

THE VATICAN'S DOOM

LATEST MASONIC IDEAL OF THE COMING TIME

In the event of war between France and Italy, the first reversal of Italian arms would be in the possession of the Papal Palace.

Among the sinister possibilities arising from the Italian occupation of Rome to which lukewarm Catholics deliberately blind themselves is the position in which it would place the Vatican in case of a war in which Italy figured as a belligerent. The Catholic world has indeed unremittently pointed out the unseemly and hazardous complications created by the exposure of the supreme sanctuary of religion to all the vicissitudes of internal disorder or foreign invasion to the existence of the secular state, which claims its guardianship while usurping its inheritance.

In our pages, as in those of our contemporaries, the danger has repeatedly been set forth of the pope, held, as it were, as a hostage by Italy in its own capital, falling the first victim to the rage and fury of the unruly populace of Rome in case of a reverse to the Italian arms in the field. The Italian government, impotent to put down the most paltry riot in the streets during profound peace, would be absolutely incapable of protecting its venerable prisoner from such an outbreak of frenzy as would then be unleashed against one habitually held up to obloquy as a public enemy.

In such a war the future of the papacy would undoubtedly be the stake of battle, and the fact that the Italian defeat was to its profit would be sufficient to involve it, though bound and helpless, in the odium of the hostile triumph. Yet these considerations, when urged on Catholics have been treated as bogys of clerical journalism or hallucinations of the devout imagination. Perhaps they will be received with more attention when emanated by one of the organs of Italian Freemasonry, untroubled with any suspicion of sympathy for the august victim of the catastrophe it predicts.

The Caffaro of Genoa, in its supplement to its number of Sept. 25, deals with this very question in a suggestive article, throwing a lurid light on the aims and views of the sect it represents. After pointing out the "great and almost inevitable probability of a collision between France and Italy, immediate or remote," it discusses the position and action of the pope in such an event.

The possibility of his leaving Rome is first considered, with regard to which the writer candidly acknowledges the choice would not remain with him, but with his captors. "It is easily comprehensible," he declares, "that the abandonment of Rome would depend not alone on his own will, but on the assent or dissent of the government, which, having the power to sanction or forbid it, would undoubtedly act in the manner it deemed most conformable to its interests and to the general policy of the country."

Re-enforcing its argument from history, it adds the unquestionable truth that many popes in the long story of the papacy have been "either actual prisoners, kept in strict custody, or held as hostages." We commend to the study of our readers the Masonic journal's anticipation of the probable result in the paragraph that follows: "Leo XIII thus remains, we will suppose, in the Vatican, while the armies meet in battle. The fate of war has always and will always be an uncertainty, and he who should refuse to admit the possibility of a reverse on our side would not be very well advised. Now when the news reached Rome of a will not say the loss of a pitched battle, but of the first check to our forces, what would follow? Plainly this—that of the Vatican there would not be left a stone upon a stone, nor would any official force avail to guarantee the lives of its inmates."

Here we have the latest Masonic ideal of the coming time, the pope no longer a guest, but a martyr, while we need hardly point out how fully the Catholic contention that he is the virtual prisoner of the Italian government, enjoying only on sufferance the little liberty conceded to him, is accepted by the mouthpiece of his enemies. The party of the revolution, foiled in its impious project of accomplishing the annihilation of religion by the overthrow of the temporal power, is filled with increasing hatred of the institution which it regards as the obstacle in its path. Their designs are mocked and frustrated by the survival in undiminished force and splendor of the spiritual authority which they fondly imagined was bound up with the principality of Rome and of the states of the church.

Hence the possibility of a catastrophe which would make their country infamous to all time is now foreshadowed by them with a certain satanic satisfaction as the occasion for wreaking their malice on the representative of a force they had proved their impotence to subdue. The person of the pope is at least in their keeping, if his authority eludes destruction, and the palace and the temple, which are the tangible symbols of his intangible empire, can suffer the demolition that empire escapes. This new attitude of the enemies of the church has been foreshadowed in some of their earlier utterances, and a recent number of The Unita Cattolica gives an appropriate quotation from The Riforma of Oct. 30, 1886, which is not without significance in the light it throws on the present situation:

