

The True Witness

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EDITORIAL NOTES.

LAST WEEK we announced the final organization of "THE TRUE WITNESS Publishing Company," and the appointment of a Board of Directors consisting of Hon. Senator Murphy, Messrs. M. Burke, T. J. Quinlan, C. A. McDonnell, and P. Wright. On Friday last the Board held a meeting at which Mr. Burke was elected President and Mr. C. A. McDonnell Managing Director. On Monday the newly organized company took over the business direction of the establishment. This step is but merely a preliminary one, and the imperative duty of the hour for all English-speaking Roman Catholics in this city, and in the Province, is to come forward and subscribe to one or more shares of the capital stock, which is fixed at \$10,000, in shares of \$10 each. The wants and requirements of the paper have been thoroughly investigated by several gentlemen, with the result that \$10,000 are absolutely necessary to continue the business. Of course, as we stated last week, we will require the hearty co-operation of all the friends of Catholic literature. We will need subscribers, advertisers and customers in the job-printing department. On the threshold of a new career we may as well plainly state that THE TRUE WITNESS is completely and entirely outside the circle of politics. Under no circumstances will it deviate from the path of purely Catholic journalism. There are no controlling influences in the organization. All who have joined in the movement have done so for no other purpose than to secure for our Province a truly reliable Catholic organ, one that can afford to be uncompromising in the defense of true principles and fearless in the assertion of our religious privileges.

We notice that from all quarters, and from clergymen of various denominations, there are severe denunciations of the P.P.A. propaganda. It is pleasant to find that sensible men are not taken in by such vile methods. Truly did we argue, some weeks ago, that the members of that organization were not Protestants—that is to say, that they by no means voice the sentiments of Protestantism. There is something too un-Christian about the whole organization to permit of honest, fair-minded men sympathizing with it. Some of the Anglican clergymen are even more bitter than are Catholics in their opposition to this hydra of political, social, moral and religious discord.

So MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN has at last informed the people of Birmingham that he has faith in a new party; it is to be called the Unionist party, and naturally Mr. Chamberlain is to be the leader thereof. It is a pity that a man of such fine talents and still finer opportunities should waste them all in playing the mountebank politician. In his speech of the thirtieth January the Liberal-Unionist chief really proves himself to be a "Brumigem Joe." He claimed

that the "title Unionist was far wider and nobler than that of either Conservative or Liberal, as it includes both." Humble as our opinion may be, still we have the presumption to differ from Mr. Chamberlain; we believe that Unionist—in the sense in which he uses the term—excludes both honest Conservatism and genuine Liberalism. Mr. Chamberlain began as a Radical; not because he believed in the principles that he advocated, but because he had no other means of catching the popular vote of Birmingham. Once he attained the object of his ambition, he gradually dropped off his Radicalism, and even his Liberalism. He naturally gravitated toward the aristocratic sphere, and he blessed his stars when the Home Rule question afforded him an opportunity of displaying his bigotry and an excuse for deserting the Liberal camp. He soon found that he had lost the respect of the Liberals and had failed to gain either the respect or confidence of the Conservatives. The latter were willing to use him as a battering-ram against the Government; but they let him feel that he was an escaped Radical and not a "true blue," not "to the manor born." Set thus midway between the party he deserted and the one that don't want him—like Mahomet's coffin, between earth and sky—he would like to persuade himself that he is called upon to establish a new party, one that will accept his Koran of intolerance, and the members of which will cry out, "Brumigem is Brumigem; and Joe Chamberlain is its Profit (Prophet)." Some day or other, when we have occasion to refer to this new leader of the "lost tribes," we will undertake to prove that a Unionist can neither be a true Conservative nor an honest Liberal.

In the days when telegraphic communication was unknown and before the power of steam had been applied as it is in our time, "war-worn soldiers" used to tell extraordinary stories of fields that were fought and won. There was no person to contradict them, and their vivid pictures were taken as presented. But things have changed in the last few decades. In the United Service Magazine, Major-General Sir Fred. Middleton has a lengthy statement regarding the famous Batoche Retreat, in which he lays the blame upon the other officers, and claims that he alone refused to withdraw from the position. Lieut-Col. Houghton replies to the late commander of the Canadian Militia, and proves, beyond a doubt, that Sir Frederick was the only one who wanted to retreat, and that were it not for Dr. Orton's determined action the cowardly and demoralizing step would have been taken. Thus closes that letter, which is a powerful defense of our Canadian officers and a well-deserved slashing for the would-be military critic:

