



EDITORIAL NOTES.

With this issue of the TRUE WITNESS we close Kickham's story, "Sally Cavanagh, or, The Untenanted Graves." Next week we purpose commencing Charles Lever's last novel, "Lord Kilgobbin." Not only is this the last contribution from Lever's pen to the literature of his day, but it is the only one of his works entirely free from anything that might tend to ridicule the Irish character. The general reader is familiar with Lever's works: but, as a rule, that familiarity is confined to his most popular and widely known stories, such as "Charles O'Malley," "Tom Burke of Ours," "Harry Lorrequer," and a couple of others. The one we have chosen is but little known, and yet it is one of the best that the rollicking Irish novelist ever penned. Many years ago John O'Mahony remarked that he believed there was more true Irish feeling in "Lord Kilgobbin" than in any other novel he had ever read.

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The celebration of the silver wedding of King Humbert of Italy will be marked by the absence of Catholic enthusiasm. The Vatican has announced that the Pope will not grant audiences to any royal personages of the Roman Catholic faith who come to Rome to attend the silver wedding of King Humbert and Queen Margaret. The rule does not apply to Protestant sovereigns nor their representatives. This is a pronounced repetition of Pius IX's *non possemus*. Leo XIII is determined to let the world see that he will never abdicate his rights nor acknowledge the usurpation of St. Peter's patrimony. There will be a marked contrast between the jubilee festivities at the Vatican and the Quirinal. Italy is to day most miserably pauperized and can ill afford the expenditure of the occasion. It is, perhaps, no harm that such an event should arise during the year of Papal jubilee, for the marked contrast between the two powers must tell powerfully in favor of the Vatican.

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Our city—or at least a portion of it—has lionized the famed pugilist, the Champion Corbett. It is wonderful how enthusiastic a crowd becomes over a big, cruel, powerful man. But prize-fighting is the rage, and, like the bull-fighting amongst the Spaniards, it will always attract the brutally inclined. There is something so debasing in it that low natures are drawn thereto as if by a magic magnet. Let them cheer, revel and triumph; it matters little to us. But we do emphatically object to being called upon to take pride in a pugilist, be he champion or ex-champion, on the score of his nationality or creed. From a national standpoint we see no glory in having a grand sample of the animal—we are not proud that he is Irish; quite the contrary; we are ashamed of the fact. The pugilist may be a fine specimen of physical form, he may be a very decent fellow in his own way; but he is

no sample of an Irishman, for the better part—that which distinguishes the man from the animal—is absent. The heart is not there; cruelty has blasted it, and a heartless Irishman is not a being to be proud of. Moreover, we remember the old song:

"Were I as tall to reach the skies
And pluck the stars out at a span,
I would be measured by my mind,
For the mind's the standard of the man."

From a religious standpoint—as Catholics—we must repudiate pugilism as in duty bound. Just listen to what took place last week in Auburn, N.Y. At Syracuse a fight occurred between Duffee and Donovan. The latter was killed by a blow from the former. When his remains were brought for burial to Auburn, he was denied the funeral rites of the Catholic Church. The priest acted under the direction of his Ordinary, and enforced the law of the Church, and properly so. No more than a suicide has a pugilist killed in the ring any right to the Church's recognition. He goes to the ring with the knowledge that he may possibly kill or possibly be killed; he is little better than guilty of deliberate homicide, or else suicide. He takes the risk; his soul counts for nothing. Manhood has given place to animal nature, and as the animal, not as the man, does the Church treat him.

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How strangely time changes the face of the world; what extraordinary mutations in the history of the human race; what wonderful transformations to be seen even in some families. Some few weeks ago we referred to the proposed memorial statue to be erected by the solid Presbyterians of Edinburgh, in commemoration of the notorious John Knox. That fiery enthusiast left, after all, very little behind him. His work produced but indifferent fruits, considering his fearful passion, his all absorbing enthusiasm. His name is about all that remains to be invoked by his divided, and a hundred times sub-divided, followers. Yet, strange and wonderful irony of life! the only lineal descendant of the frantic reformer is a Roman Catholic and a religious. He is a member of the Congregation of the Cross. His name is Brother Philip, and he has labored for upwards of thirty years in the East, where he was engaged in educational work. He is now in Ceylon. The Edinburgh statue-builders should invite him to unveil the proposed one to his ancestor.

