

Selections.

POSITION OF MODERN ROME.

Over against Balliol College, in one of the most public places of Oxford, there stands a monument erected by the piety of modern ages to commemorate one of the greatest events which has occurred since human beings have formed themselves into societies. The artist, with great skill and singular success, has carved in enduring stone the features of those great paladins of our religion who upon that spot laid down their lives in torments to secure liberty of conscience in after ages to their fellow-countrymen and their fellow-creatures.—Life in England is so fully occupied in the Senate, in the forum, in the market-places, that but few professed students care to delve in the dark chambers of history, and to labour among dusty records and old dates.—The toll, however, is not always without reward.—Strange suggestions and contrasts are brought to light by confronting the present with the past. It is now within a few days of three centuries back that stout old Latimer and Ridley, the most fearless and the most efficient of the Protestant bishops, were burnt at Oxford on the very spot where the Martyr's Monument now stands. These things happened on the 16th of October, 1555. All laws that had been made to the prejudice of the Pope's authority in England had been just repealed. Queen Mary had shaken from her as a pollution the title of "Head of the Church," and it was made felony to pray that God would turn the Queen's heart from Idolatry and Popish superstition.—Everything seemed to promise fair for the renewed subjection of England to the Roman See. The Pope of that day could look around him with confidence to the Sovereigns who either held or were about to succeed to supreme power in France, in Germany, in Spain. Charles IX., with one foot upon the throne, was already dreaming of St. Bartholomew's night, in concert with the Guises, and Aumales, and Anjous.—The hypochondriacal bigot Philip was about to receive from his great father the inheritance of Spain, and the cause of the Papacy in Germany was to be entrusted to Ferdinand I., with good expectation of pious successors in his place. We will not speak of England as it is in the year 1555, but certainly the Pope whose reign was illustrated by the martyrdom of Latimer and Ridley would have been not a little astonished, could he have known that the correspondent of a London journal, writing from the Holy City precisely three centuries after his time, would have drawn the following picture of his successor's position:—"The chief feature in the social state of Rome is decidedly an abhorrence of Papal Government, and, possibly, it might be added, an increasing deference to religion. Of the latter point, however, I cannot speak with certainty; only I do know that the day before yesterday, (the Feast of the Annunciation,) when the Pope performed Mass in the church of Santa Maria del Popolo, there were not above 200 persons in the building, besides officials, and very few in the streets to see the display of Military and State carriages, and receive his Holiness's blessing as he passed. I am told, indeed, that it is not unusual for the people of Rome to run up side streets, or into houses as they see the Pope's carriage coming along, in order that they may not be obliged to do him reverence." This surely is a sad falling off from the days when a Gregory, an Innocent, a Julius, or a Leo thundered forth his decrees from the Vatican as "the servant of the servants," and yet the Omnipotent Lord here below!

But in truth, to any man gifted with but moderate observation who has made Italy his home for a time, this result can cause no astonishment. In England we find the Papal system modified according to the exigencies of an heretical land and unbelieving race. Would you know what that system is in its full development, go to Rome. You will not at first be conscious of the horrors with which you are surrounded. A certain season must be given to day dreams in the Forum, and to night dreams in the Coliseum. The artist's enthusiasm must be allowed to satiate itself on the marvellous marbles which ancient art has bequeathed to us, and among those wonderful pictures which seem to prescribe the limits of the painter's skill. There comes a time, however, when the fueling for these things passes by. Man was not sent into this world to dream away life among ruins, nor to practice dilettantism in any of its alluring forms. Mix, then, gradually—but with exceeding caution—with the Italians who inhabit this holy town, and learn from them the meaning of their lives. You will doubtless meet with exaggeration enough—possibly with falsehood—but on the whole there will be such a concurrence of testimony in proof of the unutterable turpitude and atrocious tyrann-

