

LEO XIII.—EPISCOPAL JUBILEE.

(Revised and corrected for the TRUE WITNESS.)

Lion of the Fold of Judah,
Leo, Pontiff, Priest and King,
Vicar of the King of Heaven,
From whose lips His mandates ring!

Chief Pastor of the Church unchanging,
Keeper of the Heavenly Keys,
Pilot of the Barque of Peter
O'er the world's tempestuous seas.

Many hands have clasped the helm
Of this bright and gallant Barque;
Many storms have raged around it
In the by-gone Ages dark.

But this gallant Barque still boundeth
O'er the stormy waves of Time,
And her Captain's voice still soundeth
With the words of Truth sublime.

Many ships of State have perished
On destruction's rocks obscure,
But the Ship of Christ still saileth
For the Port of Heaven sure.

Many thrones have risen, fallen,
Many sceptres passed away,
But the Papal throne still standeth,
Still that sceptre holdeth sway.

Many flags of many nations
In defeat have oft been furled,
But the Church's Cross-crowned Banner
Floats aloft o'er all the world!

MICHAEL WHELAN.

Renous River, N. B., March, 1893.

MARION CRAWFORD.

THE GREAT NOVELIST IN ROME.

Trade and Art—The Trade-Novelist and
Artist-Novelist—An American by In-
heritance, an Italian by Birth, and
an Englishman by Training.

[WRITTEN FOR THE TRUE WITNESS.]

In front of the Ara Coeli I stood. A swarthy Italian was telling of the dramatic death of Cola di Rienzi. His English was lightly worn, but it seemed to please his audience, and it was for that purpose they had paid their lire. The crazy quilt language of the cicerone and his audacious way of handling history, made him cut an attractive figure in the eyes of most tourists, whose desires are amusement rather than study. As a type, to use a phrase borrowed from the school of psychological novelism, he was a study. To the student, Rome is a city of absorbing interest, to the ordinary American bird of passage, a dull place. It all depends on your point of view. If you are a scholar, a collector of old lace, or a vandal, Rome is your happy hunting ground. If these pursuits do not interest you, Roman beggars with all sorts and conditions of diseases, sometimes by nature, mostly by art, Roman fleas, and the gaunt ghosts of the Campagna quickly drive you from the cadital of the Cæsars and Popes. A few other annoyances might be added, such as sour wine, whose mist fumes are not to be shriven by your bottlelet of eau de Cologne, garlic on the fringe of decay, and the provoking smell of salt fish in the last stage of decomposition. But you have come to Rome, it is a name to conjure with, and despite the drawbacks, you must have a glimpse, an ordinary bowing acquaintance with the famed old dame. At the office, an English office, in the Piazza di Spagna, you have asked for a "droll guide." Who could not listen to a scholarly one amid such active drawbacks as wine, fleas and fish. Michael Angelo Orazio Pantacci is your man. What do you care for good English? Did you not leave New York to leave it behind? What do you care for Roman history? Pantacci is your man, and his lecture on Cola di Rienzi is a masterpiece. A stranger joined our little crowd. Pantacci at that moment had attained his descriptive high-water mark. His pose, voice, were touchingly dramatic. Cola was, as he expressed it, "to perish." The stranger smiled and passed on. His smile was a composite affair. It was easy to see in it Michael Angelo's historical duplicity and our ignorant simplicity. The stranger was tall, with the shoulders slightly stooping, a nose as near an approach to the Grecian as an American may come, a heavy black mustache, ruddy cheeks, that whispered of English food mellowed with the glowing Chianti. Who is that man? I said to my companion, whose eyes had followed the stranger rather than Pantacci. "That," said he, "is Marion Crawford, the author of the Saracenesca books. You remember reading them at Albans." Tell me something about him. He is a very clever man. Cola has perished; let us leave Pantacci. On the way to Cordiettis tell me something of his life. He knows how to tell a story,

