

The True Witness



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Franciscan Scholar Dead.

He was the Author of Over Fifty Books.

Padre Marcellino da Civezza died in the Minorite Convent of the Madonna at Leghorn, Italy, recently. His name in the world which he left as a boy was Pietro Ranisi, and he was born on May 23, 1822, at Civezza, in Liguria, or to speak with greater precision in the modern province of Porto Maurizio, the chief town of which is so closely associated with another great glory of the Order of Friars Minor. He entered the Roman province of the order in 1838 at the age of sixteen, was solemnly professed in 1839, went through his theological course at San Francisco in Lucca, and was ordained priest on May 17, 1845.

As preacher, teacher, confessor, editor, writer, he was alike indefatigable, and he filled many positions of trust in the order, including finally that of definitor general. He was the author of upwards of fifty books the most famous of which is the thrilling chronicle of the Franciscan Missions in 11 volumes. In 1876-77 he was ordered to travel over Europe in search of Franciscan documents likely to be useful in the continuation of his magnum opus. We have the result of these travels in his Franciscan Bibliography ("Saggio di Bibliografia, Geografia, Storia, Etnografia, Sanfrancescana," Prato, 1879, sm. folio, 698 pages). Early in 1899, with his most distinguished and faithful disciple, Padre Teofilo Domenighelli, co-editor, he published a book which made a great stir in the camp of Franciscan students: the "Legenda III. Scolorum, publicata per la prima volta nella vera sua integrità."

Whatever may be thought of its conclusions, whether the two learned editors did or did not present us with the legend in its entirety, there can be no question of the value, the deep interest and the usefulness of his scholarly preface. Soon after in the same year, accompanied by his inseparable disciple, Padre Marcellino, at the age of 77, retired to comparative rest in the quiet convent of the Madonna at Leghorn. In consideration of his great attainments, and because he still purposed to continue writing, the minister general placed at his disposal a library of printed books and MSS, which was specially set up at Leghorn (I well know its importance and value, for free access to it has ever most cheerfully been accorded me by Padre Marcellino). The transference of P. Marcellino and Teofilo to the quiet Convent of Leghorn was made the subject of an unhappy form of insinuation on the part of certain English writers, Canon Rawnsley did not hesitate to say in a letter to the Times, of May 9, 1899—I regret to say that he was able to quote M. Sabater as his authority—that the two Franciscan Fathers had been exiled from Rome for approving of some of the conclusions of the editor of the "Speculum Perfectionis"! A more authoritative writer, Mr. A. G. Little, repeated the statement in the English Historical Review (October, 1902).

It does not seem to have occurred to any of these writers that if the book were so evil as to merit the punishment of exile, it would surely be placed upon the "Index Librorum Prohibitorum," where, so far, it had never appeared. They had no feeling against the two friars, though, perhaps, they thought that they were chivalrously fighting their battle against a tyrannous, liberty-stifling "Curia," but in reality their insinuation implied that these two distinguished and faithful sons of the Church had been guilty of conduct which had brought upon them the severest censure of that Church to which they had wholeheartedly devoted their entire existence. I told the venerable friar of these insinuations against him in a language which he could not read. I could never draw from him anything but a smile and a characteristic little shrug of Franciscan resignation. But unknown to him I took up the cudgel for his reputation as a loyal Catholic, and endeavored to draw from the most impartial of these writers, first privately, then pub-

licly, substantiation of the calumny or its withdrawal. But in vain: neither proof nor expression of regret was forthcoming. I have allowed myself this digression in a brief obituary notice in the hope that they may still make an amends honorable over his modest tomb.

Padre Marcellino da Civezza was buried in the Cemetery of the Misericordia Brothers, just outside Leghorn. The funeral was made the occasion of a fervent manifestation of regard and admiration by hundreds of people who had no idea that the old friar whom they had learned to love was a distinguished scholar and man of letters. The lay-brothers of the convent were imperturbed by scores of the poor for bits of his habit: "vox populi, vox Dei": those who knew him could not have imagined a tribute more fitting to his memory, nor have found proof more positive that he is enrolled in the long catalogue of the Church's saints.—Pittsburg Observer.

An American Opinion On the Gaelic Revival.

(From the Philadelphia North American.)

Apart from the United Irish League the goal of which is the political emancipation of Ireland through the creation of an independent national legislature, there is not in Ireland, nor has there ever been, an association which appeals, or has appealed, more to the sympathies, the patriotism, the sense of pride, the intelligence of the financial aid of Irishmen the world over than does the Gaelic League.

Started at a time when the Irish language was unknown to four-fifths of the Irish people, when it was spoken mainly in the countries bordering the western seaboard and was written nowhere, the League was confronted from the first with difficulties that seemed almost insurmountable.

