

Publishing Office:
1100 Bute St., Vancouver, B.C.
Telephone:
Seymour 6048

Established 1911
THE BRITISH COLUMBIA
MONTHLY
The Magazine of The Canadian West
Devoted to COMMUNITY SERVICE · FEARLESS · FAIR & FREE

D. A. CHALMERS
Managing Editor and Publisher.
With an Advisory Editorial
Committee of Literary Men
and Women.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY SPECTATOR OF BRITAIN'S FARTHEST WEST

For Community Service—Social, Educational, Literary and Religious; but Independent of Party, Sect or Faction.

"BE BRITISH," COLUMBIANS!

Vol. XVIII.

FEBRUARY, 1922

No. 6.

THE NEW POPE AND - JOE FORTES.

It is with no irreverence that we connect, in title at least, a reference to the new Head of the Roman Catholic Church with the humble life guardsman of English Bay, Vancouver, who passed to his rest about the time the head of the Church was elected at Rome. But as it is true that the influence of the Pontiff may extend to millions, it is also certain that the genial happy-hearted "Joe" interested, and more or less influenced thousands in Vancouver city, many of whom may not have known until after Joe's death that he was a member of the Roman Catholic Communion.

All men earnestly interested in religion—and after all perhaps most men **are**, whether or not they are "churchmen," of any "denomination" of Protestant, Catholic or Greek Christendom—would give at least some attention to the news concerning the passing of one Pope and the election of another. Those who, whatever the church of their inheritance, in questioning hours may ponder—"Is it a case of 'God and thyself?'" or those others who put stress on the words "There is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus," may wish that the responsible authorities in ALL the churches gave evidence of being more exercised about service to humanity than about Denomination or Community precedence in National and World affairs; and that even dogmas and doctrines (the interpretations of which change with the generations) were made secondary to a practical christianity which recognizes that "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren."

In this connection an open-minded observer could not but note that a majority of the Roman Catholic Cardinals (with whom, humanly speaking, the election of each Pontiff rests) were Italian, and wonder why such a majority should continue in a religious organization which has such international interests. It seems a foregone conclusion that (however much is left to the Almighty) each successive Pope seems to feel it his duty to create sufficient Italian Cardinals in proportion to ensure that his successor is most likely, if not certain, to be an Italian.

This criticism is not prompted unkindly, but rather by the perhaps somewhat vain idea that if a "Holy Father" happened to be a man trained

and experienced in another country such as France, America or Britain, there might be at least a remote possibility of his being so "liberal" that a re-union of Christendom might result. At any rate, on the very ground that the Roman Catholic Church itself takes—its world-wide interest and claim—a writer not particularly held by any mere section of the church, and yet, like every thinking man, recognising religion as a vital thing, ventures respectfully to suggest that the new Pope might during his term of office see that new Cardinals are appointed in such proportion outside of Italy as will make it a reasonable possibility that in future decades the office of earthly head of this great religious and otherwise influential Organization shall be open to Cardinals of other than Italian birth.

We are glad to learn that the new Pope is reputed to have been a man of great practical service in Poland and elsewhere, and one of "liberal" tendencies, and we hope that in his elevation to the highest office in his Church he may give unprecedented evidence of his fitness.

"So past the strong heroic soul away.
And when they buried him the Western port
Had seldom seen a worthier funeral."

—Tennyson (with "western" for "little" and "worthier" for "costlier").

The crossing of the bar by faithful "Old Joe" Fortes, the English Bay life-guardsman, and the public funeral which followed naturally recalled to memory these closing lines from Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*. In the same way the funeral service in St. Mary's Holy Rosary Cathedral, Vancouver, could not but be suggestive to reflective minds. We hope it is quite consistent with good fellow-citizenship, common adherence to the Christian faith, and respect for the views and methods of others in church matters, to comment on the impressions received even at a funeral service.

If, in the olden days, some Denominations went to the one extreme in objecting to the "Mass", etc., and worshipped within unbeautiful and commonplace buildings, and without any ritual, one has only to attend a funeral service in the Roman Catholic church to be reminded that in some ways that church changes little in its forms,