"The pacific conquest (of Rome) has been powerless to effect what the daring revolution had dreamed of in anticipation. In 1849 the profound idea had taken root in the minds of two or three individuals while walking the streets of Rome that, when a religion has ceased to be anything more than a rite, if you destroy its altar the religion will fall. And this is, without doubt, which our party will entertain again and which our

predecessors have unanimously professed. When the Roman conquerors wished to insure the subjugation of a conquered people, they razed its cities to the earth, and rebuilt them on the same site in their own fashion. We moderns, on the other hand, not only protect the temples and altars of a vanishing religion which persist in swearing implacable hatred to us, but build it new ones! Can you not imagine how the problem of the reconstruction of Rome would have been simplified if the idea of two of the triumvirs of the last Roman republic, of 'blowing up the mosque,' before surrendering the city to the advancing 'red legs,' had been carried into execution? And how much would not the Vatican question, properly so called, have been facilitated had not Alberto Mario, on the announcement that one of the four great arches of St. Peter's had been mined, opposed the intended attempt with a shudder at the colossal sacrilege?"

That Rome cannot be permanently held by united Italy without a war for its possession is a conviction deeply rooted in the minds of Italian Liberals, and their declarations to that effect have been repeatedly quoted in these pages. The resentment of France for the advantage taken by Italy of her misfortune has smoldered for 23 years without being any nearer to extinction than when the deed that excited it was recent history, and The Falchetto, writing on the day after its latest anniversary, acknowledges this fact in the following terms: "The hatred and contempt in which we are held by the French; whether Imperialists, Orleansists or Republicans, date from 1870, and their roots are twined in the wall of Fort Pia, exactly on the spot where the breach was opened and Italy passed through."

Since the recovery of France from her disaster the political action of Italy has been inspired by a single motive, fear lest her prize should be wrested from her. It is this chronic alarm which has driven her to blind panic into the triple alliance and urges her to the maintenance of those costly and crushing armaments which have been the destruction of her material well-being. Economy in face of her, yet she dare not disarm in face of the red specter of war that haunts the dreams of her statesmen and people. An eminent French economist, M. Antoine Leroy-Beaulieu, in a recent article, shows her bankruptcy to be imminent, and the organ of her Austrian ally, The Neue Tagblatt of Vienna, writes in the same strain, declaring that only by fresh taxation can she be rescued from the abyss on the edge of which she is suspended. The acceptance of this drastic remedy is said to be the condition on which the financiers of Berlin will consent to subscribe a new loan of 600,000,000 francs required to stave off the catastrophe. Her financial condition is believed by many well informed persons on the continent to be an element of danger for the peace of Europe, rendering war itself a more tolerable alternative than the present strain on her resources.

An "eminent foreigner," interviewed by the correspondent of The Gazzetta di Torino, has expressed himself in this sense, declaring that Italy has entered on a period of moral and material decadence, which will render her position at the end of some years still more equivocal than at present. Her German ally, he goes on to assert, are fully aware of her critical state and may be driven by this knowledge to hasten on a catastrophe which they regard as the inevitable prelude to "a new, rational and stable reorganization of Europe." The tightening of the bonds between Russia and France and the increasing ill will between the latter country and Italy, signified among other indications by the presence of the Prince of Naples at the German maneuvers in Lorraine and the proposed assignment of an Italian port for the refitting of German vessels, are incidents which may point to the same conclusion.

Thus the event which the enemies of the pope have declared would render his position one of the most extreme and imminent danger is no remote or impossible contingency, such as may be left to the consideration of the future. The position of Italy is in many cases too unstable and insecure, both as regards her foreign and domestic relations, to make her a safe guardian either for the venerable person of the pope or for those monuments which are the sacred heritage of the Catholic world.—London Tablet.

Mr. Murphy Could Feed the Multitude. In a certain church in Ireland a young priest was detailed to preach. This occasion was his first appearance, and he took for his text, "The Feeding of the Multitude."

He said, "And they fed five people with 5,000 loaves of bread and 2,000 fishes."

An old Irishman said: "That's no miracle, begorra! I could do that myself," which the priest overheard.

The next Sunday the priest announced the same text, but he had it right this time. He said, "And they fed 5,000 people on five loaves of bread and two fishes."

He waited a second, and then leaned over the pulpit and said, "And could you do that, Mr. Murphy?"

Murphy replied, "And sure, your reverence, I could."

"And how could you do it?" said the priest.

"And sure, your reverence, I could do it with what was left over from last Sunday."—London Tit-Bits.

