

# THE COLLEGE OF CARDINALS



CARDINAL GIBBONS.

CARDINAL FARLEY.

CARDINAL O'CONNELL.

## THE VATICAN AND THREE AMERICAN CARDINALS.

IN the hands of the college of cardinals rests the election of a new pope to succeed a deceased pontiff. While a pope lives these princes of the church are his advisers and the men to whom he delegates the government of the vast organization of the Roman Catholic church. On his death they become the electors of his successor. Some of the present cardinals are the appointees of the recently deceased pontiff. The others have held their exalted positions in the church since the pontificate of the predecessor of Pope Pius X., the late Pope Leo XIII. Until Dec. 5, 1913, the sacred college possessed a member who was appointed by Pope Pius IX., predecessor of Pope Leo. This last survivor of the pontificate of Pope Pius IX. was Cardinal Oreglia, dean of the sacred college for many years.

The college of cardinals is of ancient organization and arose from the coming together of the priests who presided over the churches of Rome, the

nal Francesco Della Volpe was appointed to the office of camerlengo, or chamberlain, which honor entitles him to preside over the conclave, or calling together of the cardinals to elect a new pope. The chamberlain also plays a very important part in the conduct of affairs of the Vatican during an interregnum.

### Cardinals Are Mostly Italians.

As has been usual for centuries the college of cardinals consists mainly of Italians. The great dignitaries of the Roman Catholic church believe that the affairs of the church should always be held firmly in the hands of men belonging to the nationality in which the mother church finds its temporal home. This eliminates the possibility, it is believed, of electing any cardinal not an Italian. In recent years, however, there has been much talk of upsetting this precedent of centuries, and it has even been suggested that the church might see an

It is generally believed, even among those conversant with the laws and usages of the church, that the cardinals are obliged to select one of their number for supreme pontiff. But this is not so. They have perfect freedom of choice and may place the triple crown upon the head of one who may be not even a priest. But in practice, for many centuries, at least, the choice has always fallen upon a member of the college of cardinals.

In title as well as in fact the cardinals are "princes of the church" and enjoy extraordinary privileges, both at home and abroad. All governments pay them honors and each is officially styled "most eminent prince." In most monarchical countries, in fact, they rank with princes of the blood royal and take precedence over all others save royalties. They wear a distinctive red hat, which is given to them in the consistory, but is never worn. They enjoy incomes from the

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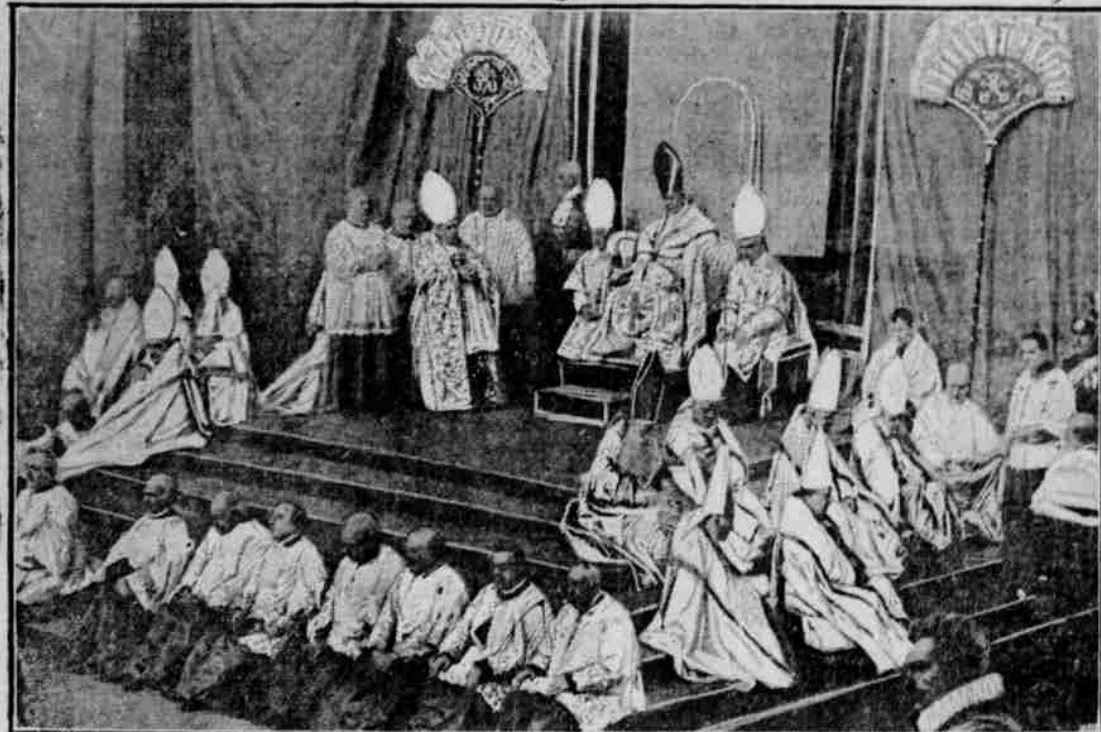


