

**POPE LEO XIII
JUDGED BY HIS OWN
WORDS AND ACTS**

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Pope Leo XIII judged by his own words and acts by William Burt

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WILLIAM BURT

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WILLIAM BURT.

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THE Italians often say, "The nearer one gets to Rome the less faith he has." To one living in Rome the articles which have appeared from time to time in some of the English and American papers and periodicals on Pope Leo XIII have seemed as if they must have been written by persons living in another world. A sort of aureole has been purposely created around the person of the actual Pope, so that the Protestant world has never understood his real character. He has been represented as liberal, learned, broad-minded, tolerant to excess, intensely religious, and yet abreast with the thought of the day and fully in sympathy with the needs of the hour.

To some he has seemed the very ideal of a

(These articles were published in the *Christian Advocate* of Feb. 8 and 15 1900 and now published in this form by request.)

saint, to others a reformer of the evil customs of the Church, and to others the long-looked-for leader in all that promises good for humanity.

Have we ever stopped to inquire what Leo XIII has said or done to merit this estimate of his character and work? That the actual Pope has demonstrated himself to be a very able man no one can deny; but where are the proofs of his liberalism, of his broad-mindedness, and of his claim to be a leader in the thought of the world? Have not the Jesuits literally pulled the wool over our eyes and deluded us, making us believe the exact contrary of the truth?

In this brief pamphlet we wish to demonstrate, from the Pope's own sayings, acts, and official documents, that his pontificate has been intensely reactionary.

A distinguished diplomat in Rome said to us last June: "Tell the people in America that the papacy is the same as it was a thousand years ago. Before I came to Rome I used to deride as bigots, narrow-minded, and unchristian those who spoke against the Roman Catholic Church; but since I came to Rome I have been fully converted."

One of the Pope's panegyrists writes: "When Pius IX closed his eyes on earth the enemies of Catholicism dreamed of a Pope who would bless the revolutionary spirit of modern progress, revise the syllabus, and content himself with being a nominal sovereign, by the side of a constitutional king. Such foolish hopes must have vanished immediately when it was known that the new Pope had chosen the name Leo."

HAS Leo XIII been any less pretentious than his predecessors? He has allowed himself again and again to be called "our most holy lord Leo XIII." He has declared himself to be the supreme ruler of rulers in this world. In his letter of April 21, 1878, after depicting the actual state of society, especially in Italy, in the darkest colors, he declared that the cause of all the evil which afflicts the world is to be found in the refusal to acknowledge the authority of the Church which, in the name of God, presides over the destiny of the human race and is the avenger and guardian of every legitimate power." "Hence," he says, "we shall use our influence to maintain the au-

thority and dignity of the Roman See, and to reclaim the territory and civil power which by right belong to us, for the temporal dominion of the Roman pontiff means the salvation of the human family. By these letters of ours we renew and confirm the declarations and protests which our predecessor, Pius IX, made against the occupation of the Roman states and against the violation of the rights of the Church of Rome.”

On Feb. 22, 1879, in reply to an address presented to him by Roman Catholic journalists, he said: “My beloved sons, maintain by your voice and pen the necessity of the temporal sovereignty of the Pope for the free exercise of our supreme power, and demonstrate from history our legitimate right to the same. Let it be known that the affairs of Italy shall never prosper, nor shall there be peace, until provision shall have been made for the dignity of the Roman See and for the liberty of the Pontifex Maximus.”

To the standing committee of the Catholic convention, meeting at Modena Sept. 18, 1879, the Pope addressed a brief inciting the people to arise and vindicate the rights of the papacy and restore the temporal power.