

pany of monks and go to England (Ing'gland), where so beautiful a race were serving idols instead of the true God.

13. The whole of this had been done quickly, on the inspiration of the moment, with the Pope. But no sooner were the Romans aware that Gregory had left the city for this distant mission, than they ran in a body to the Pope, saying, "You have offended Saint Peter; you have ruined Rome in allowing Gregory to leave us." Pope Benedict, only too well pleased to yield to the popular voice, sent messengers after Gregory, who overtook him in three days, and conducted him back to his monastery. His disappointment was great, but his purpose remained unshaken.

14. His monastic peace suffered still more when, in 578, Pope Pelagius II. sent him as nuncio to the Emperor Tiberius in Constantinople. During this involuntary absence, which lasted six years, he was accompanied by many monks of his own community, reading and studying with them, and following, as closely as possible, the observance of the Rule: "Thereby," as he writes, "to attach myself by the anchor's cable to the shore of prayer, while my soul is tossed on the waves of human affairs."

15. While Gregory was in Constantinople, the patriarch, Eutychius, who had suffered for the faith under Justinian, fell into an error concerning the resurrection of the body, and this error appeared in a book which he put forth. Gregory, alarmed, held several conferences with the patriarch; and as this prelate was very humble, he was no sooner convinced of his mistake than he was ready to retract it. Soon after this he fell sick, and was honored by a visit from the emperor. Not willing to lose this opportunity to correct his error, he pinched up the skin on his shrivelled hand, saying, "I believe that we shall rise in this very flesh."

### III.

#### 7. SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT.

##### PART SECOND.

RETURNING to Saint Andrew's and the routine of monastic life, Gregory was immediately elected abbot, and his loving care for the souls of his brethren was like that of an-

other Benedict of Monte Cassino. He shared all their crosses, their trials, and assisted at the holy death of those who were called to their eternal reward. But this fraternal affection for his brothers in religion did not prevent his exacting the strictest obedience to their holy Rule.<sup>1</sup> A monk, who was also a skillful physician, was found, at his death, to have secreted three gold pieces, thus breaking the rule which forbids private property. Gregory ordered the three pieces of gold to be thrown upon the corpse, which was then buried without one mark of respect. This act of justice performed, all the masses for thirty days were said for the unhappy monk.

2. In 590, an overflow of the Tiber was followed by a pestilence, of which Pope Pelagius died. Gregory was immediately declared Pope by the senate, the people, and the clergy. Terrified at the thought of such a responsibility, Gregory protested, and wrote to the Emperor Maurice, beseeching him not to confirm the election. His letter was intercepted, and in its place one was sent from the Romans themselves.

3. While all this was pending, the pestilence ravaged Rome. Then it was that the great soul of Gregory rose up for the protection of his native city. From his monastery on the Cœlian Hill, Gregory organized that procession on three successive days in which appeared, for the first time, all the abbots of the monasteries with their monks, and all the abbesses with their nuns. On the last day, when these communities were slowly defiling before the tomb of Hadrian, singing litanies and psalms, Gregory saw on the summit of the tomb an archangel, who was sheathing his sword, like a warrior returning from the slaughter. From that moment the plague ceased. A representation of this angel in bronze, placed upon the spot, has given to the mausoleum its present name, *Castel Sant' Angelo*.

4. Meantime the emperor's confirmation of the election sped on its way. Gregory no sooner heard this than he fled from Rome to one of the caves to be found everywhere among the surrounding mountains. He was finally discovered by a pillar of light over the cave. Seeing it to be the manifest will of God, Gregory no longer resisted the election; but to the end

<sup>1</sup> Rule, the regulations and custom orders the daily life of its members.

of his life sighed, and even groaned aloud, whenever he recalled his few years of peace as a Benedictine monk. Such was the charm of a monastic life for a soul like that of Saint Gregory the Great.

5. Seated upon the Chair of Peter, what a succession of great acts flow from his unceasing solicitude for his people—the people not only of Rome, but of the world! Now it is some powerful patriarch, like John of Constantinople, whose self-asserted jurisdiction infringes upon the titles of the Holy See, and therefore upon the rights of Christendom. Now it is an Arian or a pagan prince, whom he brings sweetly under the yoke of Christ. Now he defeats the aggressive Lombards who threaten the freedom of Rome; now the treachery of the Byzantine emperors. Now it is a slave, whose vocation he protects under the pontifical mantle; and again it is the Jews, whom he shields from popular hatred. The liberty with which Christ makes His children free, was the liberty which Gregory claimed for all over whom his spiritual or temporal jurisdiction extended.

