

CORONATION OF PIUS X.

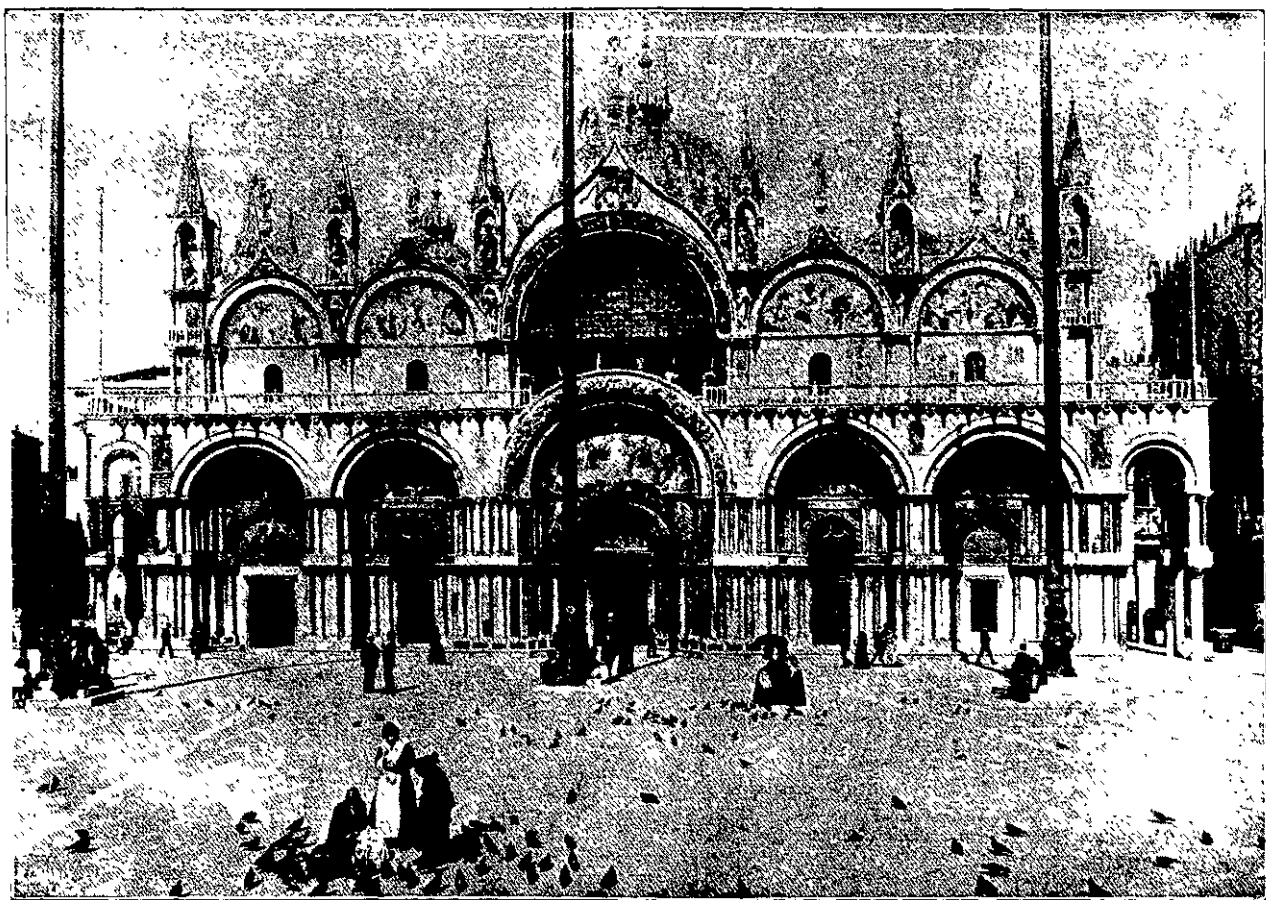
THE CEREMONY AND ITS STORY.



THE coronation of Pius X. took place in St. Peter's on Sunday in the presence of 50,000 persons. The ceremony is one of great antiquity and solemnity. According to Moroni's great work (the principal authority from which we summarise the following particulars for 'Tablet' readers) the first Pope of whose coronation a record appears to exist was St. Leo III., who received the diadem in the Vatican Basilica in the year 758. Another account credits Nicholas I., who came to the throne in 858, with being the first Pontiff who was publicly and solemnly crowned. He, like some of his predecessors and practically all his successors, was a temporal ruler, and he is said to have been the first to unite the princely crown with the mitre, although the Bellandists think that this was done before his time. Innocent III., who reigned from 1198 to 1216, is represented in a thirteenth century picture as wearing the

ed by the bestowal of generous largess upon the poor and the charitable institutions of the Eternal City, and the occasion was signalised by a splendid and picturesque pageantry, the firing of salvoes of artillery, illuminations and fireworks on a great scale, and the pleasant hum of popular rejoicing. A legend that arose—heavens knows how—still runs to the effect that on the coronation day these words were sung or said in the presence or hearing of the new Pope: 'Non videbis annos Petri'—'thou shalt not see the years of Peter'—meaning that his pontificate should not last for twenty-five years. The story is utterly without foundation.

Before the Piedmontese troops took possession of Rome in 1870, the coronation of the Popes took place in the great basilica of St. Peter's amidst scenes of great and festive splendor. Leo XIII., however, from motives of prudence, was crowned in the great chapel over the portico of St. Peter's, in the presence of a great number of Cardinals and other ecclesiastics and of dip-



One of the two great architectural glories of the Church in Northern Italy—the great Basilica of St. Mark's, Venice, which was the Cathedral Church of the present Pope until he was chosen to fill the chair of St. Peter.

second crown, and Benedict XII (1334-1342) or Urban V (1362-1370) is supposed to have added the third diadem that goes to form the triple crown which is placed upon the Pope's head at his coronation, and of which a faithful representation appears on the upper right-hand corner of the portrait of Pius X. which appears on the front page of this supplement. The tiara is never used at spiritual functions. At these the Pope uses the episcopal mitre. From very remote times (according to Moroni) the Popes used three mitres in pontifical functions—a smooth white one, and two others of different richness, each adorned with gold lace, etc. The triple crown or tiara is probably a representation of those three kinds of papal mitre, which are in use to this day.

From the first a Sunday or festival was set apart as the proper day for the coronation of a Pope. This usage prevails at the present time, and has been departed from only in the case of Clement VIII., Paul III., and a few others. Clement X. (1700-1721) was the last who set aside this ancient custom. Following another old usage, the newly-elected Pope distributed money last Saturday (the day previous to his coronation) to a number of poor persons of both sexes in the Belvedere courtyard of the Vatican. This ceremony will be repeated on each anniversary of the event. The day of the coronation was also, in the times of Papal independence, mark-

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