



## Marion Crawford's Lecture on LEO XIII.

Verbatim report by Mr. Frank W. Russell.

Mr. Marion Crawford said:—"In speaking to you this evening of "Pope Leo XIII. in the Vatican" I must in the first place give you a very brief sketch of the circumstances which preceded his elevation to the Pontificate, touching upon the reign of his predecessor. The life, the temper, the gifts, the public acts of Leo XIII. have been as different as possible from those of his predecessor Pius IX. Under Pius IX. the political power and influence of the Vatican went steadily down; under Leo XIII. they have steadily gained in strength, and the difference is due to the difference in character between the two men. I shall then try to show you the man himself, as he lives, breathes, works in his great old age and in his surroundings; lastly I shall touch upon one or two questions very briefly which intimately concern him and, in a measure, concern humanity.

We often call this 19th century in which we live an age of enlightenment, an age of civilization, and yet there has been more blood shed, by nations calling themselves civilized, during the last 120 years than in any equal previous period of history. That record of death, however, was not uninterrupted: it was divided in its midst by a period of peace extending over over about 30 years and succeeding the fall of Napoleon. About the middle of that time a man came to the front of history about whose name cling the recollections of all revolution, great uprisings, of all peoples. I mean Giuseppe Mazzini, an Italian of very extraordinary intellectual gifts, who founded about 1850 the Young Italian party in connection with all the secret societies of Europe and having the same object they had—a universal uprising in the hope of founding a general and lasting republic. They had not the slightest intention of founding the present kingdom of Italy as we see it to-day. A series of politically insignificant Popes had occupied the Chair down to 1846 at the time when Mazzini and his friends had been plotting for about 16 years. In the place of Gregory XVI., the Cardinals elected Pius IX., a man still young, full of the highest enthusiasms, devoted to the most lofty ideals, of great piety, beloved by all who approached him, but a man politically weak, not able to cope with the tremendous difficulties with which he was to be confronted. One of the first acts of his pontificate was to proclaim a universal pardon to all political offenders, thereby releasing many revolutionaries; and then with the great feeling of humanity and kindness inborn in him he drifted into a kind of tacit approval of the Young Italian Party, not dreaming how far it meant to go.

And then in 1848 the great movement came to a head simultaneously all over Europe. Even in England there were the Chartist riots, and in free Switzerland there were uprisings. It was a year of riots, of rebellions, of revolutions and of new constitutions, some of which remained, many of which passed

away; a year in which an emperor, more than one king, and many princes were driven from their thrones and scattered in all directions. Pius IX. fled from his capital when his favorite minister had been murdered on the steps of the Palace devoted to the the new parliament which he had granted to his people with a constitution. It was France that brought him back to Rome and kept him on the throne until she herself in her life and death struggle with Germany was obliged to recall every man she could master.

From his return in 1849 to the fall of the temporal power in 1870 he governed the Roman people very kindly, very paternally and by no means unwisely. He did a great deal for the city; he converted Rome from an old medieval town into a fairly creditable modern capital and he was beloved by the people. Yet his government was one of the most unpopular in Europe, the most detested perhaps of all governments at that time. The reason for that was this. So far as he was doing anything for his people it came from his heart, but his government was never wholly his own—it was that of a strong, unscrupulous man who had his interests at heart but seemed incapable of using any honorable or upright means of promoting it—a man who imposed himself upon Pius IX.—that was Cardinal Antonelli. He was not a priest, for cardinals are not necessarily priests, the function by which they are raised to the dignity does not take place in a church. Consequently he may be judged by the same standard by which we measure other statesmen of the day. He was not a good man, he did a great deal of harm and lived to see his plans fail; he lived to see Rome fall when he shut himself up in the Vatican with Pius IX. and died before him.

