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Benedict the Fifteenth

WHEN Arianism got a foothold in Northern Italy, some sixteen hundred years ago, St. Ambrose found it necessary to institute certain heads, or captains, to defend the Church against those heretics, who denied the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father in the Trinity. Those illustrious defenders of the faith were called champions of the Church—*"campioni della chiesa"*—and it was thus the family of the present Pontiff originated.

Giacomo della Chiesa was born in Genoa, November 21, 1854. Like many of his predecessors in the Chair of St. Peter, the blood of nobility flows in his veins. The Holy Father is of a very small stature, and, although of a frail nature, he has never felt the pang of ill-health. From his childhood, Giacomo was quiet, reticent, pious, serious and extremely fond of books, so fond, as one writer informs us, that he was in danger of ruining his health from study. But, although young, Giacomo was, by disposition and habit, peculiarly adapted to the mission of Christ; yet not even for one day did his parents entertain the idea of having their son a priest. In truth, his father's one ambition was to see his son, not wearing pontifical robes, but the gown of the judiciary, and so far did the parents persevere in their wishes that, one day, when their son expressed his desire to become an ecclesiastic, the father said: "I