

Poet's Corner.

THE HEART IMMACULATE.

(For the *Ave Maria*.)

Through street and field wild howls the March wind's blast,
The bare trees shiv'ring, loudly wail and moan,
Like souls remorseful for the bright days flown
When life was young and no sin dimmed the past;
Deep sounds in minor key run through the vast
Gloomed cavern of the night: alone, alone,
Yet in a warring world, our weak hearts groan,
And catch at prayer, to find sweet peace at last,
And this we know: let all the world be dark,
Dear Mary watches o'er our troubled sea;
And this we know: though unknown danger lurks
In all our land her pure heart is an ark,
In which we shelter, childlike, trustingly—
O heart unstained! the greatest of God's works.

MAURICE F. EGAN.

POPE LEO XIII.

A DETAILED BIOGRAPHY OF THE NEW PONTIFF BY FATHER
BALLERINI, S.J.

(Translated by *Weekly Register*.)

THE new Pontiff, whose election, so marvellously rapid, brought joy to the whole Christian world, was born at Carpineto, a large district of the diocese of Anagni in the States of the Church, of the spouses Count Lodovico Pecci and Anna Proserpi, on the 2nd of March, 1810. In baptism he had the two names of Vincenzo and Gioacchino; and his mother always called him by the first, as he himself did also, until near the end of his studies. But afterwards he always used and kept to the second.

In 1818, being then eight years of age, he was entrusted by his father for educational purposes, together with his elder brother Giuseppe, to the religious of the Society of Jesus in their College of Viterbo. There, under the instruction of Father Leonardo Garibaldi, a man of much talent and of a most gentle character, he made his studies of grammar and humanities, until the death of his mother in 1824, when he went to Rome. Here he was placed under the guardianship of an uncle, and had rooms in the Palace of the Marchesi Muti. In the November of the same year he entered into the schools of the Roman College, at that time given back once more by Pope Leo XII. to the Society of Jesus, and there he had for his masters Fathers Ferdinando Minini and Giuseppe Bonvicini, both of illustrious name, for their merit in eloquence and in virtues above the common.

Afterwards for three years he gave himself up in the same college to philosophical discipline. Amongst the masters who taught him, Father Giovanbattista Pianciani, a man illustrious in science, and nephew of Pope Leo XII. and Father Andrea Carafa, a mathematician of great repute, are worthy of being remembered. The young Pecci gave proof of rare ability, not only in the rational part of philosophy, but likewise in the others; since, as is affirmed by the list of students who received the premiums published in the year 1818, he gained the first prize in chemical physics; and in mathematical physics he had the first *accessit*.

He, feeling himself inclined towards the service of God and the Church in the sacerdotal ministry, after having with much profit finished his course of philosophy, undertook that of theology. In the four years which he dedicated to it, he had as his masters men of great fame, such as Fathers Giovanni Perrone, Francesco Manera, Michele Zecchinelli, Cornelio Van Everbroeck, and the venerable and most learned ex-cogit Father Francesco Saverio Patrizi, who, now more than eighty years of age, still lives, and has the consolation of seeing his former pupil gloriously assumed to the chair of St. Peter. Now whilst he studied theology he was requested, although still so young, to repeat philosophy for the students of the German College, an office which could not be conferred on any one except a person of choice talent and sound knowledge. Pecci fulfilled his task to the satisfaction of all. In the third year of his theological studies, in 1830, he sustained, with much praise, a public dispute in theology, and gained the first prize. . . . In the following year he likewise finished this course of studies with the honours of the doctorate. He was then twenty-one years of age.

A fellow student of Pecci, a man most worthy of faith, thus writes in a private letter:—"I can attest that, whilst he was in Viterbo, he was admired for his prompt talent, and more for his singular goodness of character. I having passed with him into the school of humanity, where we were competitors, every time that I saw him a mind all life and all intellect was brought before me. In his studies in Rome he never knew companions, conversations, diversions, or games. His little desk was his world: to cast himself into the depths of science his paradise. Even from the age of twelve or thirteen he wrote Latin prose and verse with a facility and elegance wonderful at his age."

Having entered into the Academia of Noble Ecclesiastics, the Abbé Pecci frequented the schools of the Roman University for the study of Canon and of Civil Law. A person of very worthy character, who was his companion in this study, assures that he was remarked amongst the others no less for the excellence of his talent than for the exemplary character of his life. He and the Duke Riaro Sisto Sforza, who was afterwards Cardinal-Archbishop of Naples, where he died in the odor of sanctity in the September of the past year, 1877, were the two mirrors of the numerous scholars.

At that time Pecci was patronised by Cardinal Antonio Sala, who came to him comforting him with wise counsels and admonitions.