an art hardly to be met with in contemporary fiction. Fiction has abrogated to herself the whole domain of life, and thus the art of telling a story for the story's sake is lost. Fiction has a mission. She freights herself with all isms. Scott, Manzoni, even the great wizard of Spanish fiction, could they live again, were failures. Introspection is the cult, and, happily for their fame, they knew nothing of it. These great masters told us how scenes of life were enacted. Why they left to the inquisitive and later day brood of commentators. Since then the all absorbing scientific spirit prevails, and we moderns brush away the delightful humor of Dickens for the analytical puzzles of Henry James; the keen satire of Thackeray for the coxcombetics of George Meredith. Fairy cult interests none, modern children are ancient men. Scepticism is rampant, and the cause of it is in a great manner due to the modern novelist. This product of the 19th century world spirit coolly tells us that romance lies dead. Realism has taken her place. If we are to believe the theories of its votaries, it is without an ideal—a mere anatomical transcript of man. What this theory leads to is well illustrated by the gutter filth of Zola and Catulle Mendes. It makes novel writing a trade. One ceases to be astonished at the output, if he thoroughly grasps the difference between a tradesman and an artist. Trade is a word much used by realists. Grant Allen, writing of that realistic necromancer, Guy De Maupassant, has nothing apter to define his position than the phrase "he knows his trade." In point of fact, Grant Allen enunciates a truth in this phrase, one that might be carried still further, by saying that his whole school are journeymen laborers, tradesmen, if you prefer, turning out work, tasteless and crude, at the bidding of the erubescient young person of the period. It is tacitly assumed that work of this kind is not, despite the word jugglery of their school realism. It does not deal with the true man, but with a phrase, and that abnormal. A better phrase in use in speaking of the works of this school is, Literature of Disease. The artist who lives must have a model, and that we call the ideal. The nearer he approaches this the more lasting his work. All the great artists had ideals. Workmen may be guided by the rule of thumb. The first lesson a great artist learns is, "The art that merely imitates can only produce a corpse; it lacks the vital spark, the soul, which is the ideal, and which is necessary in order to create a living organic reality that will quicken genius and arouse enthusiasm throughout the ages." The gulf between the trade novelist and the artist-novelist is of vital importance. The former believes that art is simply imitation, the latter, that art is interpretation. One is a stone-cutter, the other a sculptor.

Crawford's canon is that art is interpretative, not imitative, and, moreover, he has a story to tell and tells it for the story's sake. He has no affinity with that school so pointedly described by the Scotch novelist, Barrie, as the one "which tells, in three volumes, how Hiram K. Wilding trod on the skirt of Alice M. Sparkins without anything coming of it." "Cordiettis," said my friend, "give the order and I will tell you what I know of Crawford." Paulo, said I to the waiter, some Chianti, and, well, a pigeon. "Crawford," said my friend, "was born in Rome about thirty-five years ago. His career has been a strange one, full of life. His early years were spent in Rome, where his father was known as a sculptor, his boyhood in the vicinity of Union Square, his early manhood in England and India. In the latter country he was the editor, proof-reader, typesetter of a small journal in the natives interest. As such he was a thorn to the notorious freak, Blavatsky. Crawford is an American by inheritance, an Italian by breeding, an Englishman by training, an Indian by virtue of writing about India with the knowledge of a native. In 1873, by the financial panic, Mrs. Crawford lost her large fortune, and Marion was forced to shift for himself. He became a journalist, and as such wandered over most of the interesting part of the globe. On his return to New York, at the request of his uncle, Sam Ward, the epicurean, who had discerned his kinsman's rare power of story-telling, he wrote his first book, Mr. Isaacs. It was a success. Of the writing of that book, Crawford has told us was "very curious." I did not imagine that I possessed a faculty for story

writing, and I prepared for a career very different from the career of a novelist. Yet I have found that all my early life was an unconscious preparation for that work. My boyhood was spent in Rome, where my parents had lived for many years. There I was put through the usual classical training—no, it was not the usual one, for the classics are much better taught in Italy than in this country. A boy in Italy by the time he is twelve is taught to speak Latin, and his training is so thorough that he can read it with ease. From Rome I went to Cambridge, England, and remained at the university several years. Then I studied for a couple of years at the German universities. During this time I went in for the sciences, and I expected to devote myself to scientific work. Finally I went off to the East, where I did a good deal of observing, and continued my studies of the oriental languages, in which I had taken considerable interest. It was while I was in the East that I met Jacobs, the hero of Mr. Isaacs. Many of the events I have recorded in Mr. Isaacs were the actual experiences of Jacobs."