ny of the Papal Government that no indifferent person could refuse acquiescence in the testimony produced. But, if words will not convince your mind, look around you! What you see—that scene of ruin and desolation—that hub-bub of fever, with its stenches, and miasma,—was once the capital of the world. When heathens held it, and the high priest, with the silent virgin by his side, ascended the Capitol in honour of Jupiter, Rome was supreme among the nations. In the hands of the Christians, and when the self-styled Prince of the Faithful on each returning Easter day ascended the balcony of St. Peter's to bless the Holy City, what has not Rome become! If it be the case, as all history appear to suggest, that nations and kingdoms, even as men do, perish and decay from the effect of their own vices and corruptions, surely the sentence and condemnation has been branded deeply enough upon the brow of Pontifical Rome. But the ruin and the sickness, and the poverty, and the desolation above ground, are as nothing compared with what passes in the interior of those Roman houses and in the dungeons, the dark secrets of which are but occasionally revealed by the few prisoners who ever escape from their chains to tell the tale. We have not space nor time just now to enter upon the subject, but it has been well ascertained that within the last few years horrors have been enacted in the Roman prisons for which parallels must be sought in the dungeons of the Spanish Inquisitions when that tribunal was at its worst. But the physical torture—no! nor the imprisonment of hundreds of thousands of innocent men—is not all. Worse, far worse than this, is the unutterable moral pollution which overflows upon every wretched cottage and miserable lodging in this Papal land. Get some Roman who has accorded you his tardy confidence to sit by your side under an old archway, when the hot air and bright sun of Central Italy drive you to some cool shelter, and there hear what he has to say of the doings of yonder sable-stoled priests, who sweep past you in silence and in gloom. Hear his story of what priests do at Rome, where they are omnipotent, and you will see reasons to be thankful that your lot was not cast among the pollutions to which every Roman born is subject—he and his family. *Civis Romanus sum!*—How pathetic a complaint do the words now imply; how much history is involved in that brief phrase!

We, of course, can only concern ourselves with the story of modern Rome as a political question. The Pope of Rome to us is but a temporal prince, who grievously oppresses his miserable subjects, and whose misdeeds are likely to hurry on that explosion in Central Italy which sooner or later must come. The French garrison has been reduced, and the Pope, in a fright, has sent off for another Swiss regiment, to guard him from the consequences of the too enthusiastic loyalty of his subjects. The police espionage of Rome has been screwed up to the level of that of Naples. The project for withdrawing the paper currency has proved a failure. Every obstacle is thrown in the way of those who would carry out the projected railroads; for the cardinals have come to the conclusion that the instant their wretched serfs begin to travel and mix with their fellow-creatures, there is an end of their dominion. Only think of what the condition of that population must be which may become too enlightened by contact with the tazzaroni of Naples! He would be a bold man who should venture to predict with absolute certainty the moment when that power which has held the human race in thralldom for so many centuries shall fall to rise no more; but certainly the foundation of the Papacy, as a temporal power, appear sadly shaken just now. Were the French garrison withdrawn to-morrow, the next day Pio Nono might reckon himself fortunate if he escaped the vengeance of his subjects in the most cunning disguise which the craft of his advisers could suggest.—*London Times.*

GREAT INNER SEA EQUATORIAL AFRICA.

The following communication has been addressed to the *Athenæum*, by Mr. Augustus Petermann:—"A communication from Mr. Rebmann, the missionary at Mombas, on a very interesting feature of Inner Africa having been made to me by Dr. Barth, of the Missionary Society at Calcutta (Wittenberg). I am induced to offer the following few lines in reference thereto:—The communication consists of three letters from Mr. Rebman, dated, "Mombas, the 13th, 20th, and 30th of April, 1855," and a small map comprising the greater part of Africa, drawn by that gentleman at Mombas under the last of the dates, the purpose of these documents being to announce the discovery of a very large inner sea, which in the map, is represented to occupy the vast space between the equator and 10 degrees south latitude, and between 23 degrees and 30 degrees east longitude, Greenwich, having at its