6. But while Africa, Asia, Spain, Gaul, Germany, as entire Christendom, were always before his eyes; while the liturgy of the Church, and even her song, won his enthusiastic attention, so that the Stations in the different churches of Rome, as we find them to-day, are by his appointment; so that the chant, according to which the priest of to-day sings the words of the Divine Office and of the Mass, is called the Gregorian chant; still it was England and her *Angles*, whom he had declared years before “were born to become angels,” which seemed to have won and chained to itself that noble and sanctified heart. Of his holy zeal we, who stand to-day on the steps of San Gregorio, overlooking the crumbling palaces of the Cæsars, are the distant witnesses. But this, as Montalembert<sup>7</sup> remarks, was to be the missionary work, not of Gregory as monk alone, but as Pontiff: the first monk who sat on the Chair of Peter.

7. In the year 596, he sent to England from his monastery of St. Andrew on the Cœlian Hill, the prior, Augustine, with forty monks, each of them kindled with a zeal for the same spiritual conquest as Gregory himself. They were furnished with books, and all the spiritual armor which the Holy See

could bestow. Moreover, all the diplomacy of the sovereign was put in requisition to secure the safe passage of the missionaries through countries hostile to each other; nor was there an hour during which the weight of this mission did not rest personally upon Gregory himself. After having embraced each of them as his brothers in religion, and, while bidding them farewell, declaring he envied them their privilege, he still lingered on these very steps where we stand to-day, and gave them his last blessing as they knelt on the triangular grass plot before us.

8. Are we ready now to enter the court to the old palace of the senator Gordianus and his wife Silvia, and the monastic home of Saint Gregory the Great? With all these inspiring memories in our hearts, let us cross this court of a patrician house of ancient Rome. Let us lift this heavy curtain, and stand within the very church still fragrant with the traditions of heroic sanctity. Its nave, supported by sixteen columns of antique granite, stretches before the eye to a solemn length, and on each side of the nave chapels shine out of the tender gloom of the aisle like colored gems. In the first chapel to the right we have, as an altar piece, Saint Silvia, with her young son Gregory at her side, while her eyes are fixed on the vision of a tiara over the head of her son. The picture is one of exceeding beauty; and the chapel reminds us that in St. Peter's we find Michael Angelo's *Pieta*, the dead Christ on the lap of His Mother, in the same first chapel on the right hand; as if it were the mother's place of honor in the house of her son.

9. Pausing in the chapel of Saint Peter Damian and of Saint Romuald, we pass directly forward to the chapel of Saint Gregory, in which this aisle ends. But of even greater interest than this chapel is the small room adjoining, which was formerly the cell of Saint Gregory, and only large enough to contain the bed and chair of a Benedictine. In this room we see the stone on which, according to the inscription, he took his short sleep after the labors and vigils of the day and night. Here, too, is the marble chair in which he sat as abbot of the monastery; and so battered and worn with its more than twelve hundred years of usefulness as hardly to have the heads of its lions recognized. Exactly opposite this room is the one in which we find the picture of the Blessed Virgin which spoke

to Saint Gregory. It is on the wall of an irregular *niche*, and sometimes concealed by a curtain; for, if only as a proof of Saint Gregory's devotion to the Mother of God, it is unspeakably precious.

10. Coming out again into the court, a door to the right allows us to enter a garden, in the midst of which stand three chapels in a semicircle. The first of these is the chapel of Saint Silvia. Very near this spot we are certain she lived, while Saint Gregory's infant sports were made in the garden which surrounds it. A statue of Saint Silvia, one of the best modern statues in Rome, stands above the altar, and Guido Reni was called upon to paint its ceiling. The second and largest chapel is that of Saint Andrew, in which Saint Gregory delivered several of his Homilies on the Gospels. Here we find the famous frescoes—one by Domenichino, of the scourging of Saint Andrew, and another by Guido Reni, of the same saint welcoming the cross on which he was to be crucified. The third chapel is dedicated to Saint Barbara. In this is preserved the table at which Saint Gregory fed, every day, twelve poor men, serving them himself, and at which, one day, sat an angel with the twelve poor men, so as to make thirteen. The place occupied by the angel is marked by a cross.