The average Irishman of the midlands, to whom Gaelic was as Greek, could see no necessity for the revival of the tongue in which St. Patrick and his successors preached the Gospel of Christ, and in which the famous Brehon laws were framed. Sentiment, he argued, was a good thing in the abstract; but mere sentiment could not perform a miracle, and in somewhat the height of a miracle he regarded a widespread, not to say a national, revival of the ancient tongue.

To overcome this apathy of the people was the most difficult task of the Gaelic League. Pessimists had to be converted into believers in the great possibilities and future of the movement; foes had to be wooed into friendship and toleration, and, in a word, the whole current of public opinion or thought in Ireland on this subject had virtually to be altered.

The magnitude of the work was never underrated by Dr. Hyde and his associates of the little but determined band that started the great upheaval. But they were not dismayed. Undeterred by the ridicule of the few and the cold, almost contemptuous indifference of the many; cheered by little sympathy and buoyed up by no great hope of ultimate success, they fought a long and stubborn fight for a cause than which no rallying cry of a nation was ever more holy.

And what of the result? Simply that it has been marvelous! Within the span of a few years an almost complete revolution has been effected in Ireland. Apathy has been galvanized into enthusiasm, hostility placated and doubt made to realize that even the most unpromising movement based on patriotism, which appeals to the pride and susceptibilities of a nation, though baffled often, must ultimately succeed.

To-day the branches of the Gaelic League are numbered by hundreds. Gaelic is taught in hundreds of the national schools; books and booklets by the thousand are issued in the tongue of St. Brigid and St. Columbkille, and scores of Irish plays are being enacted in the towns and villages of the land.

More than this, and more significant, the post office has recognized Gaelic as a legal subscription on letters and newspapers; and within the walls of Dublin Castle—long the center of alien misgovernment and

outrage—Irish jigs and reels are a feature of each St. Patrick's Day celebration.

Surely, in all this there is the dawn of Erin's hope—hope that in the not distant future she will reveal in her right of an unfettered Parliament, speak the language of her forefathers, and stand forth among the nations, triumphant in her resurrection and resplendent in her newborn freedom.

Why is Ireland Called "Unhappy"?

The Emerald Isle contains about the same number of square miles as the State of Indiana. It also contains, as Elbert Hubbard assures us in his charming essay on Oliver Goldsmith more happiness to the square mile than any spot on earth. This is Ireland's day, and it may be a profitable reflection to ask ourselves why that beautiful isle of green should so often be spoken of as "unhappy Ireland." For all its sufferings and losses have been transmuted by the subtle chemistry of song and story into fragrant memories and glorious traditions of poetry, art and patriotism. On this day we are all Irishmen; and it will become us all if we can gather impulses of devotion from the domestic virtues of her daughters and the virile spirit of her sons. Just as the traveller's wearied eyes are refreshed at sight of Ireland's musical waters and evergreen landscapes, so the arid waste of human history is made beautiful and vocal with the recollections of Goldsmith and Moore, of Wallace and Balfe, of O'Connell and Emmet, the scholarship of Belfast and Dublin, the fervent love of home revealed wherever Irish hearts, however far sundered from their native land, turn fondly to the shamrock and the harp upon the green. There is something wrong with the soul that does not thrill upon the day that brings to mind the checkered history of dear old Ireland. There is something lacking in the heart that feels no sympathetic throb for her age-long struggle for Home Rule.—Indianapolis Star.

Ireland's World's Fair.

Ireland is to have a world's fair. It is to be held in Dublin next year. It has been planned for years, and among the indefatigable workers to bring it into being were ex-Lord Mayor James Shaaks of Dublin. That it will be worth going to see is proven by the successful exhibit made by Ireland at the world's fair at St. Louis. Now that she is to have an exposition of her own, she will, of course, far and away eclipse her effort in a show 4000 miles from her shores.

A large tract of ground has been selected for the fair, and work is already under way. The necessary guarantee fund has been raised, and there is no possibility for the enterprise to fail. The exposition will run all the summer of 1907 and will reach the full tide of its glory in the autumn months. The chief feature, of course, will be that of home manufactures. Every trade will be in evidence, all the arts and crafts will be represented, cottage industries will be made prominent, and, taken all in all, the Irish section will be such as to gladden the hearts of Erin's sons and to open the eyes of all men to her new revival. The show will act as a magnet to draw Irishmen from all the lands to which they have scattered and will have a tendency to produce race union and solidarity such as have not been witnessed for a century.

The Irish exhibit will not be all, however. Other nations will be invited to display at the fair, and all the chief ones doubtless, will be represented. This will give an opportunity for English manufacturers to display their wares such as is not often presented. American trade, which is so rapidly invading the world's markets, will also be in evidence, while France, Germany, Russia and even far-off Japan will take advantage of the occasion. Altogether it is hoped to make this a truly gigantic enterprise worthy of the century and of the Irish people.