The writing of his first novel occupied the months of May and June, 1882; it was published the same year, and at once established its author in the front rank of living American writers of fiction. Since then Crawford has written twenty volumes of fiction. Crawford is frank and he tells us how he manages to produce in a few years the amount of an ordinary lifetime. By living in the open air, by roughing it among the Albanian mountaineers, wandering by the sunny olive slopes and vineyards of Calabria, and by taking hard work and pot luck with the native sailors on long voyages in their feluccas, are the means of the novelist to hold health and make his pen-work a laxative employment. In these picturesque journeys, he lays the foundation of his stories, makes the plots and evolve the characters. He does not believe in Trollope's idea of sitting down, pen in hand, and keep on sitting until at its own will the story takes ink. The story in these excursions has been fully fashioned, and it becomes but a matter of penmanship to record it. How quickly this is done may be seen from the rapid writing of the novelist, which averages 6,000 words the working day. This rapid composition has its defects, defects that are in some measure compensated by the photographic views of the life and manners of the people. These views are in the rough, but they are truer than when toned down. Poetry needs paring. The greatest novels have been those that came like Crawford's, fresh from the brain, and were hastily despatched to the printer. Scott did not mope over the sheets. Thackeray's were written to the tune of "more copy." Your American critic, Stoddard, says "that Crawford is a man with many talents, and with great fertility of invention, is evident in every story that he has written. He has written more good stories and in more diverse ways than any English or American novelist. It does not seem to matter to him what countries or periods he deals with, or what kind of personages he draws, he is always equal to what he undertakes." It may interest you, in ending this biographic sketch, that he is a convert to the Catholic Church, and with the American critic's idea in view, a Cosmopolitan." I was not astonished by the former information. To those who know Italy and Mr. Crawford's wonderful drawing of it, there could be but one opinion, that the faith of the novelist was the same as that of his characters. No Protestant novelist, no matter how many years he had lived in Italy, could have drawn the portraits that play in the Saracenesca pages. One of his friends had this in his mind's eye when he wrote of the superiority of the novelist's writings on Italy over those of his countrymen. This writer tells us that Crawford added the indispensable advantage of being a Catholic in religion, a circumstance that has not only allowed him a truer sympathy with the life there, but has afforded him an open sesame to many things which must be sealed books to Protestants." As to my friend's summing up Crawford as a cosmopolitan, in the everyday meaning of that word, I take issue. Cosmopolitan novelist is one who can produce a three volume novel, whose scenes are laid in all the great centers of commerce, while he sits calmly in his library. No previous study of his novelistic surroundings are necessary. What does the age want the beginning of the

plot in Cairo or Venice, half-way at Tokio, and a grand finale beyond the Gates Ajar. Your novelist is ready to turn out the regulation type, with the greatest ease. Cosmopolitan novel writing is simply a trade. The living through of local and artistic impressions, the study of types in their environment, the color of surroundings are unnecessary. Imagination divorced from nature, study is left to guide the way.

Once Crawford followed this school, and the result was "An American Politician," the "worst novel ever produced by an American." Had Crawford been a tradesman he might have produced a passable book, but being an artist, he failed, not knowing what paints to mix in order to get the coloring. The difference between an artist and a tradesman, the one must go to nature direct, the other takes her second-hand. No artist can catch the lines of an Italian sunset from a studio window in London. "Art is interpretative, not imitative." Crawford is only a novelist in the true sense when he knows his characters and their surroundings. This is amply proven in the charming volumes that make his Saracenesca series. Here he is at home, so to speak. The Rome of Pius IX, with its struggles, its ambitions, the designs of wily intriguers, the fall of the temporal power of the Papacy, the rise of an united Italy, the flocking to Rome of the scourgings and outcasts of the provincial cities, the money-mad schemes of daring but ignorant speculators, and over all the lovely blue Italian sky rise before us in all their minuteness at the bidding of Marion Crawford. His work is hardly inferior to genuine history; "for it affords that insight into the human mind that acquaintance with the spirit of the age, without which the most minute knowledge is only a bundle of dry and meaningless facts." Who that knows Rome of the Popes and Rome of the Vandals, that will not feel heavy-hearted at these lines.

"Old Rome is dead, too, never to be old Rome again. The last breath has been breathed, the aged eyes are closed forever, corruption has done its work and the grand skeleton lies bleaching on seven hills, half covered with the piecemeal stucco of a modern architectural body. The result is satisfactory to those who have brought it, if not to the rest of the world. The sepulchre of old Rome in the new capital of united Italy." The exclusiveness of the Patrician families of Rome, families that a brood of novelists pretend to draw life like, is happily hit by the painter G. Guache.

Guache, long resident in Rome, being asked what he knows of Roman families, replies, "Their palace is historic. Their equipages are magnificent. That is all foreigners see of Roman families." Who that has seen the great Leo carried through the grand sala, a vision of intellectual loveliness that will not recall it as he reads. "The wonderful face that seemed to be carved out of transparent alabaster, smiled and slowly turned from side to side as it passed by. The thin, fragile hand moved unceasingly, blessing the people." True, said my friend, his pages are delicious bits of the dead past. At every sentence we halt and find a memory. He has the sense of art, if Maupassant definition of it, "as the profound and delicious enjoyment which rises to your heart before certain pages, before certain phrases be correct."

Dinner was finished. A check, Paulo. We rose and went.

WALTER LECKY.



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