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COLLEGE OF CARDINALS IN SESSION.

central city of the Roman Catholic church. To this day the cardinals are divided into three classes—cardinal priests, cardinal deacons and cardinal bishops. The first are those who have titular rule over the parish churches of the city. The second administer each the charities of a particular "region" of the city, and the third, the cardinal bishops, were originally the ecclesiastics who had charge of the suburban sees of Rome. The bishop of Rome is the pope himself, and the title is one of his most highly cherished possessions as successor of St. Peter.

### Ruling Body of the Church.

The cardinals are appointed by the pope and constitute the sacred college. The laws of the church do not require the pope to consult them, but he does so as a matter of fact, and matters of high importance to the church are decided by the body. The number of the cardinals has varied at different times and was fixed by Pope Sixtus V. in 1586 at seventy-six cardinal bishops, fifty cardinal priests and fourteen cardinal deacons.

The pope is not obliged to maintain the number of cardinals at seventy, and, in fact, there are generally vacancies in the body. Sometimes at a consistory, or assemblage of the cardinals, the pope announces that he has decided upon a certain ecclesiast for elevation to the cardinalate, but will reserve the announcement of the name until a later time.

Fourteen cardinals were announced in May, 1914. At the same time Cardi-

nal American pope. The American cardinals are James, Cardinal Gibbons; John, Cardinal Farley, and William, Cardinal O'Connell. To these is generally added Diomedes, Cardinal Falconio, who became a naturalized American citizen many years ago, but has resided abroad for many years. Cardinal Gibbons, head of the Roman Catholic church in the United States, is archbishop of Baltimore; Cardinal Farley presides over the archdiocese of New York, and Cardinal O'Connell over that of Boston. Cardinal Falconio holds a high place in Rome.

The cardinals are the chief members of the twenty-one sacred congregations or standing ecclesiastical committees of the papal government, such as the holy office, propagation of the faith, index, rites, studies, etc. They meet in consistory, over which the pope presides. But they are most prominent before the world when a pope dies and they are called upon to elect his successor. Many quaint and curious customs, hallowed by the observance of centuries, govern their conduct. In the present instance the calling together of the conclave presents singular and grave difficulties, since almost the whole of Europe is at war and there are cardinals resident in every one of the warring countries save Russia. The difficulties of travel are especially great for those cardinals, mainly aged men, who must come from corners of the earth that are far from Rome, such as Brazil and Australia.

papal treasury and are frequently sent by the pope as his personal representatives on delicate missions.

### Recent Deaths of Cardinals.

In December, 1913, passed away Cardinal Rampolla, who was one of the most prominent and best known of them all. On the death of Pope Leo XIII, he was mentioned prominently as his possible successor, but the choice passed him and fell on the comparatively unknown Cardinal Sarto, patriarch of Venice. On July 31, 1914, Cardinal Lugari, head of the congregation of the holy office and also mentioned as a "papabile," or papal possibility, died. Cardinal Gennari died in January of the present year; Cardinal Katschthaler of Salzburg, Austria, in February, and Cardinal Kopp of Breslau, Germany, in March.

Before the assembling of the conclave it was, of course, impossible to forecast the result of the papal election or even to risk a guess at its outcome. The greatly disturbed state of the world can but have its effect on the Roman Catholic church.

In years past the governments of some of the Roman Catholic countries have interposed objections to the election of any one considered unfavorable to themselves. This has been especially true of Austria, which is one of the strongholds of the church in Europe. Italy also asserts the right to have on the throne of St. Peter a pope not unfavorable to itself since the position of the pope in Rome, the former seat of his temporal authority, is one of great delicacy and difficulty.

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