"Is it possible that his memory is failing so fast that he has already forgotten the fact that the very matter to which I have here taken exception was the subject of both official and newspaper correspondence, in the spring of 1886, the latter being between Dr. Orton and some of the General's inspired and expectant

friends; and that it was finally settled, both privately and officially, in favor of the former? Or, does he imagine that because, whilst occupying the high position of Major-General commanding the militia of Canada he was permitted, through the rules of military discipline and etiquette, the privilege of making incorrect statements and garbled reports, unchallenged, he will still be accorded the same license of speech and pen, and immunity from contradiction, now, when appearing in the role of an historian, and egotistical auto-biographer combined? Or, has he forgotten that he no longer wields the baton in Canada? I think I have now said all that is necessary for the vindication of myself and others from the charge of incapacity or cowardice—which you will—laid at our door by Gen. Sir Fred Middleton, who will hear no more from me until he either disputes the truth of any of the statements contained in this letter (of which I shall, of course, send him a copy), or makes some other libellous accusation—for his own aggrandisement or otherwise—against, or to the disparagement of myself, or any of my brave Canadian brothers-in-arms, with whom I had the honor of serving in this my adopted home."

IT STRIKES us as very strange that the admirers of the present Italian government should be so blind that they cannot see how ruinous to the nation is the anti-papal policy which its rulers persist in carrying out. The very King, himself, is aware of the impending doom. He could not give better evidence of his distrust in the country's future than by investing one hundred million lire, or about twenty million dollars, in English banks. He can see the tide of bankruptcy that is daily rising around the government and the country; consequently he is bound to secure his own future and that of his family. He is not the only one that has taken such wise measures. Having drawn attention to these signs of an approaching storm, the New York Catholic Review says:

"Of the patrimony of the poor, neither King nor Parliament have been so careful. The amounts of pious foundations, the legacies left in past generations for the support of the poor and the orphan, the education of the people and other charities, they have by law converted into Italian securities which are at an enormous discount. The properties belonging to these pious foundations have been by law secularized and sold. They have been bought up by speculators and the proceeds invested in worthless Italian rentes. The Kingdom of Italy was founded on fraud, was supported by robbery of the Church and the poor, and will end in ruin and disgrace."

WE HAVE received from Benziger Brothers, New York, a most interesting and highly instructive volume entitled, "The Priest in the Pulpit; a manual of Pastoral Theology." It is adapted from the German of Rev. Ignaz Schuech, O.S.B., by Rev. Boniface Luebbemann, professor of Mount St. Mary's Seminary, Cincinnati. We could not do better than give our readers the short but very careful and exact comments of the Ave Maria upon this work:

"Although there are not wanting in our language treatises which deal with special departments of pastoral theology,

there is no text-book which covers the whole of that important science. The translation of this volume—there are to be three in the complete set—is an important step in the direction of supplying the deficiency. As Archbishop Elder observes in his admirable preface, pastoral theology is the application of theological knowledge to the work of the ministry, and as such its importance can not be over-stated.

The "Priest in the Pulpit" is an auspicious beginning of the series. No book can make a preacher eloquent when talent is wanting; but all that the written word can do is here done, and done well. Father Schuech's admirable treatise is regarded as a standard work in Germany, and it was a happy thought to place it within reach of English-speaking students. Father Luebbemann has performed his task of adaptation so perfectly that one might almost doubt that the work was a translation, if the title-page were not there to enforce belief. There is nothing superfluous, nothing which will not prove useful to seminarians, for whom, it may be presumed, this first volume is chiefly intended, and to whom it will prove most profitable."

ACCORDING to the accounts received of the great earthquake in Thibet it would seem as if not only the cities and the villages, the temples and monasteries were shaken, but that the very foundation stones of ancient Buddhism were displaced. It is almost impossible to calculate the importance of that terrific event. The number of victims that perished will reach the thousands. The grand monasteries of Hueliyuan and Kemis, the home of Buddhism, are in ruins. Seventy-four Lama priests were buried in the crash. In that country, north of the Himalayas, Shoolhak, the Buddhist god incarnate reigns supreme. The Sacred Head, the Holy Shoolhak, has disappeared. The circumstance, although carefully guarded by the faithful, for fear it might destroy the whole fabric of their faith, is rapidly becoming known abroad. The temple of Kemis, built 1,000 years before Christ, is a ruin, and the Holy One is missing from earth. Who will say that the end of Buddhism is not at hand? The earthquake of Thibet may be the forerunner of its doom.

A LADY from Somerset asks us a couple of questions, one regarding the "Ancient Order of United Workingmen," and the other concerning Archbishop Plunkett, the Martyr of Armagh. The first question is one we cannot answer at present, but will strive to do so later on. We are not in possession of the facts of the case. As to the second question, the Archbishop of Armagh was killed about two hundred years ago. He was born on February 7th, 1629. We are not aware that he was ever beatified or canonized by the Church; but undoubtedly he ranks amongst the martyrs. There are thousands, we might say millions, of martyrs who have never been officially canonized, and yet they rank in heaven as saints of God. Canonization does not create a saintship, it merely establishes the sanctity of an individual as an incontestable fact. In the Litany of the Saints we find that certain martyrs are invoked by name, and then all the others are included in the words, "and all ye Holy Confessors and Martyrs."