Religious Orders in Brazil.

The holy father has sent the great Benedictine, Don Gerard von Calvin, to Brazil to re-establish in that country the order of St. Benedict, which, in common with other religious orders, suffered much under the government of the late Emperor Dom Pedro. It should be stated, however, that the sufferings of the religious orders during the latter years of the reign of Dom Pedro were not due to the old emperor himself, but rather to those who controlled his later misdeeds and legislation, in spite of him.—Reform.



HERE was probably not a happier girl in the world than Loya Westworth as she sat at the open window of a hotel on one of the Paris boulevards, looking down on the crowded street below. To-morrow she was going into the country to stay at the chateau belonging to the father of her fiancé, the Marquis de Belleire, a gentleman of the old school, who had seen his son engaged to the pretty American, first with resentment and then delight, as was by the charming manner and sweet frank character of the girl. He came to enjoy the idea of having his new element in the traditional routine of his house. It was far indeed from being one of those marriages which, to their shame be it said, are made every year by dozens of American women who buy for their money titles, the possessors of which heartily despise their wives' country and customs, and look upon them only as a necessary incubation to a fortune, which will enable themselves to carry on their habitual method of life with greater ease.

Loya Westworth had met the young Comte de Belleire at Dinard, and a several months' acquaintance had resulted in their engagement. It was a real love match. The old marquis being very well off, provided amply for his son, who was his only child by his dead wife. The Westworths were in comfortable circumstances, but had no dot to give their daughter. She and her father and mother were to make a short visit to the chateau de Belleire before the marriage took place. As I have said, it would be hard to have found a happier girl than Loya the night before they started for the country.

Upon arriving next day, an enthusiastic welcome awaited them on the platform from the old marquis and his son. Stanislas, who was only in the afternoon, and after a little tiring up the while party started for a tour of the house and her fiancé's room were well in front of the others. Upon entering the room, and at last they arrived at a chamber at the end of a long corridor near the staircase.

"This," cried Stanislas, gaily, as he threw open the door, "is the haunted room. I have an ancestor who had the bad taste to commit suicide here once, and his ghost is supposed to walk about from 11 until 1 o'clock, the regular orthodox thing, you know, Loya."

The young girl examined the apartment with great interest.

"It looks as if it had not been slept in for a long time," she remarked.

"Oh, no, not for a good while now; we occasionally have had friends staying here of an inquisitive frame of mind who have spent the night in it and slept most peacefully, I believe. For my part, I am rather inclined to think that it is a hoax," said Stanislas. It was a large, oblong, low-looking room, with the door opening on the right side. The bed was in the middle, and on the wall directly opposite it hung a large mirror in a tarnished gilt frame. A bell rope dangled on the left of the bed, and a lamp stood on a small table the side nearest to the door.



"I never did have much confidence in ghosts," remarked Loya, "and you know I should rather like to sleep here and see if anything happened. My nerves are very strong," she added laughing.

"Oh," cried Stanislas, anxiously, "I really must beg that you will do nothing of the sort. I should be worried to death about you."

"Don't be such a silly, dear old boy," replied Loya, whose desire to have her own way was naturally increased by the opposition she was met by. "Here come the others, I will ask them."

Herscheme was not received with any great enthusiasm, but she wheedled M. de Belleire, Sr., into taking her side, and in the end it was arranged that she should spend the night in the haunted room.

"Any way, my dear," said the marquis, "in case you should mistake your white dress hung up against the wall for a ghost, you have only to pull your bell rope vigorously—it sounds in the hall just outside my door, which is always open—and I will fly to your assistance."

Loya smiled. "I shan't disturb your peaceful slumbers," she said.

Stanislas made no remark, but looked worried and unhappy. Mrs. Westworth also seemed a little uneasy.

"Are there no burglars around?" she inquired nervously.

"Such a thing has never been heard of at Belleire," pook-pooked the marquis. The evening arrived and Loya was escorted to her room by the entire party, no arguments having availed to make her change her mind. Mrs. Westworth's fears about the robbers being abolished, Stanislas was the only one who seemed to attach any importance to the affair.

even thanks to the marquis's head, I am a square to that of Stanislas and I might guess all around, she disappeared into the room, carrying the lighted lamp, with her, and the key of the door as it turned in the lock.

