

LEO XIII'S JUBILEE.

BY MISS ONAHAN.

(Concluded)

On Jan. 27, 1848, Mgr. Pecci, though then only thirty-three years of age, was nominated titular Archbishop of Damietta and sent as Nuncio to Brussels. It was not without misgiving that he entered the Belgian capital, for his horizon had hitherto been bounded by the papal States; but the personality of the young Nuncio was a safe passport for him wherever he went. The qualities which had won the love of the Pontiff were readily recognised by the Protestant king; the tact which had been triumphant, too, at the dinner table and in Lady Seymour's drawing-room. In the more bohemian salon of Charles Lever, whose house adjoining the English embassy, Mgr. Pecci was often a guest. At these gatherings he met the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Whatley and they became great friends. "The loud buzz of conversation," says John Oldcastle in his most interesting memoir of the Pope. "The louder laughter which followed the rollicking host wherever he wandered, made convenient cover for the conversation of these two quiet talkers on things theological, who were interrupted now and then by music, when Le Lever would sing, with a bow to the grave Nuncio, some of the German student's songs he had translated."

In the world, yet not of it, was the young Nuncio. He had a keen irony of his own too, for he had inherited not a little Roman wit, and more than one saying of his survives in the court circles of the Belgian capital. The following story is certainly worth telling:—

One night at a dinner a certain Marquis showed the Nuncio a snuff box having on the cover a very lovely Venus. The men of the party watched the progress of the joke gleefully, and, as for the Marquis, he was choking with laughter, until the Nuncio deferentially returned the box, with the remark: "Tres jolie, est ce le Portrait de Madame la Marquise?"

From which report it may be seen that the grave young ecclesiastic did not disdain worldly weapons, and knew quite well how to use them.

But the influence of Mgr. Pecci was not confined to salons. It was already exerted for that literary movement which is the glory of the century. L'accordaire, "keen for salvation and all that is beautiful," was then preaching this gospel to his countrymen in language that never can be forgotten: "Among living nations the culture of letters is, next to religion, the greatest of public treasures, the aroma of youth and the sword of manhood." This was the doctrine which the Nuncio propounded in Brussels, and which he has since preached from the height of Papacy. Such a character, an accomplished scholar, a diplomat, a well-bred and courteous gentleman, and a priest whose asceticism was mirrored in every feature, could not but have an irresistible tendency even in royal courts. Leopold I., who was a penetrating judge of men, formed a very high opinion of him. He endeavored to make of him a counsellor and friend, and induced him to be a frequent visitor at the court. The King often conversed familiarly with him, and took pleasure in propounding all sorts of difficult questions. The Nuncio, however, was never taken back, so that the King would end by saying: "Really, Monsignor, you are as clever as a politician as you are an excellent churchman." The Queen, too, had great veneration for him, and never lost an opportunity to obtain his blessing for herself and her children. He tells us himself that he often held the little Leopold, Duke of Brabaten, in his arms and, at his mother's request, blessed him

"in order that he might be a good king."

At the Belgian Court the Nuncio heard much of Queen Victoria, niece of King Leopold, and it is therefore not surprising that before he finally left Belgium the future Pope spent a month in London, strolled in the park, sat in the distinguished strangers' gallery in the House of Commons heard O'Connell and looked into the print shops of Pall Mall—memories which he recalls to English visitors at the Vatican year by year. "It is hard to imagine," says a writer quoted before, "Thomas Aquinas in Holborn; a more singular figure in some ways was that of this future Pope wandering down Piccadilly and breathing what Lord Beaconsfield called the 'best air of Europe' at the top of St. James street."

He knew little English then. In Brussels he had often visited an English family in order to "do conversation," but the knowledge has, in the lapse of years, unfortunately been lost, in 1846 he was appointed to the See of Perugia and King Leopold bade him adieu, adding smilingly, "I am sorry that I cannot be converted, but you are so winning a theologian that I shall ask the Pope to give you a Cardinal's Hat." "Ah," said the Nuncio, "but that would be a poor substitute for—since you mentioned it—an impression on your heart." "I have no heart," said the King sadly. "Then on your head," said the Nuncio—and so they parted.

