

to suggest that he has an accurate or familiar acquaintance with it. They are possibly picked piecemeal out of the services of the Church for the day. It is, for example, to say the least, a most singular method of reference to the difficult subject of the genealogies of our Lord to say, "we read at the commencement of *two* of the Gospels a long genealogy of Him, which comes down from princes and kings." Where, again, did the Pontiff learn that the Jews, as a nation, had some celebrity as smiths, with which imaginary celebrity he oddly enough connects the mention of the antediluvian Tubal-cain in Gen. iv.

22. Nor can anything be more curious than his *exegesis* applied to the parable of the sower. He expounds it to a Roman deputation. The way-side represents the impious and unbelievers, and all who are possessed by the devil; those who received the seed among the thorns are those who rob their neighbor and plunder the Church; the stony places represent those who know, but do not act. "And who are the good ground? You. The good ground is that which is found in all good Christians, in all those who belong to the numerous Catholic Clubs." Now the clubs on the other side are clubs of hell; sanctity is thus (here and commonly elsewhere) identified with certain politics. Nor does it seem very easy to trace in detail the resemblance between the exposition of the vicar and that given by the principal (Matt. xiii. 18—23).

Indeed, the Papal Exegesis appears somewhat frequently to bear marks of dormitation. Thus, placing King Solomon at a date of twenty-two or twenty-three centuries back, he makes that sovereign the contemporary either of Pericles or of Alexander the Great. More important, because it is a specimen of the wilful interpretations so prevalent at Rome, is the mode in which he proves his right to be the Teacher-general of all States and all nations, because Saint Peter was chosen, in the case of Cornelius, to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles.

#### A PICTURE.

Let us revert for a moment to the month of June, 1846.

A provincial prelate, of a regular and simple life, endowed with devotional susceptibilities, wholly above the love of money, and with a genial and tender side to his nature, but without any depth of learning, without wide information or experience of the world, without original and masculine vigor of mind, without political insight, without the stern discipline that chastens human vanity, and without mastery over an inflammable temper, is placed, contrary to the general expectation, on the pinnacle, and it is still a lofty pinnacle, of ecclesiastical power. It is but fair towards him to admit that his predecessors had bequeathed to him a temporal polity as rotten and effete in all its parts as the wide world could show. At the outset of his Pontificate he attempted to turn popular emotion, and the prin-

ciples of freedom, to account in the interests of Church power. As to ecclesiastical affairs, he dropped at once into the traditions of the *Curia*. He was, and is, surrounded by flatterers, who adroitly teach him to speak their words in telling him that he speaks his own, and that they are the most wonderful words ever spoken by man. Having essayed the method of governing by Liberal ideas and promises, and having, by a sad incompetency to control the chargers he had harnessed to his car, become (to say the least) one of the main causes of the European convulsions of 1848, he rushed from the North Pole of politics to the South, and grew to be the partisan of Legitimacy, the champion of the most corrupt and perjured sovereignties of Italy—that is to say, of the whole world. Had he only had the monitions of a free press and of free opinion, valuable to us all, but to sovereigns absolutely priceless, and the indispensable condition of all their truly useful knowledge, it might have given him a chance; but these he denounces as impiety and madness. As the age grows on one side enlightened and on another skeptical, he encounters the skepticism with denunciation, and the enlightenment with retrogression. As he rises higher and higher into the regions of transcendental obscurantism, he departs by wider and wider spaces from the living intellect of man; he loses province after province, he quarrels with government after government, he generates schism after schism; and the crowning achievement of the Vatican Council and its decrees is followed, in the mysterious counsels of Providence, by the passing over, for the first time in history, of his temporal dominions to an orderly and national Italian Kingdom, and of a German imperial crown to the head of a Lutheran king, who is the summit and centre of Continental Protestantism.

But what then? His clergy are more and more an army, a police, a caste; farther and farther from the Christian commons, but nearer to one another, and in closer subservience to him. And they have made him "The Infalible"; and they have promised he shall be made "The Great." And, as if to complete the irony of the situation, the owners, or the heirs, of a handful of English titles, formerly unreclaimed, are now enrolled upon the list of his most orthodox, most obsequious followers; although the mass of the British nation repudiates him more eagerly and resolutely than it has done for many generations.

Such is this great, sad, world-historic picture. Sometimes it will happen that, in a great emporium of art, a shrewd buyer, after hearing the glowing panegyric of a veteran dealer upon some flaming and pretentious product of the brush, will reply, "Yes, no doubt, all very true; but it is not a good picture to live with." So with regard to that sketch from the halls of the Vatican, which we have endeavored faithfully to present, we ask the reader in conclusion, or ask him to ask himself, *Is it a good picture to live with?*