11. Over the altar is a noble statue of Saint Gregory, begun by Michael Angelo, and finished, after his death, by Cordieri, who executed also the beautiful statue of the venerable Silvia. The dove of the Holy Spirit is seen at the ear of Gregory, in this statue by Michael Angelo. It was from this chapel that Saint Gregory sent forth Augustine and his forty monks on their mission to England; and is there a spot in Rome which can arouse more profound emotions in any one who claims the English language as his mother-tongue? The cradle, indeed, we may call it of English Christianity; and from it we overlook the crumbling remains of that pagan Rome which sought only to subjugate where Gregory would send true freedom. Returning through the blooming garden, we come again into the portico of the court, where two inscriptions tell us how Saint Gregory converted this house from a palace into a monastery, and how he sent forth from it his missionaries to England.

12. And here we stand face to face with the one great fact

concerning England and the Benedictines; for to them, under God, she owes Christianity and civilization. And not only England, but we who derive from England our language and the laws which underlie our Republic. When the present Italian government not only took from Monte Cassino her revenues, her bare subsistence, but contemplated the appropriating of Monte Cassino itself to secular use, England, through her parliament, acknowledged this indebtedness to the Benedictine Order. What it could not do officially it did through its individual members, imploring the Italian government not to shame the nineteenth century by usurping to secular or national use Monte Cassino, that fountain-head not only of the Benedictine Order, but, through them, of European civilization.

13. We of America are one of the fairest fruits of this civilization; and we of this great Republic acknowledge with joy and pride our indebtedness to the Rule of Saint Benedict, and therefore to Saint Gregory the Great—Benedictine monk as well as Roman Pontiff.

STARR.

ELIZA ALLEN STARR was born in Deerfield, Massachusetts, and devoted herself in early life to literary pursuits. In 1854 she was received into the Catholic Church, and since then her pen has been under its inspiration. In 1867 she published a volume of poems. In 1871 appeared her "Patron Saints," with an Introduction bearing on Religious Art. She has also been a contributor to the "Catholic World" and other Church periodicals.

#### IV.

#### 8. ST. ANTONINO, ARCHBISHOP OF FLORENCE.

THE story of this good saint is connected in a very interesting manner with the history of art. He was born at Florence, of noble parents, about the year 1384. While yet in his childhood, the singular gravity of his demeanor, his dislike to all childish sports, and the enthusiasm and fervor with which he was seen to pray for hours before a crucifix, held in special veneration then, and I believe now, in the Or San Michele—caused his parents to regard him as one specially set apart for the service of God.

2. At the age of fourteen he presented himself at the door of the Dominican convent at Fiesole,<sup>1</sup> and humbly desired to be admitted as a novice. The prior, astonished at the request

<sup>1</sup> Fiesole (fĭ ɛs'olā).

from one so young, and struck by his diminutive person and delicate appearance, deemed him hardly fit to undertake the duties and austerities<sup>1</sup> imposed on the order, but would not harshly refuse him. "What hast thou studied, my son?" he asked benignly.<sup>2</sup> The boy replied modestly that he had studied the Humanities<sup>3</sup> and Canon Law.<sup>4</sup> "Well," replied the prior, somewhat incredulous,<sup>5</sup> "return to thy father's house, my son; and when thou hast got by heart the *Libro del Decreto*, return hither, and thou shalt have thy wish;" and so with good words dismissed him, not thinking, perhaps, to see him again.

3. Antonino, though not gifted with any extraordinary talents, had an indomitable<sup>6</sup> will, and was not to be frightened by tasks or tests of any kind from a resolution over which he had brooded from infancy. He turned away from the convent, and sought his home. At the end of a year he appeared again before the prior: "Reverend father, I have learned the Book of Decrees by heart; will you now admit me?"

4. The good prior, recovering from his astonishment, put him to the proof, found that he could repeat the whole book as if he held it in his hand, and therefore, seeing clearly that it was the will of God that it should be so, he admitted him into the brotherhood, and sent him to Cortona to study during the year of his noviciate.<sup>7</sup> At the end of that period he returned to Fiesole and pronounced his vows, being then sixteen.

5. The remainder of his life showed that his had been a true vocation. Lowly, charitable, and studious, he was, above all, remarkable for the gentle but irresistible power he exercised over others, and which arose, not so much from any idea entertained of his superior talents and judgment, as from confidence in the simplicity of his pure, unworldly mind, and in his perfect truth.

<sup>1</sup> *Au stēr' i ties*, hardships and mortifications, especially those imposed by rule, or voluntarily undertaken through religious motives.

<sup>2</sup> *Be nign'ly*, in a kind manner.

