

are imposed upon the confessor regarding these matters, and he is perfectly aware that when he refers—as he has done—to these authorities, he is acting a lie, he is deceiving the public, and is piling up calumny upon calumny. He knows that were it otherwise our wives, our sisters, our mothers would be the first to inform us of the evil of the confessional; yet the only remark we have ever heard from those nearest and dearest to us was that such and such a priest was “too easy, he asked too few questions.”

If what Dr. Chiniquy states were true, then the Roman Catholic females who attend most regularly the confessional should be the worst class of women, in thought, in sentiment and in consequent action. We claim that Dr. Chiniquy has not only belied the confessors and produced false evidence against the Church, but he has cast a slur upon the morality of the mothers, wives, sisters and daughters of the whole Catholic population. We regret exceedingly that we found it necessary to enter upon this subject as we have done; but we owe it to our dearest and most cherished relatives, we owe it to the priests who cannot enter the arena to struggle with such a man as Dr. Chiniquy, we owe it to our Protestant fellow-citizens who may innocently be led into false impressions by these cunningly arranged attacks upon our Church. Our only trouble is that we have but one issue weekly and that our space will not permit of a fuller exposition of the impostor's methods.

OUR BLOODY FLAG.

There are critics and critics; there are men who imagine that fault-finding is the essence of criticism and that abuse is the most convincing of arguments. A couple of weeks ago we found necessary to point out to the Chicago Citizen and its excessively forcible correspondent—Rev. Bernard Emmet O'Mahony, of Piper City, Ill.—how very mistaken and ungenerous were their attacks upon the present Governor-General of Canada and his Lady. In the last number of the Citizen we find a letter from its correspondent, under the heading, “Father O'Mahony scores the TRUE (?) WITNESS.” Perhaps he does score us, but decidedly he does not *hit* the line. We pointed out last week how blind a great number of our neighbors across the line always are when there is question of Canada or Canadians. Were it not that the very patriotic, but evidently over-zealous, correspondent of the Citizen takes upon himself to insult every Irishman living in Canada, we would not be guilty of giving him any more notoriety than he already enjoys. But when an educated man, in the name of patriotism, sees fit to play the fire-brand and, in his excess of prejudice, proceeds to display bad temper and ungovernable antipathies, it is about time to read him a lesson—at least in common politeness. As far as any of this gentleman's remarks about the TRUE WITNESS, or its editor, are concerned we have no comment to make. He knows as much about the TRUE WITNESS as he does about Irish Canadian history, and as much about the editor of this paper as he does about Canadians in general—and that is saying very little. But when he, or anybody else, undertakes to sneer at or belittle “the Irishmen” “who freely chose Canada for a home,” we have no intention of allowing that person to go unnoticed. We need only reproduce a few of Father O'Mahony's sentences, to convince our readers that he is out of his element when he attempts the part of public

critic. We have but small comment to make. The letter opens thus:—

“Some kind friend sent me a copy of the TRUE WITNESS of Montreal, defending the Aberdeens from my sarcasm, and though it is a waste of powder to let fly at such a pigmy as this ‘Orange-Catholic’ sheet, yet for the sake of another slap at the hypocritical Aberdeens, here we are again. Lady Aberdeen claimed descent from the ‘O’Neils of Tyrone,’ but not until it might pay diplomatically, and so the story was started during the Irish Viceroyalty. Now, this claim is simply not true. One of the scions of the O’Neils made an English connection, but with the female line of a Scotch grubber, never, no, never.”

There is a specimen for you of combined wisdom, knowledge, refinement and grammar! So the TRUE WITNESS has become an “Orange-Catholic” sheet! We only trust that in our new capacity we will prove a worthy illustration of poor Gerald Griffin's poem, “The Orange and the Green.” Had we sufficient space and time, we would gladly give our readers a few more samples of his “assertion without proof and violent censure without moderation;” but, to use his own elegant expression, it would be “a waste of powder to let fly” at such an antagonist. Here is another of those beautiful phrases that at once indicate an academic education and a wonderful familiarity with the most polished writers of English:—

“In fact, no decent poor person in Ireland would take money or relief from a ‘Souper’ organization whose principals are ‘Presbyterians when they live in Scotland,’ and members of the Episcopalian church when they live in England, after the example of the Montreal TRUE WITNESS Queen.”