When Mgr. Pecci reached Rome, after visiting Paris and Marseilles, the Pope was dead.

The intentions of the Pontiff who was gone were, however, known and regarded by the Pontiff who ruled in his place, the genial Pius IX. It was St. Anne's day, 1846, when Archbishop Pecci entered Perugia to take possession of his See, a day chosen in honor of his mother, whose feast-day it had been. Perugia the queen of the hill country, the names of whose saints are forever wedded to the names of its cities—Assisi, Cortona, Viberto, Foligno—towns guarded by the heights or set secure upon the hillsides with the sunshine pouring into their steep streets, is even now a city of the past. Along the solitudes of this hill country St. Francis walked meditating on his "Lady Poverty;" here were the very birds that he taught and it was over these uplands that he saw the sun rise and set—"our brethren Lord Sun,"—upon a peaceful and pure-minded people. Ah, the deep blue sky of Italy, it need not be seen to be loved. Those Umbrian twilights, delicate and cool as dawns; the trees—slender trees such as Pietro Perugino drew—standing out against the lucid blue, the horizons share yet soft with air and distance—the whole atmosphere of those purple shadowed mountains and wine clad plains teems with associations of the art and the glory of the past. "As late as 1869," says one writer, "those streets had no gas; no carriages no carts came and went by the dim oil lamps; and the pavement on soft summer nights knew only the footsteps of strollers and the sound of their ceaseless Italian voices. And if Perugia was so much a city of the past on the eve of the taking of Rome, it must have been most remotely old and most intensely Italian in 1846, when the civil Governor went back as Archbishop."

The entry was made amid the huzzas of the people, for Mgr. Pecci's wise and faithful administration was remembered with gratitude and those happy anticipations were not disappointed. Among the records of his rule are the building of thirty-six churches and the restoration of many others, the institution of the Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas for priests, a seminary for the clergy, a convent for

the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, the organization of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, for the relief of the poor (an order already widespread), of St. Joachim for the assistance of aged and needy priests, and the establishment of institutions for the care of magdalens and foundlings.

His zeal for education was unbounded; he not only founded schools, but he kept a constant watch over them to see that they were all conducted properly. The seminary was close by the Episcopal palace and the new Archbishop gave up a wing of his house for its further enlargement. He visited it at all hours, going in quietly and without any notice, seating himself, and listening to the recitations and lectures. One of the professors relates that one day, failing to be in his place at the appointed hour in the school of Belles Lettres, and hastening to repair the delay, with the trepidation of a man who knew that the most likely thing in the world was to meet the Cardinal in the corridor of the college, watchful over the silence and order to be kept there, what was his astonishment when opening the door of his class-room to see the Cardinal seated in his chair and translating for the benefit of the rapt scholars a passage from Cicero's "Pro Milone." The professor received no reproof save a gentle smile, but doubtless he was never tardy again.

Among the duties of an archbishop is that of writing at certain times pastoral letters to his flock, warning them of dangers, encouraging them in good works. Archbishop Pecci's pastorals were not only masterpieces of eloquence, but they showed the character of the man, firm and unmoved as an antique statue of the presence of danger, yet bursting forth into a tongue of living flame when called upon to protest against outrage and wrong. His pastorals were indeed addressed not so much to the people of Umbria as to the Christian world. In one of them he says: "Why should the Church be jealous of the wonderful progress of our age in observation and discovery?" Bacon, so eminent in science, has said, 'A little knowledge leads away from God, but much knowledge leads back to God.' This golden saying is always true; and if the Church fears the ruin that may be wrought by the vain ones who think they understand because they have a smattering, she has entire trust in those who apply seriously and profoundly to the study of nature; for she knows that at the end of their search they will find God who in all His works reveals Himself with all His attributes of power, wisdom and goodness."

