



HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIII.

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The recent excesses by pilgrims at Rome have directed public attention once more to the Eternal City, and to the venerable Pontiff who, owing to the strained relations between the Holy See and the Italian Government, appears to hold his place in Rome by a somewhat uncertain tenure. His Holiness Leo XIII., the 258th Roman Pontiff, is a son of Count Ludovico Pecci, and was born at Carpenito, in the year 1810. From 1818 to 1824, he was a student at the Jesuit College of Viterbo. Later he achieved distinction at the School of Collegio Romano, and passed thence to the College of Noble Ecclesiastics. Having received the degree of D.C.L., he was made, in 1837, by Pope Gregory XVI., Referendary of the Segnatura, and in the same year took holy orders and was consecrated a priest. He received further honours from the Pope, and in 1843 was sent as Papal Nuncio to Belgium. His rise to influence and power in the church was rapid. Shortly after visiting Belgium, he was created Archbishop of Damietta. In 1846 he was

nominated Bishop of Perugia, and was made a Cardinal in 1853. On the 20th of February, 1878, he was elected Pope, and assumed the title of Leo XIII. The Papal Jubilee, in 1887-8, and the universal interest it aroused, are still fresh in the public mind. That event commemorated the 50th anniversary of his assumption of holy orders. Rome was the centre of great rejoicing, and representatives both from Protestant and Catholic states in Europe, from America, the Indies and all parts of the world went there to offer congratulations. The Duke of Norfolk was England's special envoy, and bore a congratulatory address from Her Majesty the Queen, whom, but a short time previously, Leo himself had congratulated upon the celebration of her jubilee. The Pope has throughout his reign manifested a deep interest in the affairs of nations. He was selected as arbiter in the dispute between Germany and Spain over the Caroline Islands. His decree denouncing the Plan of Campaign in Ireland is still fresh in memory as the subject of vigorous

controversy. The question of African slavery has occupied his attention, and he has endeavoured to unite European nations for its suppression. His Holiness takes great interest also in the United States and Canada, and quite a number of distinguished Catholics in this country remember with pride and pleasure that while in Rome they were favoured with an audience with him. He has made strenuous efforts, with more or less success, to increase the friendly relations between the Holy See and the different governments of Europe, a step all the more necessary because of the hostility to himself sometimes so markedly manifested in Italy. The question of his removal from Rome, owing to this hostility, is still a lively subject of discussion. Among distinguished Protestants who have personally visited His Holiness was the Emperor of Germany, who visited him in 1888. The Princess Louise and Marquis of Lorne, when in Rome in March of last year, were granted a private audience. Despite his great age, the venerable Pontiff retains considerable vigour and a lively interest in the affairs of the world by so large a portion of whose people he is regarded with love and veneration.