An Infamous Suggestion.

French Masons Would Pay People to Go About the Streets Disguised as Priests and Commit Acts That Would Create Scandal.

The following information published in the Catholic and non-Catholic Opposition papers in France under date of March 23 is of a character which Englishmen would deem absolutely incredible, but unfortunately it is entirely true, says the London Catholic Times. In order to cast obloquy on the priesthood the Masonic lodges are endeavoring to get the French Government to abrogate the law (Clause 259 of the Penal Code) forbidding the wearing of clerical clothes by laymen. The "Masonic Review" (Revue Maconique) for January, 1906, contains this remarkable proposal:

"The most efficacious manner of solving the question of the priesthood in accordance with the spirit of freedom and justice which should animate all honest Frenchmen would be to prohibit magistrates from enforcing the law which renders it a punishable offense for laymen to wear in the public streets the costumes of ecclesiastics or those of nuns and monks. When all persons have the right to dress themselves up as priests according to their own caprices, the prestige of the frock will soon fall."

It will be seen that though at other times organs of the Masonic body would have people believe that the morality of the clergy is inferior to that of the members of the lodges the Masonic Review here admits that the priests enjoy a high reputation for morality which is partly the secret of the influence they exercise.

The Masonic Review does not stop at the proposal that people of all classes should don the clerical garb so that the respect for the clergy may be lessened. It proceeds to make the following suggestion, which is simply diabolically perverse:

"In fact, it would be a good thing if people even now were paid to go about the streets disguised as priests, monks and nuns and commit acts which might create scandal—such as going about with women of low character in cafes and beer saloons. Even if arrested they could be easily ransomed and rewarded for the great services they had thus rendered in the cause of the propagation of free-thought."

It seems that within the last few weeks a number of persons disguised as priests and nuns have been arrested for scandalous conduct in the streets of Paris and other large cities; and on Mardi Gras several noted Anarchists, wearing ecclesiastical costumes, were arrested for singing obscene songs along the route of the Mi-Careme procession. Amongst them was the celebrated Libertad, who pretended to be dead drunk. These rascals have been ordered to pay small fines. Such facts as these generally remain unnoticed by the British press, although they fill the columns of the Parisian papers and must at last lead to some terrible catastrophe.

Heroic Irish Nun Dies Among Lepers.

From Zanzibar comes news of the death of a heroic Irish missionary Sister, Rev. Mother Maria Donatelle O'Donnell, of the Order of St. Joseph, of Cluny. Mother Donatelle was a native of County Limerick. Close on thirty years of her religious life she passed in France, until the spoliation of her Order by the Government under the nefarious Ombes regime.

While this wild work of spoliation and confiscation was being carried on in France a wall of woe was rending the heavens from the leper lands by the western waters of the Indian Ocean. In the loan mountains of Zanzibar, the exile leper's home, over whose portals may be written "Let him who enters here leave hope behind," the leper victims, men, women and children, cast forth by kith and kin as unclean, sought refuge in wild beasts' lairs and mountain caves, or crawled the sandy beach, and, cursing fate, expired in blasphemy. The cry of desolation reached Mother Donatelle, and her offer

to devote her life to the lepers was accepted by her superiors.

Accompanied by other equally noble souls, Mother Donatelle set out for Zanzibar, and was welcomed by the Bishop and installed in the lazaretto at Walezo. There she lived and labored for those poor, reeking, rotting wretches—there she hoped to die a leper's death and fill a leper's grave. On the morning of February 2 she fell feverish. By night the doctor knew her fever was fatal and in the course of two days she succumbed. Her remains were carried down from the Lepers' Home to the Cathedral Church at Zanzibar, where they were honored with a public funeral, the Government officials and the Consuls of many lands joining in the funeral train.

The Bishop of Zanzibar, writing some months ago, paid a noble tribute to Mother Donatelle. Speaking of the leper mission he says: "For the past twelve months they (the Sisters) have had over eighty baptisms in articulo mortis among those poor unfortunate creatures—all Mussulmen. As soon as they become dangerously affected they are easily instructed, and of their own accord ask to be baptized and receive the sacraments with remarkable piety. If exceptionally a disciple of Mohamed refuses on his death bed to become a Christian, Mother Donatelle goes to pray before the tabernacle, and won't give up praying until another Sister comes to tell her that 'all is now arranged.' Such is the confidence of these Nuns in St. Joseph, patron saint of a happy death."

Mother Donatelle was sister to Brother Leo O'Donnell, superior of Cummes Monastery, County Galway, and to Sister Angelo, also of the Order of St. Joseph now in Spain.

A Minister At Mass in Cologne Cathedral.