<sup>3</sup> *Hā mǎn' i ties*, the branches of polite learning, as language, grammar, the classics, poetry, etc.

<sup>4</sup> *Cǎn'on Law*, the law which re-

lates to the doctrine and discipline of the Church.

<sup>5</sup> *In crēd' u loūs*, not easily disposed to believe.

<sup>6</sup> *In dōm' i ta ble*, not to be curbed.

<sup>7</sup> *No vī' ci ate*, the years spent in learning and keeping the rules of a convent before making the vows of a religious.

6. Now, in the same convent at Fiesole where Antonino made his profession, there dwelt a young friar about the same age as himself, whose name was Fra Giovanni,<sup>1</sup> and who was yet more favored by Heaven; for to him, in addition to the virtues of humility, charity, and piety, was vouchsafed the gift of surpassing genius. He was a painter: early in life he had dedicated himself and his beautiful art to the service of God and His most blessed saints; and, that he might be worthy of his high and holy vocation, he sought to keep himself unspotted from the world, for he was accustomed to say that "those who work for Christ must dwell in Christ."

7. Ever before he commenced a picture which was to be consecrated to the honor of God, he prepared himself with fervent prayer and meditation; and then he began, in humble trust that it would be put into his mind what he ought to delineate; and he would never change or deviate from the first idea, for, as he said, "that was the will of God," and this he said not in presumption, but in faith and simplicity of heart.

8. So he passed his life in imagining those visions of beatitude which descended on his fancy, sent, indeed, by no fabled Muse, but even by that Spirit "that doth prefer before all temples the upright heart and pure;" and surely never before or since was earthly material worked up into soul, nor earthly forms refined into spirit, as under the hand of this most pious and most excellent painter.

9. He became sublime by the force of his own goodness and humility. It was as if paradise had opened upon him, a paradise of rest and joy, of purity and love, where no trouble, no guile, no change could enter; and if, as has been said, his celestial creations seem to want power, not the less do we feel that they need it not—that before those ethereal beings power itself would be powerless: such are his angels, resistless in their soft serenity; such his virgins, pure from all earthly stain; such his redeemed spirits, gliding into paradise; such his sainted martyrs and confessors, absorbed in devout rapture. Well has he been named "Il Beā'to" and "Angelico," whose life was participate<sup>2</sup> with angels even in this world.

10. Now this most excellent and favored Giovanni and the

<sup>1</sup> *Giovanni* (jō vān'nē).

<sup>2</sup> *Par tic' i pāte*, shared.

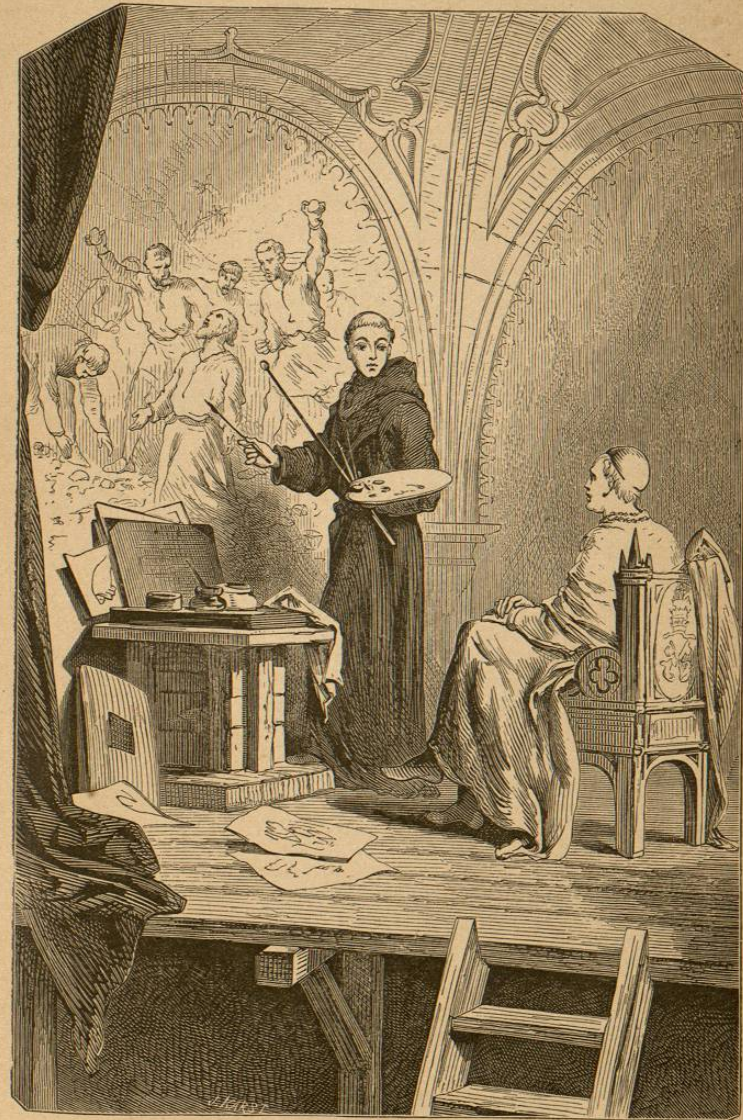
good and gentle-hearted Antonino, dwelling together in their youth, within the narrow precincts of their convent, came to know and to love each other well. And no doubt the contemplative and studious mind of Antonino nourished with spiritual learning the genius of the painter, while the realization of his own teaching grew up before him in hues and forms more definite than words, and more harmonious than music.