The next morning dawned bright and beautiful. One by one the party assembled in the breakfast room. The old marquis came in rubbing his hands.

"Not a sound in my room last night," he remarked, "our little ghost hunter has evidently been disappointed."

However, the time slipped by and no Loya appeared. They all began to grow slightly uneasy although no one liked to own it. At last Stanislas grew desperate.

"Father," he cried, "I simply can't stand this any longer. I am going to see what is the matter."

"I will go with you," said Mr. and Mrs. Westworth in one voice.

"And I, too," cried the marquis, filled with anxiety, written on every feature.

They arrived outside the room and a knocking was heard to come into the hall. The door was locked.

"Loya!" cried Stanislas.

There was no answer, but from within the room came a sound of voices, broken by a ripple of mirthless laughter, and then the voices went on in a monotonous hum.

"Oh, what horrible thing has happened?" shrieked Mrs. Westworth in a frenzy of terror.

Stanislas threw himself against the door, it opened a moment and then burst in with an awful crash.

This is what they saw:

Seated nearly on the edge of the bed on the side toward the door was Loya in her nightgown, holding in either hand one of the broken bell ropes, which was passed around the neck of a man, whose head only protruded from under the bed, and was drawn sharply up against the side by the tense pressure of the cord. His face was purple and his tongue and eyes were staring out of his head, and he struggled to death. Loya was sitting perfectly motionless, staring away to herself, and changing her robes every moment, with an occasional burst of hideous laughter.

She was a raving maniac.

The events of this dreadful night were afterwards conjectured to be as follows: The dead man was one of a party of thieves who had been prowling about in the neighborhood for some time. Hearing of the arrival of some guests at the chateau, he managed to conceal himself in the haunted room (which he had heard from the servants was not used) with a view to letting in his associates to help him pillage the house. Finding some one come to occupy the room he hid under the bed to hide his time. Loya had evidently left the lamp lighted to make it easier. She had been wakened by a movement on the bed and had started up to see what was in the place opposite the head of the bed, just as the thief was emerging. The poor girl's first thought was, of course, the bell rope, and the old, dinned thing came with a vigorous pull tumbling down in her hand without ringing. It is supposed that in her desperation she threw the rope over the man's head and pulled back on it, causing strangulation. And there she sat all night, afraid to move for fear of his coming and unable to make any one hear, until her mind gave way under the awful strain. And that was the end of it.

Merry-Tables Tell a Tale.

Science contains an interesting account of the Tell-el-Amarna tablets. These tablets, 350 in number, were discovered by a British woman in 1887 among the ruins of the palace of Amenophis IV., known as Ekh-n-Aten, between Minieh and Assuit, about 180 miles south of Cairo. They have been found to contain a political correspondence of the very greatest interest, dating from some 3,370 years back. Many are from Palestine, written by princes of the Amorites, Phoenicians, Philistines, etc., the burden of almost all being: "Send, I pray thee, chariots and men to keep the city of the king, my lord." Among the enemies against whom help is thus invoked are the Abiri, easily recognized as the Hebrews. The date fixes that of the Bible (1 Kings, vi. 1) as accurate.

Artificial Aurora Borealis.

Artificial miniature auroras of the borealis variety have been produced by both De la Rive, the French savant, and Lantrom, the Swedish astronomer. In Professor Lantrom's experiments, which were made in Finland, the peak of a high mountain was surrounded with a coil of wire, pointed at intervals with fine filaments. The wire was then charged with electricity, whereupon a brilliant aurora appeared above the mountain, in which spectroscopic analysis revealed the greenish-yellow rays so characteristic in nature's display of "northern light."

How Profound.

"Now, which kind of music do you desire to become proficient in?" said the professor to the new pupil.

"Oh, classical, by all means," replied the young woman.

"I am very glad to hear you express this preference."

"Yes. When you play classical music hardly anybody knows whether you make a mistake or not."

A Lachrymose Husband.

Mrs. A.—You only cook half a pound of meat each day, and surely that is not sufficient nourishment for a man.

Mrs. B., whose husband is very thin.—My husband does not care much about eating. Intellectual nourishment is what sustains him.

Mrs. A.—Yes, he has that appearance.

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Chicago attracts more vessels by fifty per cent in its docks than does New York, and its clearances and arrivals are, in the aggregate, a fraction of over thirty per cent as much as those of half a dozen of the big seaboard ports.

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