

The True Witness



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EPISCOPAL APPROBATION.

"If the English-speaking Catholics of Montreal and of this Province consulted their best interests, they would soon make of the 'True Witness' one of the most prosperous and powerful Catholic papers in this country. I heartily bless those who encourage this excellent work."
—PAUL, Archbishop of Montreal.

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NOTES OF THE WEEK!

THE UNIVERSITY QUESTION.

It is well to know the opinions of all prominent and influential persons who are calculated to have some interest in the subjects, upon all the burning questions of the hour. Taking the Irish university question, as an example, we find daily new suggestions, some of them of grave importance, some tinged with prejudice, some not worth the paper on which they are written; but when due consideration is given to all the peculiarities of individuals, their varied inspirations and motives, we find that there is always some grains of good seed to be found in the greatest mass of chaff. At the General Synod of the Irish Protestant Episcopal Church, the Protestant Archbishop of Armagh, who presided, delivered a very significant address, in which he advances his idea in regard to the best plan to be adopted in order to satisfy all sections on the question of university education. After claiming that Ireland has not a sufficient population to support more than one university, he says that the difficulty could be boldly solved, by having two or possibly three constituent colleges in one great national university, that might be called fitly and properly the "University of Ireland." He states that he has been for long months groping his way, and he has found at last ground work for a decision as to what would be the preferable course to take, in this matter, through the views of eminent Catholics. We will quote the Archbishop's remarks on this point:—

"The examination of the Royal Commission has brought out two pieces of evidence from Roman Catholic gentlemen of eminence—one, that of a prelate, reveals a mind of remarkable power, faultless in reasoning, passionate and pathetic, rising at times to almost tragical interest, or touching with a lash that cuts like a knife. I should gather that, while he would prefer the foundation of a new University for Roman Catholics, he is most strongly hostile to that which I have mentioned. The other witness is a man of whom his Church, his University (Dublin), and his country are proud, who possesses the impartial spirit of a great magistrate, the severe discipline of varied studies, and the sweet reasonableness which would respect every conviction that is reasonable. Every brick in the structure of his argument has been rung and measured before it was laid. The ideal solution, according to the Lord Chief Baron, is the establishment of a college as Roman Catholic as Trinity College is Protestant, affiliated with and a constituent of Dublin University. He proves that the advantages would be threefold—(1) the bringing together of students of different denominations; (2) the magic and prestige of a university open to all Irishmen; (3) the level of university education kept up to a high standard. All the conditions to which I have adverted could be fulfilled. The Catholic Relief Act of 1793 (38, George III.) enabled Roman Catholics to take degrees and hold professorships in a University College, subject, however, to two conditions—First, that the College should be thereafter founded, thus excluding Trinity College; and, secondly, that it should be a resolution

of the University. Therefore, the provision then contemplated for the education of Roman Catholics was a College in the University of Dublin, not being Trinity College." (Royal Commission Minutes of Evidence, p. 128). By this solution we should have an establishment (1) having its roots in the past, a witness that even in days of ascendancy there were not wanting tolerant and liberal men; (2) a portion for all Irishmen in the prestige of Trinity College, Dublin, and (3) a final deliverance from mischievous and violent agitation."

This is all very interesting and possibly well founded, and certainly favorably argumentative for a Catholic University and higher Catholic education in Ireland. But where we find the good Archbishop miscalculates the spirit of a Catholic University is when he touches upon the subject of theology.

"With regard to the study of theology in universities I desire to offer a few remarks. In any country of different religious persuasions, the solution which has been arrived at in Germany is, I think, the only one possible. In recasting the whole system they acted upon the old idea of religious teaching for all. Usher's well-known catechetics were applied all round to all comers for a degree. It was held by those in authority that an educated man was fatally wanting unless he knew something of religion, something of its vast, constraining force, something of its historical roots, something of its proofs and history, something of its sacred books. Thus, in Germany there are two departments of the theological faculty. The question which every aspirant to a degree must answer is simply, "to which cult do you belong, the Roman Catholic or Reformed?" Thus in every theological department, each with its own staff of professors and teachers. In one university at least—Bonn—there are also two professors of history. You will observe that the University School of Theology is not a professional school for making priests or ministers."

We find it hard to imagine a theological course in a Catholic university that has not for its purpose the training and educating of men for the priesthood. It seems to us that with all his goodwill, the prelate is at sea on this score.

THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL.

