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From College to Pontiff's Throne

History of the Late Pope's Life in its Most Interesting Stages

The early life of Pope Leo has already been published. Likewise the record of his Pontificate. The Register to-day gives an account of his career from the time he entered the college of the Roman nobility up to his election as Pope. Three days before his admission to the Academy, Joachim Pecci called on Cardinal Sala, his protector and the best friend of his family. Joachim was still undecided as to the vocation he should adopt. "Well, young man," said the Cardinal, "are you ready to take orders?" "Oh, wait a moment, your Eminence," was the reply. "My young friend," rejoined the Cardinal, "if all the Roman aristocracy were as undecided as you, the Holy Father might as well shut up this College of the Nobility." Joachim Pecci's irresolution arose from a mixture of prudence and energy. If his habit was to hesitate for a considerable time before coming to any important determination, it was because he wished to make sure of his ability to prosecute his design to the very end. Never to advance without the certainty of never being obliged to recede is not a characteristic of indecision but of wisdom. Joachim Pecci delivered his first public dissertation at the Academy of the Nobility on the 6th May, 1835. The Pope did not attend, but the presence of five cardinals—Maachi, Sala, Castracane, Poliadori and Matti—many numerous prelates increased the importance of the occasion. Not long afterwards the future Pope took part in a special competitive debate on public ecclesiastical law, the question of treatment being "Direct appeal to the person of the Sovereign Pontiff." For this he obtained a prize of thirty scudi. His most complete and successful triumph, however, was in September, 1835, when he delivered a dissertation dedicated to Cardinal Sala. Sala was a former counsellor of Cardinal Caprera, and played an active part in the negotiations which opened the way for the Concordat. The most eminent among the princes of the Church were glad to have recourse to his advice, and the Pope valued him highly. His protection could not but be, and in fact was, of great importance to Joachim. The latter had taken the lesser orders in 1834, but was not to have applied for admission to the sub-diaconate until the end of the year 1837. In the course of that year, however, he was successively appointed one of His Holiness' prelates, referee of the Papal signature, and a member of the Buonaparte congregation, wherein all the administrative business of the Papal States was transacted. Mr. Pecci was the junior prelate when he was named. This post, in succession to Mr. Pecci, Cardinal Sala's influence could not have been unconnected with so speedy a promotion. In September, Mr. Pecci, having experienced some symptoms of the cholera then ravaging Rome, wrote his will. It was such as might have been expected from a truly and deeply religious man. "In the name of God, Amen. I commend my soul to God and the most holy Mary. May the Divine Majesty and the blessed Virgin have mercy on me, a sinner! "I bequeath all my worldly possessions in equal shares to my very dear brothers Charles and John Baptist, on condition that they cause fifty masses for the repose of my soul to be said every year for five years. At the end of that period they may consider themselves as relieved of this obligation, but I appeal to their charity to increase the number of intercessions for my soul. I further entrust on my heirs above-named to make one distribution of twenty crowns among the poor of Carpinto, my native place. "As a humble token of respect and affection, I bequeath to my uncle Antonio the porcelain service presented to me by his Eminence Cardinal Sala. "These are the last wishes of me, Joachim Vincent Pecci, written with my own hand this 14th of September, 1837, in the third hour of the night. "The Most High did not accept the offered sacrifice of Mr. Pecci's life. He was reserved for other purposes. What was perhaps the reward of his heroism came in the shape of a vocation for the priesthood. He was admitted a sub-deacon on the 17th De-

