

The Aged Pontiff.

The Pittsburg Post of recent date contained the following interesting account of the daily life of Pope Leo XIII.:

The aged pontiff who dwells in the great vatican at Rome, and who rules the greatest sect in the world, is nearing the goal where the reaper awaits him—an end Leo XIII. awaits with Christian fortitude and wonderful calm. And yet he is not the decrepit individual his great age—91 years—would indicate. Neither his public life nor his home life would suggest that he stood so near the brink of the grave, for even at the best he cannot expect to live long. The public life all the world knows—his profound knowledge, his blameless life, his Christian democracy. Not so with the life he leads hidden away from all but the college of cardinals, from his physicians and his body attendants. It is as a private individual that the pope is perhaps more interesting than as a great prelate.

As the latter, he stands in the light of a principle—the religious and moral guide of millions. As the former, he is an humble man, whose perfect life has won for him the respect of all the world, irrespective of belief or creed. As the mere individual he is watched over, nursed and cared for with a vigilance far greater than that extended to the head of a royal house.

As every one knows, the pope makes his home in the famous vatican, a magnificent palace in Rome, surrounded by superb gardens. Since his accession to the papacy, Leo XIII. has not left the confines of the vatican gardens because of the conflict between the church of Rome and the Italian government over the question of temporal power. So great is the vatican, however, so magnificent its appointments and art treasures, that so patient and philosophic a man as Leo XIII. does not feel the restraint that would seem irksome to most other beings.

And yet, despite the hundreds of rooms and salons and immense halls, the pope uses only three small apartments for himself, and one of these is the private chapel in which he celebrates mass every morning, as the church laws demand. The most interesting of these rooms is the one in which he sleeps and works, a small narrow room, comparatively plainly furnished. In one corner stands a low bed of magnificent mahogany, embellished with solid gold and bearing on the foot-piece the inscription in gold, "Leo XIII."

Above the head of the bed hangs a small oil painting of the Virgin, and Child, by one of the old masters. To the side of the bed within reach stands a low chiffonier, having no ornamentation whatever. This serves the double purpose of writing desk and medicine chest. To one side of the bed is a settee of red velvet, and at the foot stands an easy chair. That completes the entire furnishing of the room.

The other rooms are a dining-room, also simply furnished, with a semi-alcove adjoining, which is used as a reception room for the cardinals and favored visitors. Beyond is the private chapel, the mural decorations of which are famed for their exquisite beauty. The floor is of onyx and gold abounds. The altar of solid gold is magnificent in the extreme.

In these few rooms the pope lives, save when in the gardens of the vatican or when saying pontifical high mass in St. Peter's. He rises between 6 and 8 o'clock in the morning, is dressed and goes to breakfast, consisting of coffee and wheat bread. The simple meal over, he goes to his desk and attends to such business as may be presented to him by the cardinal camerlengo—the real secretary of the church, and the prelate nearest to the pope. At about 11 o'clock he takes a cup of bullion in which a raw egg has been beaten. No more work is done until 2 o'clock, when dinner is served.

This meal consists of soup, meat, vegetables and fruit, neither sweets nor pastries of any kind being permitted on the papal table. The dinner

lasts until 3 o'clock, when the pope rises and passes through the various corridors and rooms of the vatican, where he greets the prelates and blesses those who seek his benediction. At the door he enters a sedan chair, in which he is carried by liveried servants to the park itself, where he is transferred into a carriage, which takes him some distance away to the spot where the ramble begins. The pope is usually dressed in a red cloak and a red pontifical hat, and is accompanied by some prelates or by his nephew, Count Pecci, and a body guard of his Swiss soldiers. In summer Leo takes his walks in the early mornings to avoid the great heat and works in the evenings.

Returned from his walk the pope takes a glass of Bordeaux wine and a cracker, attends to more work, or indulges in his favorite pastime of versifying, and then prepares for bed. Once in his couch the pope is watched over until he awakens in the morning. In the wall opposite the bed is a hole, through which every movement of the aged pontiff can be seen. His every breath is noted—his every move anticipated.

As often happens, Leo awakens during the night and rises to work, for his brain is unceasingly active. At those times the watchers, his body servant and physician, keep their respective eyes at the peephole to see that his holiness does not tire himself. In that manner he is somewhat constrained, but even he acknowledges that he is careless at times and needs a restraining hand.

In fact, there is a sort of jolly warfare between him and his physician, Dr. Laponi, to whom he has to report himself every day, whether he wills it or no. The doctor asserts his authority, however, and like a good patient Leo submits and laughingly vows that he will outlive all his doctors, despite their pills and drugs.