While awaiting the full and authentic translation of the Pope's latest Encyclical, the text of which was published in the "Osservatore Romano," we could not do better than bring before our readers an able analysis of the precious document made by "Vox Urbis," the learned and careful Roman correspondent of the "Freeman's Journal." The writer draws attention to the fact that some time ago it was announced in America that the Pope had made his last will. This was premature; for, while this present Encyclical letter does not deal with goods or chattels, or any of the matters that generally belong to wills, still it has the tone of a last testament. This by no means argues that the present Pope will not publish any more great Encyclicals, nor that he considers himself near immediate departure from life; merely is it the carrying

into effect of a long-felt desire, on his part, to communicate to the world the ideas contained in that letter. It is true that he says of it in the opening paragraphs:—"A testament which, close as we now are to the gates of eternity, we wish to consign to the nation with the hope and the desire that it may contribute to the common weal." In short, it consists, as he himself tells us, of a description "of the genesis, cause and various forms of the war which is raging against the Church, pointing out its fatal consequences, and indicating the remedy."

But this is not necessarily the language of adieu to the world. In opening his letter His Holiness shows how Our Lord's statement that the world would always note the Church, has been fulfilled to the letter; and the writer has translated the following splendid, historical passage, from that portion of the letter. He speaks of the persecutions of the Roman Empire, which made martyrs in every province, "and which bathed every sod of the soil of sacred Rome with their blood; the Barbarians from the North followed the Pagans of ancient Rome, and the followers of Islam from the South came after these; Caesars threatened and persecuted the Church when the Pagans, the Barbarians and the Mohammedans had wreaked their hatred; the so-called Reformation tried to destroy the Church, and did succeed in wounding her, by breaking the bond of jurisdiction and of faith which had hitherto united all Christendom; the Reformation paved the way for the proud and sneering philosophism of the eighteenth century, which spawned rationalism and pantheism, naturalism and materialism—all of them old errors under new forms which had been triumphantly expounded by the Fathers of the Church centuries before. To-day we are still tasting the fruits of this philosophism. Our governments are for the most part practically atheistic, and the results are already beginning to be evident—the bases of society are beginning to totter and the eternal principles of justice and morality are becoming almost a dead letter. The civil power has laid a sacrilegious hand upon the matrimonial bond, has invaded as far as it has found possible the natural rights of parents in the matter of the education of their children. The whole social and political order has been disturbed; in the international order the nations have adopted a system of egotism and jealousy, and look upon one another with feelings of distrust and rivalry, if not of hostility."

The next passage selected for translation is one that may find special application in England and in the United States—for both of these nations are drifting into a species of materialism, or utilitarianism, that is based on their commercial expansionism, and are floating away from the higher and less worldly, the more spiritual and elevating principles that must underlie all successful governments. The passage reads:—"Hence in their undertakings they are easily tempted to forget the lofty conception of morality and justice and the protection of the weak and the oppressed, caring only, in their desire to increase the national wealth without limit, about the opportuneness and the utility of success and the fortune of accomplished facts, with certainty that nobody will insist upon their respecting justice. Fatal criteria, these, which consecrate material force as the supreme law or the world."

After alluding to Socialism and Anarchy, the Holy Father thus indicates the dangers that menace the world:—"We conjure all men of good will, and especially those who hold elevated positions, to reflect on the adequate remedy for those evils, and to put it into execution with prompt and provident energy."

And the correspondent thus summarizes:—"The remedy is not to be found in that liberty, or rather license, which was once vaunted as a panacea for all the ills that human society is heir to—among the results of this false liberty is that turmoil of economical and social strife we see around us. Nor is education—education, separated from religious and moral instruction, has exposed men's minds, and more especially the minds of the young, to the fascination of perverse maxims. Nor is the remedy to be found in the progress which is being made by science—science so far

has done nothing to keep down the figures of delinquency, to produce harmony between the poor and the rich, or to alleviate the miserable condition of the people, or to insure the observance of the laws of justice. Not that the Church has ever opposed, or despised, or neglected to promote culture, knowledge, civilization or moderate and reasonable liberty. On the contrary, a thousand facts from history prove that she has done all in her power to propagate all these."

The "Testament" itself contains the explanation of all the remedies for the evils indicated, and we agree with the correspondent that it is too important a document to summarize. We will therefore await the full text of it before attempting to give our readers this splendid work of our immortal Pontiff.

CHRISTIANITY IN ASIA.

In the "Congregationalist" and "Christian World," Mr. John R. Mott tells of his recent trip through the East and of his impressions. Mr. Mott is secretary of the "World's Student Christian Federation," an organization for Protestant missionary purposes. Mr. Mott has visited Japan, China, India and Ceylon, and he gives it as his deliberate opinion that "non-Catholic religions are losing their hold, especially on educated men," in all these countries. The supreme need, however, now as in the past, concludes Mr. Mott, is "more missionaries." "There never has been such an opportunity as the present," he says, "for aggressive evangelistic effort in Japan and in the several parts of China and India. But the workers should be thoroughly furnished men. A few hundred of well-galvanized missionaries will accomplish far more at the present time than would thousands of men of merely average ability and of insufficient equipment."

