case by applying the motto, not to the antecedents of the Pope in question, but to the events of his pontificate. "Peregrinus Apostolicus" ("the apostolic pilgrim") seems, no doubt, a suitable device for the exiled Pius VI., as Pope, not to Pius VI. as Cardinal. "Aquila rapax" ("the rapacious eagle") does not seem a pretty name for a Pontiff like Pius VII., and the commentators refer it to the Imperial eagle of his oppressor, Napoleon; but it has obviously nothing to do with the gentle Cardinal Chiaramonte before his election.' The mottoes applied to Pius IX. ("Crux de cruce"—"the cross from the cross") and the lately deceased Pope, Leo XIII. ("Lumen de coelo"—"The light in heaven") are, says the same learned Jesuit Father, mere coincidences 'which will have little to astonish those who consider the five hundred salient features which even the most uneventful pontificate supplies, as well as the protean mutability of application of all such mystic utterances.'

(4) But the most decisive proof which Catholic writers advance against St. Malachy's authorship of the supposed prophetic mottoes that have been made to bear his name, is this: that they are based entirely upon the incorrect and blundering printed list of Popes published by Panvinio in 1575. Panvinio gives equal prominence to Popes and anti-Popes. So do the mottoes. Furthermore, the order of succession as given by Panvinio is to be found in no other writer—except in the alleged prophecies of St. Malachy. Panvinio omits the anti-Pope who called himself Innocent III. So does the pseudo-Malachy. Panvinio transposes the names of the two anti-Popes who were styled Pascal III. and Calixtus III. So does the pseudo-Malachy. Panvinio gives the family name, Christian name, birth-place, titles, and engraved coats-of-arms of the various Popes on his list. The pretended prophecies follow Panvinio even down to the blunders which he makes regarding the family name and occupation of Pope John XXII. and the coats-of-arms of several Popes such as Clement IV., Gregory X., and Martin IV. Learned Catholic writers have over and over again demonstrated the non-genuineness of the alleged Malachy prophecies, and the notice into which they have sprung in some New Zealand dailies in consequence of the recent illness and death of the late illustrious Pontiff, has induced us to lay these facts before our readers and thus incidentally to vindicate the memory of one of the greatest of the long line of Catholic Archbishops of Armagh.

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Notes

The Coming Conclave

In our next issue we purpose giving a full and authentic account of the process of electing a successor to the late beloved and venerated Pontiff Leo XIII. Among other details we will place before our readers type-facsimiles of the various forms of ballot-papers used in the Conclave. Our readers—many of whom have probably perused misleading summary accounts of the Conclave in the secular press—will, no doubt, welcome an authoritative statement of the proceedings of this most remarkable elective assembly in the world.

An Idle Rumor

Rumors and reports and conjectures are falling as thick as leaves in Vallombrosa around the death-bed of Leo XIII. Here is one from London that appeared in Tuesday's daily papers:—

'Surprise is expressed in Paris and Rome at the Pope's reported delegation of extensive spiritual powers to Cardinal Rampolla. It is alleged that it is unprecedented for a Pope to delegate powers when in articulo mortis.'

The unprecedented thing would be the delegation of spiritual powers, whether extensive or otherwise, to his Cardinal Secretary of State by Pope Leo XIII. On the death of a Pope all offices held by the Cardinals, three alone excepted, are thereby rendered vacant. The Cardinal Camerlingo (that is, the Cardinal Chamberlain), as chief of the Church in temporal matters, the Cardinal Penitentiary, for obvious reasons, and the Cardinal-Vicar, as administrator of the diocese of Rome in ecclesiastical matters, alone retain office. By the long-established laws and usages of the Vatican, therefore, Cardinal Rampolla, the Papal Secretary of State, dropped out of office as soon as Leo passed away. The Cardinal Chamberlain (Cardinal Oreglia di S. Stefano) has a life-appointment. He holds, by virtue of his office, the 'sceptre of regency' The chief of his solemn and responsible duties began with the Pontiff's death. He assumed control of the Vatican, is regent or chief administrator of the Church until a new occupant has been chosen for the Chair of St. Peter; and to him, if to any, the 'extensive spiritual powers' referred to in the quoted cable would naturally be delegated by the dying Pope. But the story of such special delegation is, in the present circumstances of the Holy See, so extremely improbable that it may be dismissed as one of the fantastic tricks that the imagination of secular journalists is apt to play around the bier of a defunct Pontiff.

LAST DAYS OF THE POPE

WORLD-WIDE SYMPATHY

WHAT NEW ZEALAND CATHOLICS ARE DOING

The marvellous vitality displayed by the Pope during the greater part of his last illness of seventeen days buoyed many up with the hope that he would be the victor for a time in the wrestle with death and live on for yet a time to fill the throne that he has graced by his many virtues. On Saturday Drs. Lapponi and Mazzoni reported him out of danger, and for a brief space hope told a flattering tale. Then came, on Monday, messages telling of restlessness, of deep depression, extremeunction, and the other last solemn rites for the dying. The final struggle had commenced at 10 o'clock on Sunday evening. By noon on Monday there was a marked change for the worse in the condition of the illustrious patient. The Cardinals were summoned, and Cardinal Vannutelli recited the prayers for the dying. Mons. Pifferi, the Pope's sacristan, gave absolution. There was but little sign of consciousness till the Pope's three nephews knelt at the bedside. Then by a supreme effort the Pope raised his hand in the act of blessing, repeating the gesture in the direction of the Cardinals

GEO. T WHITE

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