His may be a forcible style but it is none the less barbaric and un-Christian. A blow from a pugilist has considerable force about it, but it is rarely a convincing argument. In closing his powerful letter the writer is kind enough to say:

“I wonder not that the TRUE WITNESS licks the hand of the Aberdeens and fawns and flatters as most Irishmen deserve to do who freely chose Canada for a home, Canada, where the bloody flag of England floats too long triumphant.”

This last paragraph has all the fire and dash of a soul-stirring peroration. Richard Dalton Williams would have called it “the quintessence concentrated of sublimated audacity.” We have nothing to say about it; it is too lofty for such a “pigmy” as the “Orange-Catholic” TRUE WITNESS to reach. We regret very much that our flag does not seem to be acceptable to the Reverend gentleman. It is evident that he does not know the difference between England and Great Britain: certainly he would not be able to tell whether it is a Union Jack or a flag of the Dominion of Canada that floats from the spire of our legislative buildings. If the flag, under which we live, is bloody, we plead guilty of ignorance; we have no knowledge of any very sanguinary events since the beginning of our Canadian Confederation.

Le style c'est l'homme! Beg pardon, dear sir; perhaps you don't understand the language spoken by a million and a half of people and protected by the laws of this country, and under a “bloody flag.” The meaning of the phrase is this: “The bird is known by his notes.” “Let fly” and “slap at” are very sublime terms! Figmies, hypocrites, grubbers, soupers, liars, fawners, slavers and bloody flags, “dance through his letter in all the mazes of metaphorical confusion;” what Junius would call “the gloomy companions of a disturbed imagination, the melancholy madness of poetry, without any of the inspiration.”

However, there is only one point in all that tirade that deserves serious attention; it is the insinuation that Irish-

men who make Canada their home are not what they should be in the patriotic sense. We would have the reverend correspondent of the Citizen understand that some of the best, the truest, the noblest Irishmen that ever crossed the Atlantic have made homes for themselves in Canada; have helped to clear a way through our primeval forests for the advance guard of civilization and Catholicity; have assisted in laying the foundation stones of our present Dominion—the freest and most happy country on the face of God's earth; have given the fruits of their labor and the results of their prosperity to advance the cause that is dear to every child of the “Ancient Race;” and have, in proportion to their numbers, done as much for Ireland as the exiled sons of that land in any other part of the globe. Irish-Canadians have never hesitated when material aid was required on the other side of the Atlantic; when the very cause—now so popular—was in its infancy and looked upon with distrust by many who are to-day ardent Home Rulers, it was from the House of Commons of Canada—from the legislative halls over which floats the “bloody flag of England,” that the first resolutions were sent to the British Government, asking autonomy for Ireland. Thrice was the same movement repeated in the same parliament.

It is not our intention to honor the Citizen's correspondent with a lengthy defense of Irish-Canadians; nor would we pay any attention to his effusion, were it not that, perhaps, a few others—no more conversant with Canadian affairs than he is—may entertain similar false ideas.

When next, sir, you feel inclined to sneer at Irish-Canadians, remember that in the hour of Ireland's need, it was Canada that sent the Hon. Edward Blake to take his place in the ranks of the parliamentary party, and to do battle for the cause which is most dear to every honest Irish heart in Canada as well as elsewhere. Recollect that Mr. Blake is an Irish-Canadian; that his father was an Irish emigrant, who chose to make his home in Canada; that the present member for Longford was the leader of a great political party in this country; that he once held the office of Minister of Justice in a Canadian Government; that he was born and educated here; that he took the oath of office as an adviser to the Governor-General of this country; that he denounced “Orangeism” and pleaded for “Home Rule” on the floor of the Canadian Parliament; and that all these things took place under the waving folds of what you are pleased to call “the bloody flag of England.”