Here is a peculiar confession. Why "at the present time" more than at any other time he does not say; but it is quite evident that the hold of Protestantism on these still uncivilized and unchristianized countries is becoming very slack, and that men, in the very interested position of the secretary of a missionary organization, should seek to send able and clever ministers to these lands, is something that can be readily understood. But where are the hundreds of well-qualified to be had? The press and the pulpits (Protestant) of America ring with the complaints of the various sects regarding the continued falling off of church attendance and the loss of prestige and influence amongst the clergy, the denial of the fundamental truths of the Bible, and the very rejection of the Bible itself. Here then is a field of immediate labor, far more important to Christianity than the Christianizing of China, Japan, or India. Yet fully-equipped men are lacking; and of the few very eminent men, quite a number have been coming over to Rome, and quite a few are on the same track. No wonder that the missions in Asia are becoming so many failures. If we had time and space we would be only too glad to draw a contrast between this state of affairs in the Protestant missionary world and that which exists in the domain of Catholic foreign missions. But we will be satisfied with simply drawing attention to the fact that Mr. Mott, who is the most prominent authority, on the Protestant side, in such matters, has admitted that which the stay-at-home, and "fire-side philanthropists" of the non-Catholic world will not concede. In fact, they will not admit that Protestantism is a failure, and yet the evidence of contemporary history and the testimony of cold facts prove it to a demonstration.

Then we come to the really big piece of information—that which is calculated to cause the real sensation—and which bears on its face the stamp of invention. To better understand it, we will reproduce the passage exactly as it has appeared in the press of the United States and of Canada. It runs thus:—"The recent signs of the increased feebleness of the Pope which led to alarming reports of his sudden death the end of last week have caused a marked recrudescence of activity among the Cardinals aspiring to the Pontificate. The campaign preparatory to the next conclave proceeds incessantly, the Sacred College being divided into two distinct forces, headed respectively by Cardinal Rampolla, the Papal Secretary of State, and Cardinal Vanautelli. The latter and Cardinal Goiti now constitute the most probable successors to Leo XIII. Those who are not now considered dangerous candidates are fond of pointing out, however, that almost 150 Cardinals have been buried during the Pontificate of Leo XIII., and that the prolongation of the life of His Holiness for a few years is liable to cool many more ambitious calculations."

In the first place it is some months ago that the false report of the Pope's death was spread, through the medium of a Parisian journal. For a long time, ever since before New Year, there has been no serious question of even his illness, nor any particular lack of ordinary strength, vitality, or activity on his part. So that the opening of this piece of news is, at once, condemnation of the entire fabrication. But what is the most mischievous part of the concoction is that false impression, sought always to be conveyed by the anti-Catholic element, to the effect that the Sacred College of Cardinals is a kind of hot-bed of scheming and of ambitious intrigues and counter-intrigues. They seek to

ROMAN CORRESPONDENCE.

Times out of mind have we drawn attention to unreliability of the views coming to the secular press of the world from Rome, or purporting to come from the Eternal City. We do not pretend that all the despatches flashed across the Atlantic, even after they have passed through the journalistic sieves of London or Paris, are without foundation, or are totally false, or misleading. Out of the mass of matter that is daily sent out from Rome, by the vast number of correspondents in that

centre, it cannot be otherwise than that a certain amount of truth must be contained in the whole budget, and equally that a great deal of guess work and of invention, for purposes of sensationalism may be found scattered through it. But as regards all that is told about the Pope, the interior workings of the Vatican, and the internal economy and discipline of the various sacred congregations, we can positively lay it aside as entirely unworthy of belief—unless it bears a direct imprimatur that leaves no room for doubt as to its authenticity.

One of the most widely circulated despatches of the year is that which appeared in all the secular press of this continent, bearing date from Rome, the 16th April instant. That it contained a couple of items of truth we cannot deny; but these pieces of information, all probable as they seem, though still lacking official confirmation, only bring out in stronger relief the absurdity of the stories that are mixed up with them. For the simple purpose of the lesson that it conveys we will analyze that despatch. The most important, and most apparently reliable paragraph—though, we repeat, it is unconfirmed officially—is the following:—"Archbishop Falconio, the papal delegate in Canada, has been definitely selected to succeed Cardinal Martinelli, the papal delegate to the United States. This appointment will not be officially announced, however, until the meeting of the Consistory next October." It was felt that Archbishop Falconio's experience in Canada, his learning, his command of the English language and his diplomatic abilities especially fitted him for the Washington post."

