

of men, and it needed not much discernment to see that under the new regime the Byzantine court would never willingly tolerate the ancient independence and traditional boldness of the Roman Bishops.

VOCATION OF THE WANDERING NATIONS.

It was therefore high time to find a balance to the encroachments and sinister designs of those Greeks on the Bosphorus, who were drifting ever farther away from the Latin spirit and ideals; this the genius of Gregory, discovered in the young barbarian nations of the West. It would be wrong, however, to see in his conduct only the cold calculations of a statesman. It was influenced simultaneously by the deep yearnings of the apostle, by the purest zeal for the salvation and betterment of the new races which lay about him like a whitening harvest waiting for the sickle of the spiritual husbandman. While yet a simple monk he had extorted from Pelagius the permission to evangelize the Angles and the Saxons, and had proceeded some distance when the Romans discovered their loss and insisted on his return. Were it not for their selfishness he would have reached the shores of Britain and gained perhaps a place in the charmed circle of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, who were even about that time engaged in the losing conflict for independence which ended so disastrously at the Badonic Mount.

GREGORY AND THE LOMBARDS.

This is not the place to relate the details of the numerous relations which Gregory established on all sides with the barbarian peoples of Europe. The nearest to him were the Lombards, the relentless hammer of the Italo-Roman State, and one of the most arrogant and intractable of all the Teutonic tribes. His policy with them is peace at any price. Now he purchases it with church-gold, sorely needed elsewhere, and again he concludes a treaty with these iron Dukes in the very teeth of the ex-arch.

It was he who restrained this rugged and contemptuous race; who started among them a counter-current against their brutal paganism and their cold, narrow, unsentimental Arianism; who left to them, in his own person and memory, the most exalted type of Christian manhood, at once fearless and gentle, aggressive and enduring, liberal and constant, loyal to a decaying, incapable empire, but shrewd and far-seeing for the interests of Western humanity, whose future renaissance he must have vaguely felt as an Augustine or a Salvian.

GREGORY AND THE FRANKS.

Beyond the Alps the descendants of Clovis had consolidated all of Gaul under Frankish rule. Though Catholics they were too often purely natural barbarians, restrained with difficulty from the greatest excesses and guilty in every reign of wanton oppression of Church and people. They sold the episcopal sees to the highest bidder and they often intruded into these places of honor and influence their soldiers or their courtiers. With great tact and prudence Gregory dealt with these semi-Christian kings. In his correspondence he argues at length and explains the evils of a simoniacal episcopate; he warns them not to exert their power to the utmost, but to temper justice with mercy and to learn the art of self control. In all the range of Papal letters there is scarcely anything more noble than the correspondence of Gregory with the Kings of Gaul, Spain and England. His language is generally brief, but noble, courteous, earnest, penetrating and admirably calculated to make an impression upon warlike and untutored men, who were delighted and flattered at such treatment from the uncrowned head of the Western civilization. Childbert and Brunebaut, Recared and Ethelbert and Bertha, became

powerful allies in his apostolic designs, and opened that long and beneficent career of early medieval Christianity when the youthful nations grow strong and coalesced under the tutelage of the Papacy, which healed their discord, knitted them together, and transmitted to them the spirit, the laws, the tongues, the arts and the culture of Greece and Rome—treasures that, in all probability, would otherwise have perished utterly.

GREGORY AND THE ANGLO-SAXON.

No act of Gregory's eventful career has had such momentous consequences as the conversion of the Angles and the Saxons. They were, if possible, a more hopeless lot than the Lombards; revengeful, avaricious and lustful, knowing only one vice—cowardice, and practising but one virtue—courage. Though distant, the fame of their brutality had reached the ends of the earth. Moreover, they had already nearly exterminated a flourishing Christianity, that of Keltic Britain. In a word, they were not so very unlike the Iroquois when Breboeuf and Lallemand undertook their evangelization. I need not go over the recital of their conversion. All his life Gregory cherished this act as the greatest of his life. He refers to it in his correspondence with the East, and it consoled him in the midst of failures and discouragements. His great soul shines out through the pages of Bede, who has left us a detailed narrative of this event—his boundless confidence in God, his use of purely spiritual weapons, his large and timely toleration. For these rude Saxons he would enlist all the sympathy of the Franks and the co-operation of the British clergy. He directs in minutest detail the progress of the mission, and provides during life the men and means needed to carry it on. Truly he may be called the apostle of the English, for, though he never touched their soil, he burned with the desire to die among them and for them; he opened to them the gate of the heavenly kingdom and introduced them to the art and literature and culture of the great Christian body on the continent.

ROME AND THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

Henceforth the Saxon was no longer the red Indian of the classic peoples, but a member of the world-wide Church. In the long history of Christian Rome she never knew a more romantic and deep-set attachment on the part of any people than that of the Angles and the Saxons, who for centuries cast at her feet not only their faith and their hearts, but their lives, their crowns and their very home itself. Surely there must have been something extraordinary in the character of their first apostle, a great well-spring of affection, a happy and sympathetic estimate of the national character, to pour forth such an outpouring of gratitude and such a devotion, not only to the Church of Rome, but to the civilization that she represented. To-day the English speaking peoples are in the van of all human progress and culture, and the English tongue is likely to become at no distant date the chief vehicle of human thought and hope. Both these people and their tongue are to-day great composites, whose elements it would not be easy to segregate. But away back at their fountain head, where they first issue from the twilight of history, there stands a great and noble figure who gave them their first impetus on the path of religion and refinement, and to whom must always belong a large share of the credit which they enjoy.

GREGORY AS POPE, ADMINISTRATOR, WRITER.