GLADSTONE.

It is strange how anxious some news gossips are to circulate reports, entirely unfounded, regarding certain prominent men. The other day the Pall Mall Gazette startled its readers with a sensational announcement that Gladstone intended resigning his place as Prime Minister. The clever originator of the rumor gave several very plausible reasons why the Grand Old Man should voluntarily disappear from the public arena. The Pall Mall Gazette seized upon the event of Mr. Gladstone's short trip to France, in order to set afloat a story that it evidently is anxious to see realized. In truth is the “wish is father to the thought” in this case; but the foremost figure in British politics did not delay in giving a flat denial to the statements of the enterprising and sensational organ.

It is well known that hundreds of prominent politicians, and, as a natural

consequence, their official newspapers, are watching anxiously for the disappearance of Mr. Gladstone from the House of Commons. Some make no secret of their motives; not a few would inwardly exult were it only the will of Divine Providence that the Premier's days were numbered. But others, equally bitter in their opposition to him and his policy, prefer the more humane and Christian course, of praying for his retirement. They hypocritically pretend that they sympathize with a man so advanced in years and yet loaded with the affairs of state, as he is, and they strive to impress upon him and upon the public that he would do well to seek a much needed rest before the close of his earthly career. The truth is that these parties do not care one jot about either Mr. Gladstone or his health; they merely look upon him as the embodiment and expression of a great principle of justice, which they fear to see succeed.

There is something cruel in the policy of men who will stop at no obstacle in order to attain their political ends; men to whom no station is sacred, no age venerable, no services worthy of recognition, but who are prepared to ignore the past, trample upon the present and endanger the future as long as their personal ideas are made to prevail. Of course we can readily understand that Mr. Gladstone's policy means a turning point in the affairs of the British Empire; the success or failure of his grand efforts will probably affect the future of both England and Ireland for several generations to come. We also understand that the landlord and aristocratic interests are at stake; consequently, we are not astonished to find that a section of the English press is so bitterly opposed to Mr. Gladstone and that every means imaginable should be employed to secure his disappearance from the high post of public trust that he, to-day, occupies. But all that anxiety and the importance of the results that must flow from the next couple of years legislative action in the Imperial Parliament can by no means justify the methods used to discourage and to undermine the influence of the greatest British statesman of the century.

It is true that Mr. Gladstone is far advanced in years; but his vigorous constitution, the heavy work of which he is still capable, the great exertions which he has recently made, despite all obstacles, all indicate that there is yet an amount of vitality left in the Grand Old Man sufficient to carry him on for several years to come. We have confidence in Providence and in the future of Home Rule, and we believe, without pretending to any spirit of prophecy, that Mr. Gladstone will yet live to see success perch on the standard of Irish legislative autonomy. Physically speaking, Mr. Gladstone is yet more than the equal of many a much younger man in the field of Imperial politics; and as far as the spirit and determination are concerned he is the superior of all. He is one of those rare men who appear at long intervals in the world's history, and who seem to have been born for a purpose, whose mission in life is cut out, and whom the Almighty sustains through all trials until the goal is attained. From the long experience of what is the allotted limit of ordinary human life, he has been able to draw lessons for his guidance in the present; and adding thereto his gigantic talents, his power of resistance, his bold and determined perseverance, we can only conclude that, in all human probability, he is destined to disappoint his most vicious opponents and to peacefully triumph over the enemies of the Irish cause.

In any case we merely wish to point out some of the ungenerous means that are being used to conquer the will and upset the policy of the most wonderful statesman of this, or, perhaps, any other century. There is certainly very little gratitude in politics; decidedly there is much rancor and ill-will. The road is one along which ingratitude lurks and its termination is nearly always clouded. Over the portals of the political arena could well be inscribed the motto that Dante placed above the Infernal gates: “All ye who enter here, abandon hope.” But there are a few exceptions in the history of the world; men who tower so grandly above the ordinary statesmen that they resemble those sublime peaks that appear, sky-piercing, above the mountain ranges of humanity; and of these Gladstone is one.