

THE POPE'S BOYHOOD AND YOUTH.

M. VILLEFRANCHE gives the following interesting details concerning the boyhood and youth of Pius IX., in 'La Paroisse,' a French weekly paper:—"Sinigaglia is a pretty little city of Umbria in the Pontifical States, and one of the most ancient in Italy. It was founded by a tribe of Gauls who came from the banks of the Seine. At the time that France was in the agonies of the most terrible revolution of modern times, Sinigaglia had for mayor a gentleman named Jerome Mastai Ferretti. The Mastai family is a very excellent one, and originated in Crema, Lombardy. It abandoned that city in the fifteenth century, and established itself at Sinigaglia where it has always been distinguished for its private virtues and public munificence. It added the name of Ferretti to that of Mastai, on the occasion of a matrimonial alliance with the last heiress of the house of Ferretti. Count Jerome had for his wife a lady named Catherine Sollazzi. She bore him several children, of whom the second, John Mary, was destined to become Pope Pius IX. He was born May 13, 1792. His father was exceedingly anxious about the education of his children. No one was better acquainted with the painful condition of affairs in Europe, and the increase of infidelity disturbed him greatly. He took every precaution to secure his innocent offspring from its pernicious influence. In his endeavor he was admirably seconded by the good Countess, his wife, who was a lady of singular talent and ability. John Mary responded to the care and vigilance of his parents in an admirable manner. He was a very pretty child and very intelligent. When Pius VI. was led captive into France, little John was taught to feel for his sufferings, and used to add a prayer for him to those which he said at night. When any news of this unfortunate Pope was heard, the child expressed the greatest desire to become acquainted with it. "How can God permit such horrors to take place?" he would ask, "is He not the Master of all things? Then why does He permit His Vicar to be dragged away like a malefactor and imprisoned?" "My child," would answer the Countess, "it is because he is the Vicar of Christ that God allows him to be treated as Christ was." "But, mother, these French are very wicked people, and why do you make me pray for them?" "Our Saviour, John, prayed for His enemies." When Pius VI. died, people used to say that there never would be another Pope, and little John, hearing them, would ask: "Will there really never be another Pope?" His mother did all she could to sustain his faith and to persuade him that there would be another Pope, and she did this so well that if anybody expressed a doubt of it in his presence he would boldly answer: "I know there will be another Pope, because my mother says there will be one." When he was twelve years old, he was sent to the college at Volterra in Tuscany. This school was directed by the Scolopi Fathers. His progress was considerable. In the meantime his uncle, the Bishop of Pesaro, was imprisoned for his fidelity to Pius VII., and another uncle, a canon of St. Peter's, was imprisoned in Rome for the same cause. So it is easy to see what a faithful and thoroughly Catholic family that of the present Pope was. One day an inspector deputed by the French Government to visit all the schools and colleges in Italy went to Volterra, and amongst other children examined young Mastai. He was so struck by his brightness of intellect that he said: "That child will be a great man before he dies." This gentleman died in 1830, when young Mastai was Archbishop of Spoleto, and, as he knew him well, used to tell the story of the first impression Mastai had produced upon him. John Mastai was six years at school at Volterra. He never was in any army, although many biographers assert that he was a soldier from 1811 to 1812—some under Napoleon, others under Austria. But this is false; Pius IX. never carried arms. He remained quietly at Sinigaglia until the return of Pius VII., and was presented to that Pope during his triumphal progress through the Papal States. A cruel illness now afflicted him, and he was for some time a victim to epilepsy. He always declares that, under God, he owes his recovery from this illness to his mother. On regaining his health he went to Rome in 1818, but when Cardinal Prince Odescalchi undertook to preach a mission at Sinigaglia, Mastai joined himself to him, and returned to his native city for a short time. This Prince Odescalchi afterwards abandoned the purple to become a Jesuit. Abbé Mastai's ill health had hitherto prevented his entering holy orders, and it was not until December 18, 1818, that he received the sub-diaconate. A little later he was permitted to say mass, but on the sole condition that he said it assisted by another priest. Pius VII. said to him as he granted this favor. "I think I can safely predict that your ill health will be speedily removed." It never returned."

A LEAP FOR LIFE.

THE 'Rochester Express,' June 2, says:—"The stream known as Pine Creek has long borne the reputation of one of the most prolific of trout streams. During the latter part of last week our townsmen Henry Morse and William Kimball, having received favorable reports of the May fishing, started for their favorite summer quarters. After half a day's fishing they filled their baskets, and in capital spirits set out for their lunching place. The spot chosen was a ledge of a precipitous bank of rocks, shaded by a giant hemlock tree about 30ft. above the stream, and bounded on all sides save the one facing the water and a rather narrow passage-way, by an unbroken rocky wall 10 or 12ft. in height. A sufficient number of trout was soon dressed, the lunch basket taken from its place of security, and a blazing fire kindled to cook the fish. But as the heat began to increase a colony of rattlesnakes grew uneasy, and determined to investigate the cause of their disturbance.