11. When in after years they parted, and Antonino was sent by his superiors to various convents to restore, by his mild influence, relaxed discipline, and Angelico, by the same authority, to various churches and convents at Florence, Cortona, Arezzo, (à rēt'zo) and Orviē'to, to adorn them with his divine skill—the two friends never forgot each other.

12. Many years passed away, in which each fulfilled his vocation, walking humbly before God, when at length, the fame of Angelico having gone forth through all Italy, the Pope called him to Rome, to paint for him there a chapel of wondrous beauty, with the pictured actions and sufferings of those two blessed martyrs, St. Stephen and St. Laurence, whose remains repose together without the walls of Rome; and while Angelico was at his work, the Pope took pleasure in looking on, and conversing with him, and was filled with reverence for his pure and holy life, and for his wisdom, which was indeed not of this world.

13. At this period the Archbishop of Florence died, and the Pope was much troubled to fill his place, for the times were perilous, and the Florentines were disaffected to the Church. One day, conversing with Angelico, and more than ever struck with his simplicity, his wisdom, and his goodness, he offered him the dignity of Archbishop; and great was the surprise of the Holy Father when the painter entreated that he would choose another, being himself addicted to his art, and not fit to guide, or instruct, or govern men; adding that he knew of one far more worthy than himself, one of his own brotherhood, a man who feared God and loved the poor; learned, discreet, and faithful; and he named the Frā'te Antoninus, who was then acting at Naples as V'ear-General.

14. When the Pope heard that name, it was as if a sudden light broke through the trouble and darkness of his mind; he



While ANGELICO was at his work, the POPE took pleasure in looking on, and conversing with him.

wondered that he had not thought of him before, as he was precisely the man best fitted for the office. Antonino, therefore, was appointed Archbishop of Florence, to the great joy of the Florentines, for he was their countryman, and already beloved and honored for the sanctity and humility of his life.

15. When raised to his new dignity, Antonino became the model of a wise and good prelate, maintaining peace among his people, and distinguished not only by his charity, but his justice and his firmness. He died in 1459 at the age of seventy, having held the dignity of Archbishop thirteen years, and was buried in the Convent of St. Mark.

JAMESON.

MRS. ANNA JAMESON was born in Dublin May 19, 1797; died in London March 17, 1860. Her numerous works on art are the most attractive in the English language. Though not a Catholic, Mrs. Jameson pays graceful homage to that faith which has been the inspiration of all that is true and noble in art since the beginning of the Christian era.

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### SECTION III.

#### I.

#### 9. WIT AND HUMOR.

I WISH, after all I have said about wit and humor, I could satisfy myself of their good effects upon the character and disposition; but I am convinced the probable tendency of both is to corrupt the understanding and the heart. I am not speaking of wit where it is kept down by more serious qualities of mind, and thrown into the background of the picture; but where it stands out boldly and emphatically, and is evidently the master quality in any particular mind. Professed wits, though they are generally courted for the amusement they afford, are seldom respected for the qualities they possess.

2. The habit of seeing things in a witty point of view increases, and makes incursions from its own proper regions upon principles and opinions which are ever held sacred by the wise and good. A witty man is a dramatic performer; and in process of time he can no more exist without applause than he can exist without air; if his audience be small, or if they are inattentive, or if a new wit defrauds him of any portion of his admiration, it is all over with him—he sickens, and is extin-