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Abstracts

ALBERTO BELLETTI, *La missione in Irlanda del Commissario Apostolico Mons. Ignazio Persico (1887-1888)*

In 1887 pope Leo XIII decided to send to Ireland, as Apostolic Commissary, an Italian prelate, mgr. Ignazio Persico. He had to investigate the situation of the island, troubled by tensions due to social and nationalistic questions, and the connection of the Catholic Church with the social and nationalist Irish movement led by Charles Stewart Parnell. The British government and many English Catholics asserted indeed that a seditious movement was supported by the Irish clergy.

Mgr. Ignazio Persico spent almost six months in Ireland, visiting the dioceses of the island and meeting the bishops and other prominent people. He wrote a long and very interesting report about the socio-political and religious situation of the Ireland. The Apostolic Commissary blamed the Irish situation and the political activity of the Irish clergy, but advised the Holy See against bypassing the Irish episcopate, suggesting to intervene only through the Irish bishops. In 1888 nevertheless, the Holy See bypassed the Irish episcopate sentenced as immoral the Boycotting and the Plan of Campaign, two nonviolent weapons supported by the Irish clergy used by the farmers to promote their social rights.

Such an act, as mgr. Persico had predicted, turned out very unhappy causing a deep contrast among the Irish Church and the Holy See. Mgr. Persico spent his last years as a prelate of the Roman Curia, even becoming a cardinal.

Keywords:

*Roman Catholic Church
Ireland
Ignazio Persico*