

"FATHER" GAVAZZI.

Alessandro Gavazzi, the famous and eloquent Italian preacher, who reached New York on his third visit to the United States last week, November 28th, is now in his sixty-second year. At the age of sixteen he became a Barnabite monk in Bologna, the place of his birth, and was afterwards appointed professor of rhetoric in a college at Naples. Then he became a monk and a preacher for the Church of Rome. He grew to be as great a favourite with the masses as he was an object of suspicion to his superiors in the Church. He preached liberal views of the most pronounced kind, advocating honesty in religion and justice to the masses. He even attacked the Court of Gregory XVI., and was remanded to the solitudes of a convent—virtually placed in confinement—for his conduct. In all his preachings he never failed to remind his countrymen of their oppressed condition. He strove by all the powers of his eloquence to persuade them to unite and win their freedom.

Among his intimate friends were Hugo Basse and Count Joseph Mastai, the latter a brother of Pope Pius IX. By him Gavazzi was introduced to the Pontiff, who was so impressed with the man's ability that he appointed him to preach the sermon of thanksgiving for his miraculous escape from assassination. In that memorable sermon Gavazzi turned aside long enough to denounce the corrupt practices of the Church. This, together with the well-defined fact that he was a priest whose utterances could not be curbed, led to an order issued by the Pope forbidding him to preach longer. Gavazzi was afterwards imprisoned in the Franciscan convent of La Polviera, and also at Genzano, for his bitter denunciation of the Austrians. He was visited in his cell by 5,000 Romans, and the popular interest in him was so intense that twenty nobles waited upon the Pope and extracted the promise that he should be set at liberty—a promise which was fulfilled within ten days. He afterwards raised a legion of 16,000 men and equipped them for service against the Austrians with the funds raised at a meeting where he delivered one of his most eloquent appeals. So effective was his oratory on this occasion that women stripped themselves of their jewels and threw them at his feet.

In the revolution of 1848, Gavazzi was Garibaldi's trusted lieutenant and his chaplain, and when the troops entered the City of Rome Gavazzi established military hospitals, and organized a corps of 6,000 nurses from among the Roman women who responded to his appeals for aid. The intervention of the French, the rout