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THERE is a mania, for monuments, statues, memorial tablets and such like commemorative tokens that has seized upon the infidels of the world. The extraordinary success, the stupendous triumphs of Catholicity have awakened them to the necessity of doing something, otherwise the world might forget their existence. Having no living men of sufficient importance to awaken enthusiasm, they have recourse to the dead. They stir up the ashes of departed atheists and disturb their graves for the purpose of commemorating their lives. In some

cases they succeed, in others they fail. In Rome they raised enough to buy a statue of Bruno, the immoral and debasing author of renegade pamphlets. In Paris they attempted to secure funds for the erection of a monument to Jean Jacques Rousseau. The City Council, as an excuse, gave a small donation. A few days ago the committee asked the Council for another subscription to pay the expenses so far incurred. The Council could not see its way to making a second donation and was glad of an excuse to escape. The result was that the movement fell through, the amounts collected barely paying the expenses of sending round the hat. Infidel as France may be, the French people deserve credit for refusing a seat in the Academy to Zola, and declining to erect a statue to Rousseau.

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THE WORLD'S FAIR is the all absorbing topic of this summer; Chicago is the focus to which everything and everybody will converge. Evidently the Catholics of America, and of the world, are to play important parts in the immense drama of the Exposition. For all who may be interested in the representation of the Catholic press on that occasion, we clip the following from the Chicago Catholic Citizen, of March 11:

We are informed by Col. W. J. Onahan that accommodations will be available for a meeting of the editors and publishers of the Catholic papers of America during the Catholic Congress at Chicago, September 1st to 5th next. Many representatives of the Catholic press will be present at the congress and the occasion is too good to be missed for a series of informal conferences on matters pertaining to the progress of the Catholic press. We move that Col. Onahan be requested to arrange a date for the meeting of the Catholic press and that he be chosen an honorary member of the fraternity with power to call the meeting to order and to designate a series of papers on practical topics to form a basis of discussion at the ensuing conferences. What say our brethren of the press to this pleasing suggestion?

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SOME time ago we published an editorial on "Capital Punishment," in which we gave as the teaching of the great majority of the theologians that it was the safety of society, and that in all ages the Church, as a rule, upheld the law of "death penalty." We also pointed out the numerous powerful arguments against that mode of punishment. We are thoroughly aware that our expressions did not harmonize with the opinions of some eminent and learned members of the clergy. But the views expressed were merely our own, and for them no one, except ourselves, is responsible. There are to-day things permitted by the Church which a few hundred years ago would be considered heretical. Imagine Leo XIII's Encyclicals being read in the fifteenth century! If we mistake not, before another half century rolls past, provided we have a few more such statesmen as is the present Pope, both Capital punishment and many other relics of barbaric times will be relegated to the archives of ages long gone.

The Catholic Church is ever in touch with the spirit of the age; she marches with the times; she conforms to the requirements of all lands and all circumstances, while preserving intact her dogma, conserving inviolate her principles of Faith. This is not even a question of discipline; and the authorities upon whom so much stress is laid, wrote in days when torture and tyrannicide prevailed. The North Western Witness, the Catholic official organ of the Bishop of Duluth, Minnesota, has the following. After speaking of the abolition of the death penalty in their legislature, the article says:

"It is tolerably clear that the death penalty is ineffective as a deterrent. A man who is ugly enough to kill somebody wouldn't stop if he knew it would cost him his life, much less when the chance of conviction and punishment seems very small to him. The murderer is so white hot nothing could stop him, or he believes he has taken certain precautions against detection. On the other hand the death penalty often results in irreparable mistakes. As often it results in a defeat of justice because juries will not find guilty from sentiment or from fear of mistake, in cases where the evidence would seem sufficient if only imprisonment was the penalty. A worse thing yet is that judicial killing is still murder. It was well enough when every one went armed and any quarrel was to mortal combat. When life was cheap, capital punishment was not by comparison brutalizing. It is now. The life sentence is more terrible than the death sentence. It allows partial reparation where a mistake is discovered. It can be enforced where the other can not. And it is not a relic of barbarism."

We merely quote the above to show how more humane the race of man is becoming, and how more precious is that Divine gift of human life being considered.

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THE Germans are certainly great haters. It was said of a certain Hans Vanbergen when he died, that "he was a true Prussian, for he hated the French and was a good smoker." We find an example of this detestation of the French carried to a ridiculous point in the case of Abbe Lang, of Sainte Marie aux Mines, in Alsace. He has been prosecuted by the Germans for having lit a transparency, in honor of the Pope's jubilee, with the name of the Holy Father—Leon XIII, in place of Leo XIII. This same priest was once before prosecuted for giving as examples in a grammar which he edited, phrases considered friendly towards France. There is something so small in all this that we would not be surprised to find France, some fine day, giving Prussia back with compound interest what she received in 1870. Prussia must recollect that the Iron Chancellor has seen his day of power, and that Von Moltke is dead. It is not well to tantalize a gallant foe twenty years after its defeat. It is not wise most certainly.

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The revenue returns of the Dominion for the nine months ending March 31 show a surplus of \$5,141,724.

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Emigration from Ireland continues to decrease. During 1892 51,000 left that country; 58,486 in 1891.