When Rome was taken by the troops of Victor Emmanuel it was taken after a short siege. It is sometimes thought that Rome was taken without a struggle, but that is a mistake, as I can prove. For one of the shells from the besieging force fell into the library in my mother's house and I have kept the fragments of that shell with the books that were damaged as an answer to those who say that Rome was taken without any fighting, for if one shell fell in that house many more fell in other parts of the City. That was the end of the old romantic time in Italy, but the real change came some years later when Pius IX., who had come to be looked upon as a martyr by many Catholics, and Victor Emmanuel who was more than a hero for all Italians, passed away within one month of each other. The old king had always regretted taking Rome and when dying was very anxious to obtain the absolution and blessing of Pius IX. At first the Pope stipulated for an apology but eventually Pius IX. who was the kindest and gentlest of men, sent his pardon and blessing freely, but it came too late, for when the messenger reached the Palace Victor Emmanuel had breathed his last, and within one month Pius IX. had followed him.

The college of Cardinals elected in place of the humble and and politically insignificant pope one of the most remarkable, one of the most indepen-

dent, one of the most forcible individualities of the present century.

Joachim Vincenzo Pecci, who has been Pope under the title of Leo XIII. since 1878, was born in the year 1810. That wonderful old man is now nearly ninety years of age. He was born in a small mountain town called Carpineto, situated thirty or forty miles to the south of Rome on the border of a district which is called Sandal land—the land where the people wear sandals. There, in that town, is still the residence of the family of the present Pope and in the old residence are portraits of the old Pope's father and mother. His Holiness resembles both his parents in a striking degree. He has from his father the upper part of his head and the main features, the bony forehead, the prominent cheek bones, very aquiline nose and firm jaw. From his mother he has the piercing black eyes that seem to hold you as soon as you get into his presence so that you cannot get away from his look. Then he has a very strong mouth, very white, very thin lips, always set in a peculiar expression which is firm, not unkind, something like a smile and yet not altogether gentle.

One of the most remarkable characteristics of his appearance is his complexion, which he shares with other members of his family. When the Pope comes towards you in one of those shadowy galleries of the Vatican or in the dimmer church below, a real radiance seems to proceed from his face. It is absolutely colorless, but yet it is luminously pale. It has often been compared to a face carved out of alabaster, with a strong light within it. That peculiarity applies to his family, but is more especially noticeable in himself.

Born up there in those southern hills, he is by nature a mountaineer. He is a very tall man, in youth was a strong man, a man of good proportions, even noble proportions, but now thin to emaciation, a mere shadow of a past man, as it were.

There is, indeed, a very strong resemblance between Pope Leo XIII., Mr. Gladstone and Abraham Lincoln. They were all three, in their prime, long, sinewy men of very bony constitution, with great joints, with large, bony heads, high cheekbones, prominent jaws. All three men in their youth possessed very extraordinary physical strength far beyond that of ordinary members of the race. All three were men capable of most profound study and concentration, all elegant men on occasion, and all three, to complete the resemblance, having in them a certain something of profound melancholy and sadness which is often found in the natures of men at once very strong, very energetic, and who are also very deep thinkers. You might almost say that some of nature's stuff had been developed by circumstances in three different ways—in the material way, the intellectual way and the spiritual way. Abraham Lincoln was thrown back upon the hardest, the most brutal of material facts in this work-a-day world, for his self-gotten education. Mr. Gladstone received the modern form of education in its highest development, and was an eminent and

learned scholar before he was a statesman.

Leo XIII. was brought up under the domination of spiritual ideals at a time when they had just survived the tremendous shock of the French revolution. Born towards the close of Napoleon's career, when a great struggle had been going on for years in men's minds between believing and not believing, he was raised to the pontificate when the next great European struggle about belief was raging at the height of what was called the "Kulturkampf," a religious war in Prussia, in which the eyes of the world were riveted upon the struggle between the Roman Catholic Church on the one side and Prince Bismarck on the other. At that juncture came Leo XIII., the great, evenly balanced, deep-thinking, honorable statesman. It was then he appeared on the scene—one of those characters, with suppressed energy, that come to the front when events will not wait for little men's long phrases, when the pendulum is swinging the full stroke of history, when it is glory or death to lay hands upon the weight and hold it. But when it stops and hangs idly, why, then, all the little men gather boldly around it, and touch it, as though there was no danger in it, and make long theories about what it will do.