ember, 1837, by Mgr. Sinibaldi, at the Ecclesiastical Academy. Seven days later Mgr. Sinibaldi also conferred the diaconate upon him, and on the 31st December Cardinal Odescalchi consecrated him priest for ever: Te es sacerdos in aeternum. Much to his joy, his first Mass was celebrated at the St. Andrew's Institute for Novices, in the little chapel dedicated to St. Stanislas Kostka, the favorite saint of his youth. On the following day he wrote thus to Cardinal Sala: Your Eminence says in your last note, "I admire your fervor, but you must not abandon the career you have begun." It may enable you to render important services to the Church and the Holy See. I must reveal to your Eminence a secret which I have hitherto kept locked in my own breast. For some time past I have felt strongly inclined to renounce worldly pursuits and to devote myself entirely to the inner, spiritual life. I am, in fact, convinced that the world cannot give the heart full contentment and quietude. So great is my esteem and admiration for the Jesuit Fathers, from whom I have imbibed all I know, that I should have become a Jesuit had I been able to recognize within myself something more than an inclination—the special vocation which should be felt for the ministry. We pass over his appointment as Delegate to Benevento, and a Delegate to Perugia. Mgr. Pecci had only just reached Perugia when Gregory XVI. announced his intention of visiting the city. The delegate had only twenty days to organize a reception for the Pope on a scale appropriate to royalty. The time, however, was so well utilized that a magnificent new artery was completed. It was opened by the Sovereign Pontiff on the 25th September, 1841, amid the acclamations of the populace as yet uncorrupted by the revolutionary virus, in spite of the incessant efforts of the secret societies. The new road was christened the "Via Gregoriana." The Pope, whose name had been given to it, expressed his satisfaction by saying that during his journey through the provinces he had been received in some places like a monk, in others like a cardinal, and at Perugia and Ancona like a sovereign. Before his departure, the Pope gave a hint of the good fortune in store for his delegate by saying, "When I return to Rome, Monsignor, I will remember you." The Pope kept his word. At the commencement of the year 1843 Mgr. Pecci was appointed Nuncio at Brussels in the place of Mgr. Fornari, who was transferred to Paris. During his eighteen months' stay at Perugia, Mgr. Pecci had reorganized all the provincial government departments, and especially those connected with public instruction and the administration of justice. In his desire to improve the condition of the working classes, he even founded a savings bank. His record was one of good work executed with a promptitude remarkable in a young man who had been formerly reproached by Cardinal Sala for "indecision." Mgr. Pecci did not return at once to Italy from Brussels. He visited Germany, Austria and England, making the acquaintance of Cardinal Wiseman in London, and obtaining the honor of a presentation to the Queen. Wiseman supplied him with reliable information as to the state of Catholicism in England. Mgr. Pecci next went to Paris, and spent three weeks as the guest of Mgr. Fornari, who secured him a long interview with Louis Philippe. From Paris Mgr. Pecci proceeded to Rome. On his arrival he found that Gregory XVI. was dead, and that the members of the Sacred College were already assembled in the Conclave which was to result in the election of Pius IX. Mgr. Pecci's term of office was very stormy, but fruitful—stormy, because he was twice, in 1849 and 1860, brought face to face with a revolution. In 1849 the Garibaldians took possession of the city, and the Austrians, under the command of Prince von Lichtenstein, were pressing to attack when Mgr. Pecci intervened, with the result that order was restored without bloodshed. Eleven years afterwards, the 14th September, 1860, Perugia was captured by an army of 15,000 Piedmontese under General de Sonnaz. The enemy took possession of the seminary and the Bishop's palace. It is altogether improbable that Pius IX. saw in Mgr. Pecci the successor destined to change the direction of the policy of the Holy See in conformity with the views of Providence, or that he summoned the Cardinal to Rome in order to facilitate, rather than hinder, his accession? In any case, the appointment—all the more important in view of the fact that the Conclave was known to be close at hand—was received with the utmost favor both in political and religious circles. Signor Bonghi, the Italian ex-Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, undoubtedly expressed the general opinion prevailing among statesmen in the following passage in his book "Pius IX. and the Future Pope": "Cardinal Pecci, the newly-appointed camerlengo, is undoubtedly one of the most distinguished intellects in the Sacred College. He is by nature moderate, and he is one of the most vigorous cardinals in regard to health. He has studied deeply, is a good manager, and was a bishop of great merit. His ideal of a cardinal is as high as any one's, and he has realized it in his own person." On the death of Cardinal De Angelis (July 7, 1877) the Italian Govern-