As Pope and administrator of the succession of Peter, Gregory ranks among the greatest of that series. His personal sanctity, his influence as a preacher, his interest in the public worship and his devotion to the poor

are only what we might expect from a zealous monastic bishop; but Gregory was eminent in all these while surpassingly great in other things. No Pope has ever exercised so much influence by his writings, on which the middle ages were largely formed as far as practical ethics and the discipline of life were concerned. He laid out the work for the medieval Pope, and in his person and career was a worthy type of the bravest and the most politic among them. Though living in very critical times, he maintained the trust confided to him and handed it over increased to his successors. There is no finer model of the Latin Christian spirit, and some will like to think that he was put there, at the confines of the old and the new, between Roman and Gothic, to withstand the flood of Byzantinism, to save the Western barbarian for Latin influences and to secure to Europe the transmission of the larger and more congenial Latin culture.

Long ages have gone by since he was gathered to his rest (604) in the portico of old St. Peter's with Julius and Damasus, Leo and Gelasius, and all the long line of men who built up the spiritual greatness of Rome. Legends have gathered about his memory like mosses and streamers on the venerable oak, and calumny has aimed some poisoned shafts at his secular fame. But history defends him from the unconscious transformation of the one and the intentional malice of the other which ever loves a shining mark. She shows to the admiring ages his portrait, high niched in the temple of fame, among the benefactors of humanity, the protector of the poor and the feeble against titled wealth and legalized oppression, the apostle of nations once shrouded in darkness, now the foremost torch-bearers of humanity—one of that very small number of men who, holding the highest authority, administer it without fault, lead unblemished lives and find time and opportunity to heal, with voice and pen and hand the ills of a suffering world, and advance its children on a path of unbroken progress, guided by the genius of pure religion, consoled, elevated and purified by all that the noblest thought and the wildest experience of the past can offer.

Liberty and License.

Translated for the Register.

Amongst the truths recently enunciated for the benefit of the students of the Catholic Institute of Paris by the eminent Rector, Mgr. D'Hulst, is the following definition of liberty:

"I wish to speak to you of Liberty. But do not fancy that I am going to decry it or denounce it! That would be poor tactics on my part, for I well know how you love liberty and how jealous you are of her rights. Nor would it be sincere on my part, for I myself love her and wish you to enjoy her blessings.

"But merely to love liberty is not enough, we must also know it well, and know precisely in what it consists; this is necessary in order that our liberty may be secure. How many young men have lost it and become slaves, because they did not see it where it is to be found! They sought for liberty and thought they could reach it by pursuing license, but what they found was servitude!

"The great mistake with most men is to think that liberty is something outside of themselves, in the exterior circumstances surrounding their lives. If you start from this false principle, your college is a prison, for there your outer life is set in the framework of a narrow rule; and when the student is relieved from the yoke he becomes free, because he can make whatever use he pleases of his time; not that the rule has ceased to exist, but that the sanction or penalty has almost

vanished, or rather it has become less immediate and less visible. Mental sloth, habits of self-indulgence, a disorderly life—all these entail a sure and heavy penalty, it is true; but there is a long term of credit, and the delay of punishment easily merges into impunity.

"The one important thing above all others is to grasp the philosophical truth, which is, moreover, and above all, a dogma of our faith—that liberty has its seat within. From thence, no doubt, it sheds its rays abroad; but vainly would you seek for it in its outward manifestations if its interior source were dried up or exhausted. The absence of material impediments promotes the expansion of liberty, but it is not itself liberty. See St. Paul bound to the pillar which some of you may have venerated at Rome, in the crypt of Santa Maria in Via Lata. He cannot, it is true, go where he pleases, but his will is free, and he can love, serve and announce Jesus Christ, and gain soul for him. The irons binding his hands and his feet do not arrest his speech: 'THE WORD OF GOD IS NOT TO BE FETTERED.'

"Look, now, at his persecutors. They come and go as they please in the great city. But whither do they go? They go where passion hurries them, where avarice or luxury or intemperance has set them their task, or where-soever the force of opinion, or fashion, or the fear of offending Cæsar compels them to go. Are they free? No, they are slaves! For what they do they themselves condemn. They seem to move and act of themselves; but, in very truth they are but moved and dragged hither and thither.

"You see, then, that true liberty is to be found in a will capable of grappling with the powers of this lower world, because it has itself yielded submission to the law and yoke of reason and to the sovereignty of God."

F. B. H.

What France Escaped.

It was a dark horse, after all that won the Presidential stakes, writes Eugene Davis in commenting on the recent crisis. Several days before the election day only two candidates for the Presidency of the French Republic, M. Waldeck Rousseau and Henri Brisson were on the field. The latter, who is the President of the Chambre des Deputes, it was anticipated, would be the next President of the French Republic. His defeat was a boon to the cause of the Catholicity in France. Henri Brisson is and has been for years occupying the important position of Chief of the Freemasons of Paris. This saturnine and bilious bigot hates Christianity with all the spleen and rage of Voltaire. The era of the persecution of the French Catholic Church would be revived if the generalissimo of the Parisian Freemasons were chief magistrate of France. No Catholic chaplain would reside in the Elysee Palace; no mass would be celebrated on Sundays or holidays in its chapel. The first President of the French Republic, Adolph Thiers, was an infidel. Jules Grevy, the third President, was an indifferentist as to his religious views; but Mme. Grevy and her daughter were devout Catholics, and they compelled the President to obtain the services of a Catholic chaplain, who would be their spiritual adviser, and who would celebrate mass on Sunday and holidays in the chapel of the Elysee. Marshal Mac Mahon, Carnot and Casimir Perier had their chaplains.

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