In the morning at 9.30 o'clock I went to Mass in the Cathedral. I was early, and walked about to view the interior. Here was the forest. The pillars were as tall trees and the arches above them as their meeting branches. The light melted within softly as through thick leaves. The air was cool, as though the dim half-night dwelt here always.

I saw long rows of pillars. Books by various art critics will tell you what is the matter with them, and how to cock your eye at them in a superior way and say "Yes?" But if you are wise enough to open your heart and empty it of all this cheap, foolish knowledge, and look around you, as a baby looks at the moon, you may receive something of the spiritual meaning of the place.

The clock chimed. The organ began to grumble. A long row of priests and vested boys came in through a side door and wound toward the altar, headed by a frail old man clothed in bright robes, supported on either side by an assistant priest. The Bishop was about to celebrate Mass.

I do not recall much about this Mass, but above all is the memory of a voice. It came from the choir loft. Some boy—I never saw him, but I want to hear him sing in heaven—broke forth with a "Kyrie Eleeson," and I thought he would break my heart. It was a sweet, wholesome voice, unspoiled as yet by masters, who teach singers how not to sing. It was clear as the River Reuss that gushes out of Lake Lucerne. It was sweet as the sunshine that falls on the ripened orchards. It was as caressing as a woman's love. It was as pure as a calling angel.

It filled all the distant arches of the great Cathedral, ringing sonorously and distinct to the remotest corner. The organ displayed its loudest harmonies; the chorus sang strenuously, but easily above all, as an angel soars above all the leper flocking birds, rang out this sweet, glorious voice. "Kyrie, Kyrie, Eleeson!" until I found myself choking with sob and my face wet.

I brushed away furtively my tears and looked around me. The faithful

were counting their beads and moving their lips in prayer, and rising up and kneeling down to the tinkling of the bell. I suppose they knew more of that Mass than I, but I know what "Kyrie Eleeson" means and I said one prayer there.

So I saw the Cathedral of Cologne, "the most magnificent specimen of pure Gothic architecture in the world." I do not know how long it is now, how high. I do not know its cost, its date or its builders. I read all of this in my guide book, but have forgotten it.

But I hope I caught something of the feeling the builders and makers meant me to have. I looked from the side at the monstrous outline of the roof in profile against a moonlit sky, and saw my spiritual mother, and her shadow lay on me and blessed me. I gazed at the two towers of the facade and saw my two sky-piercing brothers, and they put their arms about me, and I walked for a space with them along the milky way. I threaded the interior and sensed the shaded glory of that forest in stone, and my soul ran up along the grouped pillars and peeped into heaven. I attended Mass and heard, if not the voice of God, a voice that God made and man had not yet spoiled.

I visited the Cathedral of Cologne. Often the Cathedral of Cologne visits me.—Rev. Frank Crane, D.D., in the Advance (Congregationalist).

Everything Irish in Dublin Court.

Longing eyes have been cast across the Channel at Dublin Court, which during its last days wound up its brilliant course with a tide of genuine Irish gayety, setting the formal doings of the Court of St. James completely at a disadvantage. Lord and Lady Aberdeen, who are ideal in the roles of Viceroy and Vicereine, won the hearts of their people by the Celtic character introduced into their entertainments.

Lady Aberdeen's last ball was not, as had been thought, the last festivity. The jigs and reels in which Lord Aberdeen joined with such keen enjoyment, were merely a preparation for the Vicereine's little surprise. At an "evening party" in the Castle an Irish play by an Irish authoress was given with a complete Irish cast. Harps, pipes and Gaelic songs were the music, and Lady Aberdeen would have none but native talent. It proved a complete innovation, highly pleasing to the seven hundred guests, and the distinguished amateurs played as if their lives depended on it.

Shamrocks Grow in Maine.

Comparatively few people are aware of the fact that within easy reach of Bangor the shamrock grows wild, and during the summer season may be picked by those who are aware of the place where years ago the seed was undoubtedly brought from Ireland. Probably the hundreds of people who have wandered up and down the banks of the Soudabrook stream in summer, but few have ever noticed the little yellow flower which grows wild near the site of the old paper mill, 100 feet or more above the bridge crossing the stream and on the right bank of the stream. There is said to be but one other place in Maine where the shamrock grows in its natural state, without cultivation, and that is at Grindstone Neck, in the town of Gouldsboro.

Great Things From Little Causes Grow.—It takes very little to derange the stomach. The cause may be slight, a cold, something eaten, or drunk, anxiety, worry, or some other simple cause. But if precautions be not taken, this simple cause may have most serious consequences. Many a chronically debilitated constitution to-day owes its destruction to simple causes not dealt with in time. Keep the digestive apparatus in healthy condition and all will be well. Parmentier's Vegetable Pills are better than any other for the purpose.