Leo XIII's childhood and early youth were spent in the simple surroundings of the mountain town where he was born. Early hours, constant exercise, an outdoor life with farm interests, made a strong man of him with plenty of common sense. He was very athletic, a great climber, a great sportsman, fond of being out whole days among the hills with his gun. Yet at the same time he was a student, and when he had finished his studies he entered the priesthood, and thence forward his career was straight—direct as careers of most men have been who have reached the very highest destinies. He was, from the first day of his ordination immediately attached to the offices of the Vatican. Not very long after that we find him promoted, in the due course of events, to the diplomacy, representing the Vatican abroad in Brussels as Nuncio, learning something of the great game of European politics in which he was afterwards to play so important a part. Then he is back in Italy again, consecrated an Archbishop, with an archdiocese in Perugia.

It was while there that he showed the courage, the personal independence, which was very much remarked at that time, long before it was ever thought that he could possibly be Pope. And it was in this way: In those days, the struggle between the church, the Vatican and the young Italy was very bitter. Churchmen and statesmen were all at swords drawn, and churchmen shut themselves up and would have nothing to do with politics nor persons engaged in politics. Leo XIII. did just the contrary. He opened the doors of his house, he received constantly and daily and familiarly the Italian Government officials and officers of the Italian Government stationed near by, and conversed with them upon current topics, conversed with them earnestly and freely, showed them that he was not only a churchman and an Archbishop,

but that he was an Italian and could love his country.

That required a man of courage and independence of which we have no idea now that those things are all smoothed over. And that love of conversation, that love of talking freely with the men of the time, now characterizes Leo XIII. It is a part of his nature. Few persons of distinction ever pass through Rome without being taken to his presence, and he will talk freely with them, sometimes as much as two hours without stopping. And yet, though he is one of the greatest living conversationalists, perhaps, there is something in his manner while talking which is far from pleasant, something authoritative, something very formal, something almost harsh. You feel that he is choosing his words like blades, and using them like a fencer. You feel that he will let no possible opportunity escape and you feel that, whatever he says, he wishes to be obeyed. It is a strong, dictatorial mode of conversation. But those who are near him soon become used to it, and see that he not only expresses his ideas wonderfully, but that there is also a brilliancy behind all, which is lost at the time in that something harsh that is peculiar to his manner.

Of his statesmanship, of his scholarship, we shall hear more while he lives; most, perhaps, hereafter, when he is gone, when a weaker and a less significant man sits in the great Pope's chair. For he is emphatically a great Pope, a great individuality. We have not seen such a man at the head of the head of the Roman Catholic Church for centuries.

Leo XIII. is a man who has accomplished a wonder in Europe in twenty years. He has turned the opinion of all Europe from a hostile one to a favorable one with regard to the Roman Catholic Church, with a unanimity of opinion which has not been seen, perhaps, for centuries. His is a great individuality. Without pretending that he is the greatest man that ever lived, I say, and those who have known and followed his life will say also, that of all great men of his time he possesses the most evenly balanced, the most stubbornly sane disposition under all circumstances of them all. And that fact alone speaks well for the men who elected him Pope at the time when Italy was crazed with grief over the loss of her hero king.

In spite of his very great age Leo XIII. leads a life of constant activity and hard work. He sleeps very little, not more than four or five hours in a night. He sometimes takes a nap in the afternoon, but rarely of more than twenty minutes. When his faithful old servant comes to his room every morning at six o'clock and not at seven (as I have sometimes seen it stated), he more often sees the Pope up busy writing than asleep. Once, to my knowledge, he has been found in his chair at his writing table sound asleep upon the sheet of paper upon which he had been working in the night, no having been to bed at all.

As soon as he is dressed, he says Mass in his private chapel. Immediately afterwards, according to an old custom, he hears another Mass said by one of the chaplains on duty for the week. Then he has a very light break-