Besides these faithful watchers there is another, of whom the world knows even less. He stands until relieved, at the piazza rusticucci, near St. Peter's, and watches a window in the vatican. Winter and summer it has been open (since 1878) in the daytime and lit by a lamp by night. That denotes, he knows, that Leo XIII. lives. But let that window be closed or dark and the caribinier will know at once that the soul of the pontiff has gone to that bourne from which no traveller ever returns.

Aside from these phases of the pope's private life and the fact that he was 91 years of age on the 2d of March, some incidents of his early life, before he became even a priest, are of much interest. To begin, he was born in 1810 at Carpiento, Italy, and christened Vincentio. This name he bore until he was graduated as a doctor of laws, when he took the name of Joachim (Pecci). Long before this time, however, he had become famous throughout Italy for his brilliant proficiency in Latin and mathematics. The pope, attracted by the young man's abilities, used his influence to obtain the finest teachers for him. At 28 the future pope became civil governor of the province of Benevent, which was at that time infested with murderous robber bands. From the first he ruled with energy and firmness and in a few months had cleared the province of the malefactors. Five years later he was ordained a priest, and three years after was made apostolic delegate to the province of Perugia. Shortly after he was made archbishop, and in 1853, at the age of 43, he became a cardinal.

The most important event in Cardinal Pecci's life took place February 7, 1878. At that time Pius IX. ruled the church, and Pecci acted as cardinal camerlengo. At 3 o'clock in the morning of that day Pius, who had been ill for some time, called cardinals about him and asked for a confessor. A humble Augustine monk, dressed in somber black, was called in and shrived the dying pontiff. Two hours later Pius was dead.

At 7 o'clock in the morning the cardinal camerlengo entered the papal bedchamber and re-

moved the white veil hiding the face of the dead pope.

"Giovanni Mantai! Giovanni Mantai, speak!" called Cardinal Pecci to the dead figure. No answer came from the cold lips, and the cardinal tapped thrice upon the forehead of the former pope with a silver mallet and pronounced him dead. Then he drew from his finger the fisher ring, symbolic of the Apostle Peter.

Six days later Cardinal Camerlengo Pecci was elected pope, and on March 3, when 68 years of age, he was crowned with great pomp and splendor at St. Peter's.

A Valuable Tree.

There is an orange tree at the agricultural department which, tradition says, has produced revenue sufficient to meet all the expenses of that department for the last thirty years. Its history is interesting. About 1870 an American woman told Mr. Saunders, the expert on pomology for the department, that she had enjoyed the most delicious oranges while in the vicinity of the City of Bahia, Brazil, and believed he would do well to procure some of the budded fruit as an experiment in this country.

The secretary of agriculture requested our consul at that point to send him twelve budded trees. They came in due time, and were in turn budded on small seedlings for distribution. This is one great tree that survived, and, while they did not thrive in Florida, they did on the Pacific coast, and today the navel or Bahia orange, the father of that industry in California, owes its existence to the single tree now standing in the glass house in the agricultural grounds.

Of the crop of about 20,000 carloads for 1901 at least 15,000 of them were of the navel variety, while the revenue varies from \$3,000,000 to \$5,000,000 a year. The statement of this fact, a single tree having produced sufficient revenue to sustain the department for a period of thirty years, never fails to awe the tourist, and causes him to beg for a single leaf from the wonderful money tree.—Chicago Tribune.

A Dissenting Opinion.

The Ram's Horn has never shared the optimistic estimate of this Filipino chief which is held by those who liken him to our Washington, but to his own people he is a Washington, or a Bolivar. In all fairness and good sense we ought to try and look at his capture if possible as his countrymen may look at it and as we would have looked at it one hundred and thirty years ago. Suppose some English officer, Andre for example, had gathered a company of Mohawks who knew the country trails and together with Benedict Arnold, before his treason was known, had started out for Valley Forge where Washington was in retreat with his shattered army. Suppose under the guise of friendship and loyalty and with the announcement that the English officer was being fetched as a prisoner—access were gained to Washington's quarters and that brave general were made a prisoner and dragged to a British frigate, would we as Americans think any more of Arnold and Andre than we do now? Or would there be any self-respecting Englishman now-a-days who would be overproud of his countryman's daring exploit one hundred and thirty years ago? Or does any one fancy that one hundred and thirty years hence, as the dusky youth of the Philippines spell out their lessons in reading and geography and history they will think any more highly of the Christian civilization which reigned in the North American continent in 1901? Let us not at all be misunderstood—Our aim is not at Funston; we like him, he is the kind of man whom we would love to follow in a high cause. But we pity him, and we regret that circumstances have involved him in a policy of which he may be the unconscious abettor or the unwilling victim.—The Ram's Horn.