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THE MONTHLY CONCERT.

Prayer for the heathen!—prayer!

The God of grace will hear;
Where'er the praying are
He bends a listening ear.
If in our souls his love
With quenchless ardor burn,
The gracious Heavenly Dove
Our pleadings will not spurn.

The soul, for grace that pleads
And wrestles, cannot fail;
For Jesus intercedes,
And Jesus must prevail.
The world from Satan's chains
Groans loudly for release,
Through him who lives and reigns
In heaven, the Prince of Peace.

Then for his Spirit pray,
Your alms with praying join;
Wrestle till break of day,
For blessing all divine.
Meet in the social band,
In concert sweet unite,
For oh! in many a land
The harvest-fields are white.

Send, Lord, thy laborers forth,
Let none as idlers wait;
East, west, and south and north,
Is not the harvest great?
Thrice blest is he who reaps;
The wages he receives
Exceed the tears he weeps,
While gathering home his sheaves.

O give what will not we
This rained world to save?
Since on th' accursed tree,
And in the voiceless grave,
The Lord hath deigned to show,
By being made a curse,
How much to him we owe,
Who gave his life for us.

[Journal of Missions.]

SKETCHES OF POPE PIUS IX.

A history of the pontificate of the present Pope has been published in Edinburgh, from the pen of Signor Niccolini, formerly an officer in the staff of the Roman army.

This "history" is divided into five epochs: the first, "The Pope inclined to be a Reformer;" the second, "Pius forced to be a Reformer;" the third, "The Pope an Enemy to Reform;" the fourth, "The Pope bombarding the Reformers;" to which are added, concluding reflections.

The author was brought up in the Pope's native town, and has peculiar advantages for the work which he has undertaken.

The following is from the first portion of the history:—

"Giovanni Mastai was born at Seinagalleana, on the 13th of June, 1792. He was the seventh child of Count Mastai, one of those noblemen who possess a splendid palace, an ancient name, a magnificent geological tree, and a revenue of from £300 to £400. Giovanni, the youngest of the family, perceiving that, like all others similarly situated, he must either maintain himself, or be contented with a scanty pittance at the board of his eldest brother, determined to become either a soldier or a priest. After some hesitation he betook himself to the trade of the latter, as the least dangerous and more lucrative. He became, then, a priest; and, setting aside his bigotry and superstitious strictness in the observance of the external forms of religion, a very exemplary one. Being a patrician and a bigot, he quickly advanced in the career of honour and dignity. He became a prelate, a bishop; and at the death of Gregory the Sixteenth, he was

Cardinal Archbishop of Imola. In each of these capacities, few would have acted more praiseworthy than did Mastai. A stranger to political intrigue; assiduous in performing his pastoral duties; charitable to the poor; the friend and consoler of the afflicted; strictly moral in his private life, he was most dearly beloved by his flock. The meekness of his character; his perfect freedom from political bias: the hope entertained by all the other cardinals of domineering over a pope entirely uninterested in temporal affairs; all contributed to his being elevated to the chair of St. Peter. After only two days' conclave, he was elected Pope, and assumed the name of Pius the Ninth."

No event, apparently, could have so powerfully contributed to the resuscitation of a system fast becoming *effete*, as the election of Pius, the general amnesty that followed, and the liberal spirit evinced in the beginning of his administration. The state of matters immediately before is thus described:—

"When Gregory the Sixteenth died, Popery, both as a spiritual and temporal power, was breathing its last in Italy. The pope's scandalous conduct, both intemperate and impure, had alienated from him all the honest and conscientious men among the religious Catholics. The relentless tyranny of Lambruschini della Genga Mattei had exasperated men's minds so much that every other year a new revolution broke out, each more serious than its predecessor. Youth, in its generous devotedness, was ready to shed its blood to amend the wretched condition of the country, and persons of more mature age, driven to despair, preferred death to ignominy.

Twenty-five thousand persons, the tenth of the active population, the hundredth part of the whole, were either exiles, or in the pope's dungeons. The misery was insupportable, the apprehension and anxiety extreme. All the European powers, including even Austria, had advised the Roman court to relent, but in vain. When the new pope was elected, the Romans who were ready to revolt, determined to try that last experiment. If a man like Giovanni Mastai, whose pure and uncontaminated life, whose piety, meekness and charity, every one admired, should prove no better than former popes, then all was over, and Popery would have ceased to reign over Italy."

The author then proceeds to describe the effects of the new pontiff's amnesty, and liberation and employment of political prisoners, the gratitude of his own subjects, and the general enthusiasm excited by his conduct throughout the world. The following is very significant; and, we fear, strictly true:—

"These demonstrations were, in my opinion, the pope's ruin. The flattery rendered him vain. His ambition rose, and he thought to restore to Popery its ancient splendor and power, and become himself the arbiter of nations. The short-sighted priest applied to himself as pope the praises which men bestowed on him as prince, and imagined that Europe was bending the knee to the pontiff, while she was only applauding the liberal reformer."