ment asserted that it was entitled to inherit the exceptional prerogatives of the deceased dignitary, on the ground of "the inclusion of the Apostolic Chamber within the domains of the State." Writers were not wanting to support this singular claim, and even a scheme for the occupation of the Vatican on the death of Pius IX. was drawn up. Providence and Cardinal Pecci foiled the plot. King Victor Emanuel died a month before the Pontiff whom he had deposed, his death creating a most opportune diversion; while Cardinal Pecci summoned a committee of cardinals to define the rights and duties of the camerlengo, the labors of this committee resulting, on the 10th October, in a Papal Bull calculated to destroy some of the illusions cherished by the Italian Government. Victor Emanuel was summoned to his last account on the 10th January, 1878, "by Him whom all empires depend," as Bossuet finely says. On the 7th February, God recalled to Himself the noble and pure soul of Pius IX. On the morning of that day, Cardinal Pecci took up his quarters at the Vatican, so as to be able to cope at once with the great and responsible duties about to devolve upon him. He performed these duties with an authoritativeness, activity, and energy which afforded no encouragement to resistance. Two Papal deliverances contain a carefully-codified set of rules still in force at the election of Pops. Among the most interesting of these regulations are the following: The 1878 Conclave differed from its predecessors in the abolition of separate cells for the cardinals, and the inclusion of every floor of the Pontifical palace within the area shut off for the proceedings. The Conclave opened on the 18th of February with the Mass of the Holy Spirit, sung by Cardinal Schwartzberg in the Pauline Chapel, and with the oration pro eligendo pontifice, delivered in the Sistine Chapel by Mgr. Mercurelli, secretary to Pius IX. On the 18th February, at half-past five in the afternoon, the Conclave was finally separated from the outer world. In his book "Sovereigns, Statesmen and Churchmen," Mr. Charles Benoist gives an admirable description of Cardinal Pecci's state of mind on the morning of the memorable 20th February. This passage deserves to be cited in full: "Vainly he tried to take refuge in the past. The quiet old house at Carpignano, the Jesuit College at Viterbo, his ordination, his first appointment, the cardinal's hat itself, how far away all these things seemed! Everything he had felt and experienced appeared to have forsaken him as he stood trembling at the threshold of this glorious but mysterious future, pressing high he must stand above even those nearest to him. Why would they not let him finish reciting his verses to his fellow-students in the olive grove on the slope of the hill behind St. Peter's in Montorio? "Quam flore in primo felix, quam prima Lepinis Orta jugis, patrio sub iare, vita fuit!" "Yes, that was it; the Garden of Olives. He was there, like Jesus, and they were betraying him and preparing a Calvary for him; the throne! Then he seemed to fall into a slumber and dream that he was clasping the trunk of a poplar, and that same tree grew and grew within his arms until it touched the sky. From time to time he seemed to hear his own name uttered by the dean of the Sacred College. Then the prophecy of St. Malachi recurred to him. Was not Pius IX., Cruc de cruce, to be succeeded by a Pope who should be Lumen in coelo? Lumen in coelo! That must be the star on his coat-of-arms! But what was he that he should hope to become the most honored patriarch and lord, the bishop raised to the apostolic summit, the gatekeeper of the House of God, the head and mouthpiece of the apostolical bond of union; to become an Abraham in patriarchal dignity, a Melchisedech in priestly sanctity, a Moses in command, a Samuel in jurisdiction, a Peter in power, and an Anointed like Christ Himself! A mist came before his eyes with every vote added to those already cast for him. In this the evening of his day he saw, not night, but the dawning of eternal day. "Suddenly he saw the sub-dean prostrate at his feet, and heard the words 'Acceptas-ne electionem, de te canonice factum in summum pontificem?' (Dost thou accept thy due and regular election to the sovereign pontificate?) He remembered Celestina V., and the undying stigma inflicted by Dante, his own favorite poet, on 'the shade of him who in cowardice uttered the great refusal.' His voice rose to his lips in almost a sob as he replied, 'Such being God's will I cannot gain-say it.' (Enter what name wilt thou be known?' 'As Leo XIII., in remembrance of Leo XII., whom I have always venerated.' 'All the canopies save his were thrown down. They clad him, dazed and barely conscious, in white: Lumen in coelo, they gave him a garment of light. They kissed his ring, his feet; they led him where they would. From the inner loggia of St. Peter's he blessed the city and the whole world. His tall, wasted form, with arms extended in the act of benediction, was like a living cross. He was the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the successor of the Fisher of Men, stretching forth his hands to bless two hundred million souls."

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THE CANADIAN NORTHWEST

HOMESTEAD REGULATIONS

Any even numbered section of Dominion lands in Manitoba or the Northwest Territories, excepting a and 26, which has not been homesteaded or reserved to provide wood lots for settlers, or for other purposes, may be homesteaded upon by any person who is the sole head of a family, or any male over 18 years of age, to the extent of one-quarter section of 160 acres, more or less. ENTRY. Entry may be made personally as the local land office for the district in which the land to be taken is situated, or if the homesteader desires he may, on application to the Minister of the Interior, Ottawa, the Commissioner of Immigration, Winnipeg, or the local agent for the district in which the land is situated, receive authority for some one to make entry for him. A fee of \$10 is charged for a homestead entry.

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Should be made at the end of the three years before the Local Agent, Sub-Agent or the Homestead Inspector. Before making application for patent the settler must give six months' notice in writing to the Commissioner of Dominion Lands at Ottawa of his intention to do so.

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