south-eastern extremity Lake Nyassa attached to it like a tail-piece.—This immense body of water, with an area about twice as large as the Black Sea (with the Sea of Azoff) is inscribed with the name of Ukerewe or inner sea of Uniamexi, its narrow elongated south-eastern end bearing that of Lake Nyassa; and the discovery is said, in the accompanying letters to have been arrived at by the concurrent testimony of various natives dwelling on or close to the lake, both on its eastern as well as on its western shores—with whom the missionaries came in contact. Some of these natives that came down to trade on the coast at Tanga, in particular, gave a clear account of it, while at other points of the coast, from Tanga, southward for 6 degrees of latitude, corroborative information was obtained. It is to be regretted that Mr. Rebmann does not at once communicate the particular data which formed the basis of this representation, but rather enlarges in phrases conveying little that is positive to those anxious to test the correctness of his conclusions. He refers to a large and very detailed map which has been drawn by his colleague, Mr. Erhardt, and which we presume is on its way to Europe. But however unsatisfactory the internal evidence of the account before us may be, it confirms and establishes one very important fact, namely, that there is only one large lake in Southern Africa. This was the opinion held long since by W. D. Cooley, whose valuable and important researches into the geography of that region are so well known, but whose view was opposed till now by the accounts of missionaries in Eastern Africa, as they maintained that in addition to Lake Nyassa, there existed another large lake in Moonemoet. As they now themselves conform to the opinion from which they formerly thought they had reason to differ, it may be considered all the more firmly established. Mr. Rebmann's letters contain several particulars respecting the southern, or rather south-eastern extremity of the lake, which, however, do not materially add to or differ from what is contained in Mr. Cooley's various essays on the geography of the region; while a provoking silence is observed respecting the northern more novel and interesting portion of the lake, and the very marvellous extent given to it. More detailed and satisfactory information must therefore come to hand before it can be properly discussed. The letters and map of Mr. Rebmann, which may be seen in the *Calcutta Missionblatt* of the 1st of Oct., 1855, as well as the large forthcoming map of Mr. Erhardt to which reference is made in the former, appear to me to deserve a notice, all the more because they contain the latest result of the East African Mission which is present seems intended to be given up.—Mr. Kripi has already returned to Europe, and lately arrived at Trieste, while Mr. Erhardt left the East African coast in April last, by a Hamburg trading vessel, via the Cape of Good Hope. This mission has existed since the year 1843, when Mr. Krapf first reached the East African coast, and in June, 1846, was joined by Mr. Rebmann.—Despite the series of years devoted to this enterprise, it has not been productive of such results as might have been expected, but it has nevertheless done great service in drawing attention to that interesting region, and in pioneering the way. What we now want is a determined and able man like Dr. Barth, to follow up discoveries and researches partially made."

CONCAVITY OF THE EARTH AT THE NORTH POLAR CIRCLE.

To the Editor of the *Churchman*:

SIR:—I read with great joy, in last Friday's *Tribune*, to me, and no doubt to you, the gratifying intelligence of the safe arrival in New York of Dr. Kane, returning from his voyage to the Polar regions. The feelings of joy, I think, were more excited, perhaps, than my own, for the success of the undertaking, both on the score of science as well as humanity; and I felt that if I could give a hint that would throw any light on the subject, it was my duty to do so. From that motive it was that I sent a letter to Dr. Kane on the morning that he sailed from New York; whether he received it, I know not. It was to inform him that I had good reasons to be assured that the earth was concave at or within the Polar circle; consequently as the sun's rays would be thrown directly into the concavity, great heat would be the natural result, which heat would, as another natural consequence, neutralize the cold of all that part for some considerable distance. I felt assured that if Dr. Kane came near its influence so as to perceive an alteration in the temperature, the hint I had given would be sufficient to induce him to proceed, when, otherwise, for want of it, he might return, and his whole previous exertion be lost. My first idea of the earth's concavity, and consequently