How much truth this contains, as far as our present information goes, we are unable to say; but, at least, it is within the range of the possible, and might have an authentic foundation. Then follows a long story about a traffic in tickets to the ceremonies at St. Peter's and in the Sistine Chapel, in honor of the Pope's jubilee. Some sixty thousand of these tickets are distributed and they are perfectly gratuitous; but people in Rome make a business of selling them, especially to the English and American strangers. This may, or may not, be the case; but, if true, the Church has nothing to do with it. It is simply a question of "scalping" on a gigantic scale by persons unworthy of the honor done them in having been made the recipients of such favors.

Then we come to the really big piece of information—that which is calculated to cause the real sensation—and which bears on its face the stamp of invention. To better understand it, we will reproduce the passage exactly as it has appeared in the press of the United States and of Canada. It runs thus:—"The recent signs of the increased feebleness of the Pope which led to alarming reports of his sudden death the end of last week have caused a marked recrudescence of activity among the Cardinals aspiring to the Pontificate. The campaign preparatory to the next conclave proceeds incessantly, the Sacred College being divided into two distinct forces, headed respectively by Cardinal Rampolla, the Papal Secretary of State, and Cardinal Vanautelli. The latter and Cardinal Goiti now constitute the most probable successors to Leo XIII. Those who are not now considered dangerous candidates are fond of pointing out, however, that almost 150 Cardinals have been buried during the Pontificate of Leo XIII., and that the prolongation of the life of His Holiness for a few years is liable to cool many more ambitious calculations."

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bring down the government of the Church and selection of Christ's Vicar to the level of temporal politics and political elections. They presuppose, judging that which they do not understand, or if understanding do not appreciate, by their own standards, that every human ambition must play a part in the carrying out of the perpetual, unchangeable, and immutable representation of Christ on earth, in the person of His Vicar and the Head of His Church. It is upon this rock that these ill-wishers of Catholicity constantly split. They ignore the Divine character of institution—in virtue of its being founded by Divinity—and they measure it, in all its discipline, teachings, and methods, by a standard that would not be very elevated even if applied to secular or purely human governments.

Moreover, they can never have read the truthful history of the conclaves of the Church; or, if they have, they are in still a worse condition, on account of their bad faith. Once more do we beg of our readers to pay absolutely no attention to any such news, or correspondence, either from Rome, or purporting to be from there. When subjects of such great importance to the Catholic world are really authentic, they will be found in the Catholic press of this country, and not in the secular press. Besides, it stands to reason that none, outside of the Vatican circle and of Rome can be better informed on all matters affecting the Holy See than the members of the Catholic episcopacy throughout the world. And when they have actual news of any vital importance they will confide the publication of it to the Catholic press. Hence, we repeat, that it is not only unwise, but totally unsafe to place reliance upon any of these so-called despatches that appear in the daily organs.

THE AMERICAN SABBATH.

We made reference, when speaking of the failure of Protestantism in Asia, to the grave menace to Protestant Christianity in America, in the form of laxity of spirit and falling off from Church. We find that Rev. Dr. George C. Lorimer, of New York, in a recent sermon on "The Religious Crisis in America," made the startling prophecy that "In fifty years we will have no Sabbath," unless present tendencies are checked. He said in part:—

"There is such a thing as a religious crisis in America, however much we may scoff at the idea. Religion, especially evangelical religion, is to-day of very low vitality. The attention at church service is shamefully small. At the evening services this is painfully apparent. We are attacked by secular writers. They tell us that the ministry is deteriorating; that they and their churches have lost their influence to the schools, and that education alone can encompass all the activities of life. They say that the churches spend more for the superfluous of life than for the Gospel, and point with scorn at the ice-cream suppers and other cheapening methods of securing money to support the Gospel. They condemn us for sending missionaries abroad when our people are spiritually starving at home."

"Some phases of the crisis are disheartening. In the past hundred years, more than 23,000,000 foreigners have come to our shores. Many are God-fearing men, but many more are entirely out of harmony with our religious institutions. Some 1,200 arrive in our land every day. The majority are not from Scotland, England, Ireland, and the North of Europe, but they are Magyars or are from Italy and Southern Europe, and have no inclination to our belief. From all this result two grave dangers—desecration of the Sabbath and increase in places of amusement. As has been said, we live for money by day and pleasure by night. I have no fear in saying that at the present rate which we are living in fifty years we will have no Sabbath. And the saloons? It will no longer be a question of opening them for a few hours on Sunday, but they will be open every minute of the week."

Here we have the complaints of which we have spoken condensed in an admirable manner. But it will be noticed that in referring to the causes of this grave situation, the reverend gentleman not only mentions saloons and worldly pleasures, (Continued on Page Eight.)