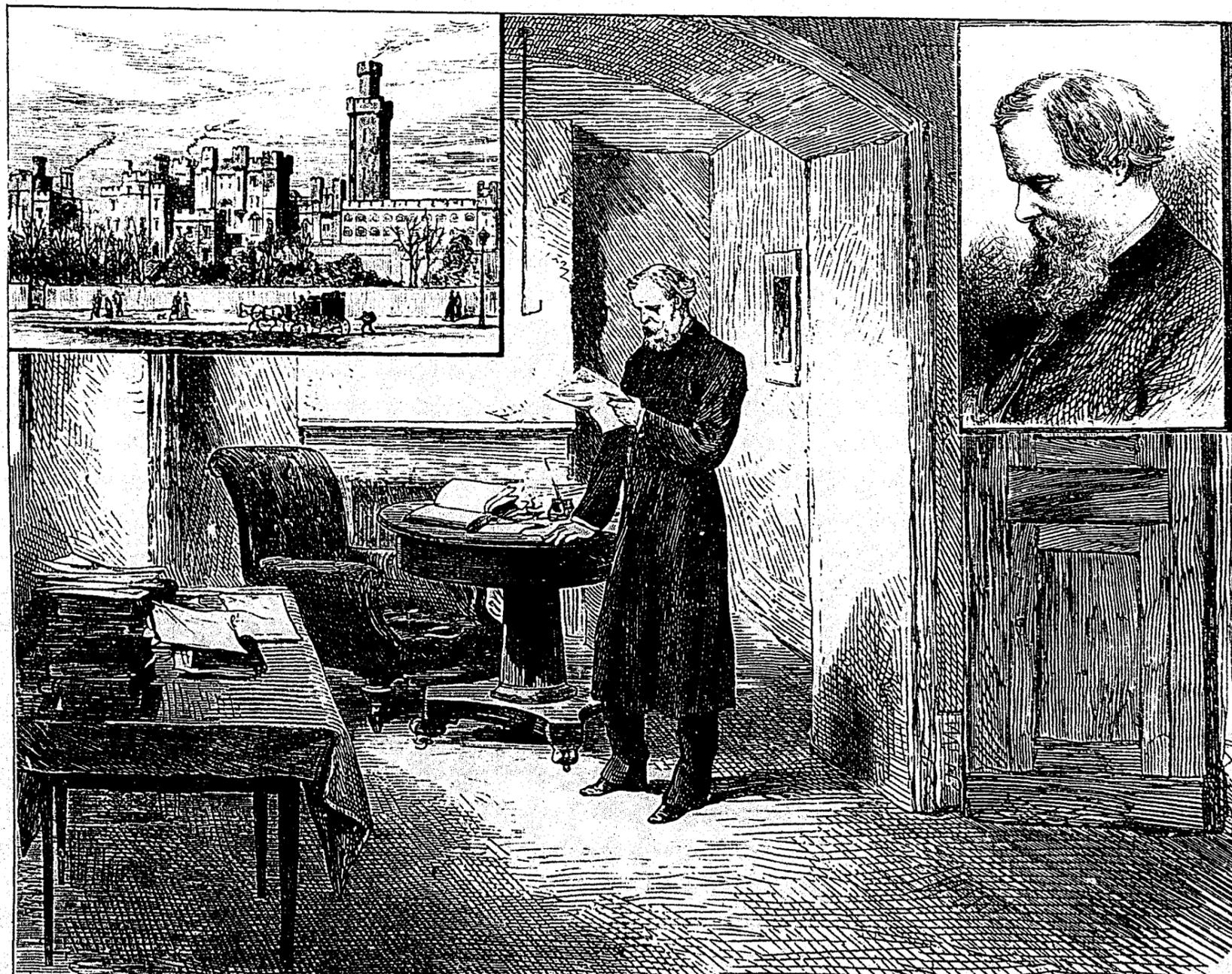


FATHER ALESSANDRO GAVAZZI.

of Garibaldi, and the flight of his forces, are matters of history. Gavazzi, through the friendship of the American Consul, was enabled to escape to England, where he spent many months in giving English audiences a description of Italy's miseries and necessities. He came to this country in 1853, and delivered lectures against popery. In Montreal he was mobbed, and his friends were compelled to smuggle him out of the city to save his life. He became a convert to Protestantism, and when the condition of affairs enabled him once more to return to Italy, he entered upon the work of evangelizing his countrymen. In this labour he has been engaged ever since. Its fruition was the foundation of the Free Christian Church of Italy.

Father Gavazzi's third visit to America is to strengthen the interest which Protestants feel in the Free Christian Church of Italy, and to secure additional funds to meet its pressing needs. Since its organization in 1870, this Church has grown steadily, and is gradually making its influence felt in every province of Italy. From a body comprising twenty-three churches with 400 communicants in 1870, it has so increased that now it has seventy-one places of worship and about 2,000 communicants. These churches are found in Rome, Milan, Turin, Bologna, Naples, Venice, Florence, and many smaller cities in Italy. In Rome there is a theological seminary within the very shadow of the Vatican, in which Father Gavazzi fills the chair of Professor of Sacred Oratory. The Church of Scotland has given the seminary a Professor of Didactic Theology, and the Christians in Great Britain have bought and presented the old Church of San Jacopo in Florence. An opportunity recently occurred to purchase a valuable church on the Piazza San Marco, in Venice. It was thought best to secure this edifice, although only half the amount necessary was in hand to pay for it. Father Gavazzi will specially interest himself in the effort to raise the remainder.

In appearance Father Gavazzi possesses little in common with the Italian physical types with which Americans are acquainted. He is six feet in height, of well-built figure, and has broad shoulders that are slightly rounded with the weight of years. His features are prominent, his complexion is light, his eyes are keen and kindly, and his hair, which is of an iron-gray, hangs in wavy locks. His thin side-whiskers, however, have been bleached to a silvery whiteness. He is as brisk in his movements as a man half his years. In all respects he is a remarkably well-preserved gentleman. His English, though somewhat broken, is clear, strong and intelligible.



REV. MR. DALE IN PRISON FOR RITUALISTIC PRACTICES.