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## POPE GREGORY VII.

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The well-known tendency of the ruined gamester to dwell with fond remembrance on the recollection of great stakes won in days gone by, the natural impulse which tempts the penniless spendthrift to revert with pride to the recollection of his unwise profusion in the hour of his wealth, have doubtless urged the present Pope and his more devoted friends to celebrate the eight hundredth anniversary of the priestly triumph at Canossa, on the 25th-27th January, 1877.

To the prisoner of the Vatican, as he is pleased to style himself, the ex-King of Rome, and probably one of the last popes ever destined to play an important part in the affairs of the world, it must naturally afford a mournful satisfaction, not unmingled with heartfelt regret, to remember how eight centuries ago, one of his predecessors kept the proudest potentate in Europe for three days suing in his anti-chamber, half-clad, more than half-starved, and suffering anguish from cold. Eight hundred years have brought with them many changes, and however much he may wish to have the power, the infallible pope of to-day in his wildest day-dream can never hope to emulate the authority of the pope who had no pre-

tensions to infallibility in days gone by. The spread of knowledge and the light of the Reformation could not but prove destructive to a power founded on ignorance and superstition. It seems almost strange that any reference should be made to the humiliation of a German emperor, especially by the Pope and his adherents, considering the relative positions held by Pío Nono and Kaisir William at this moment; however, doubtless the eyes of the faithful will be kept so intently fixed on the glories of the past, that they will not have a moment to spare to glance at the humiliations of the present.

Meanwhile a short account of the reign of Gregory VII. may prove neither uninteresting nor uninstructional.

To three popes above all others, is due the credit—if credit it can be considered—of having raised the authority of the papal see to the superb height it attained at the end of the thirteenth century. These three popes were Gregory VII., Innocent III., and Boniface VIII. In speaking of them, Hallam says: "As Gregory VII. appears the most usurping of mankind till we read the history of Innocent III., so Innocent III. is thrown into the shade by the superior audacity of Boniface VIII.