The new pope became so unpopular with the abettors of the old regime, that it was confidently believed (and the banishment of the suspected parties seemed to establish the fact) that a foul conspiracy had been formed against his life, as well as for the destruction of the leading Liberals. "Italy" and the name of "Pius" were associated together, and national independence began to be demanded. The reforms conceded by the pope were by no means real and substantial. The Consulta di Stato was the mockery of a representative body, for they were merely to give their opinion if asked. Instead of one mini-

ster, six were appointed, but all were cardinals. The most important concession was the establishment of a national guard. When the Austrians sent an armed force to Ferrara, the pope protested, and the "first epoch" of his history, the year 1847, closed. The next spring brought the general convulsion of Europe with it, and the Italian Liberals insisted on the secularization of the government:—

"We were determined to free ourselves [says our author] from the ignoble yoke of the priesthood. To no churchman, except to the pope, would we consent to leave any power in temporal affairs. . . . But in this, Pius the good prince, misled by Pius the pontiff, obstinately refused to comply with our wishes. The king claimed the privileges of the pontiff, and the pontiff withheld what the king would not have refused. On a solemn occasion, he reproached us from the balcony of the Quirinal with slandering venerable ecclesiastics; and when the news arrived that the Neapolitans had expelled the Jesuits from their city, he issued a proclamation in which he menaced us if we ever were tempted to injure them, with his anger, and with the curse of God's indignation, who would launch his holy vengeance against the assailants of his anointed. . . . From that moment Pius lost all his popularity. His policy became deceitful and hypocritical, and directed only to withhold from us the wished-for reforms."

In the foregoing extract we have the key furnished to what would be otherwise unintelligible. The whole of this narrative is but a commentary on the incontrovertible fact that the Pope is the enemy of civil liberty, and the existence of the one can only be maintained on the ruins of the other. The bigot became the tyrant; the man, benevolent and generous by nature, was so warped by the necessities of his position, and by his blasphemous assumption of a vicegerency which Christ never bestowed, that he struck an unholy league with despotism, and at this hour rules at Rome, or rather resides there, the object of popular abhorrence, through the terror of French bayonets. The Bible is proscribed, the press silenced, and the friends of freedom and of truth are either imprisoned or banished. After stating that under the new constitution the Piedmontese "are raised to the dignity of citizens, and are finally resolved off the ignominious chains of the court of Rome," the writer adds:—

"The Romish priest is now subject to the civil magistrate, the constitution superior to the canon law. To the religious persecutions of the Jesuits have succeeded liberty of conscience, universal toleration, and a Protestant chapel is now rising in the midst of the capital. Catholic priests, now allowed to discuss doctrinal matters, and to make use of their reasoning faculties, are beginning to perceive the errors and superstition in which they have lived, are publicly condemning them, and making praiseworthy efforts to impress their parishioners with their new views. And this change is due to the system of religious freedom which now prevails in Piedmont and Sardinia. All this proves the truth of my assertion, that if true religion is to flourish in Italy, it must be in the soil of political freedom."

The Valley of the Amazon.

BY LIEUT. M. F. MAURY.

From a very able article in the November number of the S. L. Messenger, we extract the following fine description of this valley:—

Of more than twice the size of the Mississippi valley, the valley of the Amazon is entirely inter-tropical. An everlasting summer reigns there. Up to the very base of the Andes, the river itself is navigable for vessels of the largest class. The Pennsylvania 74 may go there.

A natural canal through Caciquiri connects it with the Orinoco. Giving fertility and drainage to immense plains that cover two millions square miles, it receives from the north and south innumerable tributaries, which it is said, afford an inland navigation up and down of not less than 70 or 80 thousand miles in extent. Stretched out in a continuous line, the navigable streams of that great water-shed would more than completely encircle the earth around its largest girth.

All the climates of India are there. Indeed we may say that from the mouth to the sources of the Amazon, piled up one above the other, and spread out, Andean like, over steppe after steppe in beautiful unbroken succession, are all the climates and all the soils, with the capacities of production that are to be found between the regions of everlasting summer and eternal snow.

The valley of the Amazon is the place of production of Indian-rubber—an article of commerce which has no parallel as to the increase of demand for it, save and except in the history of our own great staple since the invention of the cotton-gin. We all recollect when the only uses to which India-rubber was applied, were to rub out pencil-marks and make trap-balls for boys. But now it is made into shoes and hats, caps and cloaks, footballs and purses, ribbons and cushions, boats, beds, tents and bags; into pontoons for pushing armies across rivers, and into camels for lifting ships over shoals. It is also applied to a variety of other uses and purposes, the enumeration of which would make us tedious.—New applications of it are continually being made. Boundless forests of the Saranga tree are found upon the banks of this stream, and the exportation of this gum from the mouth of that river, is daily becoming a business of more and more value, extent and importance.

In 1846—7, pontoons were made for the British army in India, and tents for the American army in Mexico were made in New-England from the India-rubber of the Amazon. It is the best in the world.

The sugar-cane is found there in its most luxuriant growth, and of the richest saccharine development. It requires to be planted but once in twenty years.

There too are produced of excellent quality, and in great profusion, coffee and tobacco, rice and indigo, cocoa and cotton, with drugs of virtues the most rare, dyes of hues the most brilliant, and spices of aroma the most exquisite.

Soils of the loam and the finest alluviums are there. The climates of India—of the Moluccas and the Spice Islands are all there. And there too, lying dormant, are the boundless agricultural and mineral capacities of the East and West all clustered together. If commerce were but once to spread its wings over that valley, the shadow of it would be like the touch of the magician's wand:—those immense resources would spring right up into life and activity.

In the fine imagery of their language, the Indians call the Amazon the "King of Rivers." It empties into the Ocean under the Line.

Now Look: Nature has scooped out the land in Central America, and cut the continent nearly in two there that she might plant between the mouth of the "King of Rivers" and of the "Father of Waters," an arm of the sea capable of receiving the surplus produce which the two grandest river basins on the face of the earth are some day to pour into the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea.—These two sheets of water form the great commercial lap of the South. This sea and receive the drainage of all the rivers of in both continents, except the La Plat