The one on "Modern Civilization and the Church" is an energetic protest against the abuse of a noble world: "When men," he says, "turn into a mockery, the Word of God, it is the dictates of 'civilization' they are obeying. 'Civilization' commands them to curtail the number of churches and priests and to multiply the houses of sin. It is 'civilization' that requires the establishment of a class of theatres in which modesty and good taste are alike unknown. In the name of 'civilization' the usurer crushes his victim with shameless exactions and the dishonest trader heaps up his ill-gotten gain; a filthy press contaminates the mind of its readers, and art prostitutes its powers to promote universal corruption." The words recall the noble speech of Montalembert in the French Chamber in 1849: "You have dethroned some kings, but more surely still you have dethroned freedom. The kings have reascended their throne, the throne which she had in our hearts. Oh, I know well that you write her name everywhere, in all the laws, on all the walls, upon all the cornices" (pointing to the roof), "but in hearts her name is

effaced. Yes, the beautiful, the proud, the holy, the pure and noble liberty, whom we so loved, so cherished, and so served, this liberty is not dead, but she is languid, fainting, crushed, suffocated."

"Tell them to have no fear of science," wrote Leo XIII. to the students of Louvain, "for God is the author of all science."

Archbishop Pecci's pastoral fell upon troubled times, covering, as it did, the whole of the national movement in Italy—1848, 1869, 1870—and Perugia was the centre of the ferment. In the presence of the persecutors of his clergy and the perverters of his flock Archbishop Pecci was no longer the humble and gentle-voiced priest but a dauntless warrior, championing the rights of the Church. He wrote two powerful letters of protest and reproof to King Victor Emmanuel against the forcing of civil marriage upon Umbria after the Italian State had taken possession and against the expulsion and spoliation of the Camaldolese friars and other religious orders.

"Sire," he wrote in 1869, "with souls deeply grieved we come once more to bring before your majesty our respectful but serious complaints about the evils which are heaped unceasingly on the churches given us to govern; we are willing to hope that our voices may yet be listened to and that justice may be done. During each of the last four years we have raised our voice with increasing frequency, and have given utterance to the grief of our holy religion, afflicted and oppressed in so many ways—by the setting aside ecclesiastical immunities; by depriving her ministers of the necessary means of subsistence; by preventing all free intercourse between the head of the Church, the pastor and the people; by withdrawing from all dependence on the bishops both schools and institutions of piety which these same bishops had themselves founded, or which had been placed under their care and government by the pious founders; by profaning or even destroying their homes the religious orders, and by so many other acts which it would be too long and too sad to enumerate. Sire, the good of a nation is its morality, and this only comes from religion and from the salutary influence of its ministers. What will become of the Christian people when they are deprived of the necessary teachers of childhood, of the men who comfort the widow and the orphan, of those who soften the pains and labor of the present life by the thought and hope of the life to come, who wipe away the tears of the afflicted, who direct the doubting and hesitating by words of good counsel, and cheer the last hours of the dying."

In 1864, made remarkable in Perugia by the elevation of Mgr. Pecci to the cardinalate, Central Italy was threatened by famine. The Cardinal's fatherly forethought had already suggested the establishment of "monti frumentari" or deposits of grain in every country parish, and he gave an example to all by opening in the episcopal residence itself a free kitchen for the poor. True son of Countess Anna Pecci, he was mindful of the example of the mother on whose tomb is inscribed: "Feeder of the Needy."

For thirty-four years the Cardinal Archbishop kept his pastoral charge in Perugia. His life had always been as simple as a friar's; the daily Mass, long prayer, constant work and the frugal table of an old-fashioned Italian (even as Pope it is said that the cost of his table is but 100 francs, \$20 a month) had kept his mental and bodily vigor so high and fresh that when at sixty-seven he was called to the Pope's side, it was not to rest that he went, but to new duties. In July, 1877, he accepted the office of Cardinal Camer-