Having gained the doctorship in both branches of law, he was made Domestic Prelate and Refendary of the *Segnatura* by his Holiness Pope Gregory XVI. on 16th March, 1837. Cardinal Carlo, of the Princes Odescalchi, famous for the humility with which he renounced the purple to follow the institute of St. Ignatius, having already given him orders in the Chapel of S. Stanilaus Kostka, at S. Andrea al Quirinale, on the 23rd December of the same year conferred the priesthood upon him in the Chapel of the Vicariate. Then the young prelate and priest was sent by the Holy Father to rule, with the office of Delegate-Apostolic, successively the provinces of Benevento, of Spoleto, and of Perugia.

In the government of all these places he acquired a reputation of inflexible justice and noble honesty. It is a well-known fact that he accomplished the task of purging the lands of Benevento from the evil-doers by whom they were infested. It is likewise told that whilst governing the Province of Perugia, there came to pass one day a rare event—the prisons remained empty. On the 25th September, 1841, he had the honour of receiving, amidst grand popular festivities, in the city of Perugia, the august Pontiff, who was travelling to visit a part of his States. The latter, having thought of rewarding the virtues and services of Mgr. Pecci, and of employing him in things of greater use for the Holy See, in the Consistory of 27th January, 1843, created him Archbishop of Damietta, to send him as Nuncio into Brussels to Leopold I. In fact, on the 19th of the following February he was consecrated in Rome by Cardinal Luigi Lambruschini, in the Church of San Lorenzo in Panisperna. Thus he reached the Episcopal Order while he was only thirty-three years of age.

He arrived in Brussels 6th April of the following year. The king, as soon as he knew him, took him into esteem and made much of him. The Catholic newspapers of Belgium have, in the days just passed, related many and precious memories of the three years of his nunciature in that kingdom, of his zeal for the Christian education of youth, of his love for good studies, of the affection with which he favoured and honoured some fine institutions of charity established there—which he afterwards wished to transplant into his Diocese of Perugia—and of the amiable and noble courtesy with which he knew how to gain the hearts of every order of persons. He visited all the large cities of the kingdom and sojourned in them. On the 2nd of June, 1844, he made in Brussels the celebrated procession for the Centenary of Notre Dame de la Chapelle in the midst of an extraordinary gathering of the faithful. In fine, so deep was his affection for this most religious land, that he afterwards made an asylum of his Episcopal Palace at Perugia for every Belgian who presented himself there. He often received there some pupils of the Belgian College at Rome during vacation time. And he lodged in this college when he found it necessary to come to the metropolis of Christianity on the business of the Church.

When Pope Gregory XVI. recalled Mgr. Pecci to Italy, to place him as ruler over the Diocese of Perugia, King Leopold, by decree of 1st May, 1846, desired to decorate him with the Grand Cordon of his Order, and adduced as a reason for this sign of honour "the particular benevolence and esteem" which he had for the illustrious prelate.

The see of Perugia was assigned to him in the Consistory of 19th January, 1846, and he made his solemn entry into the city on 26th of July following, the Feast of S. Anna, he having selected that day in memory of the Countess Anna Proserpi Pecci, his dearly beloved mother. This see he continued to hold for over thirty-two years, namely, from that day to the day of his elevation to the Supreme Pontificate. Seven years after, in the Consistory of the 19th December, 1853, the Holy Father Pius IX. created and published him Cardinal of the title of San Chrysogono. It is worthy of remark that, in the same Consistory, the immortal Pontiff pronounced his Allocution *In Apostolicæ sedis fastigio*, recounting to the Sacred College how great was the sufferance he had had towards the sub-Alpine Government, which repaid him by trampling under foot the most sacred rights of the Church.

(To be continued.)

FATHER NEWMAN.

FATHER JOHN H. NEWMAN was recently made an honorary fellow of Trinity College, Oxford. He acknowledges the compliment by dedicating his new and revised edition of his "Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine" to the fellows and President, Dr. Wayte, in the following graceful letter:—

"MY DEAR PRESIDENT,—Not from any special interest which I anticipate you will take in this volume, or any sympathy you will feel in its argument, or intrinsic fitness of any kind in my associating you and your fellows with it,—

"But, because I have nothing besides it to offer you, in token of my sense of the gracious compliment which you and they have paid me in making me once more a member of a college dear to me from undergraduate memories;—

"Also, because of the happy coincidence, that whereas its first publication was contemporaneous with my leaving Oxford, its second becomes, by virtue of your act, contemporaneous with a recovery of my position there:

"Therefore it is that, without your leave or your responsibility, I take the bold step of placing your name in the first pages of what, at my age, I must consider the last print or reprint on which I shall ever be engaged.

"I am, my dear President,

"Most sincerely yours,

"JOHN H. NEWMAN,

"February 23, 1878."

THE population of the Bessarabian territory wanted by Russia is 150,000, of whom 6000 are Muscovites, and the rest Roumanians and Bulgarians in equal proportions.