"Kimball at this time had descended from their elevated position in quest of some Bordeaux, while Morse was busy cooking the fish. The snakes, several in number, had crawled, meanwhile,

from their hiding place and were sounding the ominous rattle, familiar to man and beast alike as the certain precursor of danger ahead. But the crackling of the twigs in the fire deafened the sound. It was not until Kimball was climbing upward that he took in the situation and apprised his brother sportsman of his danger. The snakes coiled and prepared for an attack. Morse sought hastily for a way of escape, but the reptiles stood in his path, and, save the deep pool far below him, he was hemmed in on every side by a precipitous wall of rock. His face blanched with fear, but his resolve was soon taken, and leaving rods, luncheon basket and well-filled creels, he sprang with a bound into the pool 30ft. below. Fortunately, his descent was attended with no more serious results than a thorough drenching. For the water was deep, and, being an expert swimmer, he found no difficulty in regaining a foothold on the opposite shore, on less dangerous ground. Both Morse and Kimball, by this time, concluded they had had sufficient experience for one day, and, without rods or fish baskets, with the bottle of claret as their only consolation, they lost no time in taking the nearest route for their hotel."

The Church Temporalities Commissioners have notified to the public their intention to sell the residue of the Church estates now vested in them. This announcement is made after the tenants have been offered the right of pre-emption, and the fact is interesting in different points of view. It shows that the commissioners are resolved to put an effectual stop to the complaints which were made on the part of the public as to the delay in disposing of the land, and so facilitating the process of winding up the commission, and realizing the long coveted surplus. It will be seen by the public notice that the lands now offered for sale are situated in the counties of Armagh, Tyrone, Derry, Fermanagh, Louth, and Monaghan. Some lands are to be sold in their offices like the Landed Estates Court, others by auction in different parts of the country; and, as regards the rest, they invite proposals to buy by private contract. This course will afford an advantageous opportunity to landed proprietors having adjacent estates who may desire to extend them, and to local merchants and traders having money to invest in the most attractive and substantial of all securities—"a bit of land." They are offered the estates on comparatively easy terms. If the purchase money exceed £200, only one-half must be paid in cash, and there may be a mortgage by which the rest, with interest at four per cent., can be paid off in ten or twenty half-yearly payments. If the purchase money exceed £500, only one-fourth need be given in cash, and mortgage for the rest, with interest at four per cent., is to be paid off in half-yearly instalments at decennial periods up to 40 years, at the option of the buyer. If the result be to increase the number of small landholders in Ireland, one of the professed objects of the Church Act will be realised, and a larger sum will be added to the surplus from private sales.

The 'Propagateur Catholique' publishes the following from a reverend correspondent in Bernese, Jura. The account it contains is cheering, after the storm of persecution that has so long raged in Switzerland: "The religious excitement in Switzerland, and especially in Jura, happily begins to subside. We hope soon to be able to resume our functions, and recover some of our churches. At Asuel there is now but one apostate, Jules Chiquet, besides the school-master, who is a stranger. The Perfect of Porrentruy, who has done us a great deal of harm, has been attacked by a fearful and disgusting malady. The sub-prefect is dead. Many other leaders of the movement have taken flight, others have died rather suddenly, so that our position is considerably improved."

A correspondent of the 'London Weekly Register' gives the following account of the pious uses to which the most sacred precincts of the Cathedral of Breda, in Holland, are devoted:—"The nave alone is used by the colonists, to whom it belongs; and the only use made of the whole choir and transepts, as far as we could discover, was 'to air the linen of the pastor and his family,' as a very extensive line of very clean linen was suspended from one end to the other of the transepts. There was a very suspicious look, strongly suggesting the idea that the 'wash' had absolutely taken place in this part of the sacred edifice."

Lucknow is at present afflicted with a plague of monkeys. They usually inhabit Aishagh, at the further end of the town, but have recently taken to making raids on the crowded parts of the city, and if the unlucky persons on whom the monkeys fix their attention do not receive their advances kindly, the intruders do not scruple to use their teeth. Torn clothes, broken furniture, and wounds inflicted by them are of every-day occurrence, and the inhabitants of Lucknow are crying out for some measures to be taken against these mischievous animals.

It is customary in Rome during the month of May that the altars at which the devotions are carried on be at first very simply decorated. Then, from day to day, in proportion as the offerings the faithful increase the number of candles is also increased, and the altars are decorated with flowers and other gifts, so that at the end of the month brilliant illuminations and splendid decorations excite a holy rivalry in honoring the Holy Mother of God. The Holy Father was the first to conform to this pious custom and he has continued to give a noble example of filial devotion towards Mary. It is to increase this devotion, which is at the same time so tender and so necessary to the aspirations of our hearts that his Holiness has invited all the faithful of Rome to prolong the exercises of the month of May this year until the 3rd of June, in order that during these three complimentary days a solemn triduum of reparation for the outrages committed against the Blessed Virgin in the city of Rome and throughout the world might be celebrated in all the parishes and principal churches.—'Catholic Review.'

Claremont, near, Claremorris, formerly the seat of the notorious Dennis Browne, is about to be purchased as the residence of a religious community.

Twenty native Christians were killed and three hundred houses burned by rioters at Chung Kinglu, China, April 24.