

SOME NOTES ABOUT ITALY.

Under the caption "Modern Italy to a Visitor," Bryan J. Clinch, in an article in the current number of the American Catholic Quarterly Review, says:
"The religious conditions of modern Italy and the attitude of its Government towards the Church seem hardly well understood among either Catholics or non-Catholics in the United States. I will only try to give such facts as I found during my residence, and the deductions that seem to flow from them. In the country districts of Piedmont where I travelled there seemed little difference between the attitude of the bulk of the people towards the Church and that of the Catholic counties of Ireland. Nearly every one attended Mass on Sundays and holy days as a matter of course, and the attendance at the daily Masses, which began very early (much before 6 a.m.) was much larger than in Ireland. The attitude of the congregations was everywhere serious and devotional, and the numbers approaching the Sacraments very large. I was much impressed by the way in which the Piedmontese congregations took an active part in the public services. The prayers after Mass were repeated by nearly every one aloud in correct Latin in musical harmony. The chant is mostly Gregorian. I was present at the even service on the festival of the patron saint of Masserano, which was observed strictly as a public holiday. The psalms chanted were distinct from the ordinary Vespers, yet fully half the congregation chanted all the responses in good Latin. This implies an amount of true mental culture really remarkable among a remote country population.

There were daily services for the dead all through November in every country Church. In the evening they generally closed with the Litany for Souls departed and Benediction. All sang the responses to both with deep fervor. It was most impressive in dim light of a November evening to hear two or three hundred voices re-echo the petitions formulated by the priest, "Sancte Stephane ora pro eis" and "Omnes sancti martyres orate pro eis." The churches generally had no lights except around the altar. The deep chant rolled back from the gloom of the nave, where hundreds knelt motionless.
Pilgrimages to shrines consecrated to special devotions are a common form of devotion in Northern Italy. They call in a way the old "Patrons" of the Irish Catholics and the famous St. Patrick's Purgatory in Ulster. I was asked by my host to visit the sanctuary of Our Lady of Oropa, about forty miles from the town of Turin, and we walked there from Biel la up a steep but well made road. The sanctuary contains a small wooden statue of the Blessed Virgin brought from Palestine in the fourth century by St. Eusebius, the martyr Bishop of Vercelli under the Arian successors of Constantine. On special feasts twenty thousand pilgrims climb the steep road to offer public prayers at this shrine, and many spend some days there on retreats of more or less duration. For their lodging a palace-like collection of buildings has been gradually built, and free lodgings in good rooms, with bed, bedding, etc., is given free on demand to all. The hospice is in a gorge of the lower Alps, about four thousand feet above the sea level. The buildings are of granite, solidly built and seven stories high in front. They run back nearly seven hundred feet in two lines about a hundred and fifty feet apart, crossed by transverse buildings into courts. I was told they can accommodate ten thousand pilgrims at once. Additions to the buildings are being constantly made by private offerings. A glorious domed Church three hundred and twenty feet high to the top of the cross, and a hundred and twenty feet in diameter is now being slowly raised up here among the mountains at nearly the altitude of Mount Washington. The faith which accomplishes such works must be a living fact.

Varallo Sesia, about forty miles from Oropa, has a sanctuary of another kind which is as remarkable in its way. On the top of a mountain six or seven hundred feet above the town and reached by a narrow and rocky road a space of about thirty or forty acres has been devoted to a kind of panoramas of the scenes of Our Lord's life on earth. There are

forty-three chapels devoted each to a particular fact of Our Lord's earthly career, His birth at Bethlehem, calling of the Apostles, the Passion and Crucifixion. The chapels are of various forms and sizes, but each is filled with groups of statuary backed by wall and ceiling paintings so as to form perfect tableaux like the grouping of actors on a stage. Most of the figures are in wood or gesso, artificial stone, and colored. Some of the greatest Italian artists including Gaudenzio Ferrari, the friend of Raffaele, have worked on these chapels, and the effects in some are almost marvellous. The Transfiguration especially is wonderful. As at Oropa new additions are being made to the buildings at Varallo. The central church has been finished within the last few years in mosaic and marble, at the cost of an Italian gentleman. The doors are of bronze and very fine.

The devotion of all classes to these shrines is very marked. I found records at Oropa of visits by several members of the Sardinian royal family in the past. The late King Umberto was among them, as well as his brother, the ex-King of Spain. The King also I found credited with devotional visits to the Church of the Blessed Sacrament at Orvieto a few years ago, and with a contribution towards the completion of its noble facade.

In the Italian cities the churches were also well filled and large numbers approached the sacraments. At Milan on Sunday evening a sermon was preached at which I saw about five thousand in attendance, nearly half of them men. The early Masses on week days before day were also quite largely attended. It was nearly the same at Florence and Venice, possibly even more so at the latter. In the Venetian and Florentine in the intense interest felt by the Mi- their respective cathedrals seems a genuine patriotism much deeper than political enthusiasm. The cult of the patron saints of St. Ambrose at Milan, San Marco at Venice, San Antonino at Florence and San Gennaro at Naples is of a similar kind. Padua is full of memories of Saint Anthony, and his basilica is the central feature of the city. St. Catherine holds like sway at cultured Siena to-day.

Donations for religious purposes are more common by far in modern Italy than most strangers are aware of. The shrines of Oropa and Xarallo have been mentioned. The facade of the Basilica of Orvieto, the most beautiful architectural exterior I have yet seen, is quite modern in much of its details. Magnificent bronze doors, costing half a million francs, were placed in the Duomo at Florence a little before my arrival. Of more private donations for distinctly religious objects I was told that the Bishop of a single diocese in Piedmont holds four million francs in trust for perpetual Masses for the dead founded since the time of Cavour.

The way in which the religious orders have largely returned to their old abodes since the general laws for their suppression in Italy is very instructive. The famous Convent of San Marco, at Florence, was confiscated and made a national monument more than thirty years ago, yet I found the white-robed Children of St. Dominic officiating there quite undisturbed. Franciscans, Dominicans, Passionists, Sisters of Charity, and members of other religious orders are to be met everywhere through Italy. It would seem that the hostility towards them on the part of the government had little other motive than the vulgar one of getting hold of their temporal property. In many cases the convents have been bought back like that of the Camaldoli at Naples, and the authorities seem quite satisfied to leave the members to follow their rules in peace. Even the majority of the politicians have none of that bitter hostility to the Christian religion which is found among the infidel element in France or Germany, or the half-Protestant, half-agnostic public of England or the United States. Sella, the Finance Minister of Victor Emmanuel, was buried at his own desire under the sanctuary of Oropa. Mass is daily said in a private chapel of the Pantheon for the souls of Victor Emmanuel and Umberto.

All these things indicate a strong vitality in the Church in Italy to-day. Its moral power is not denied by any Italian, though political interests are supposed to be involved in

keeping it in check instead of aiding its moral influence over the people. It is not easy to map out the future, but it certainly looks as though the somewhat shaky equilibrium of the modern Italian State needed imperatively a greater moral force for its permanence than can be obtained from political action or so-called scientific statesmanship. It is just thirty-three years since Victor Emmanuel entered Rome as King of Italy. It is nearly sixteen hundred since Galla Placidia raised the basilica where St. Paul's body still rests. Time is with the Pope and the Church in Italy to-day.

Ireland's Influence on Christian Civilization.

Addressing a conference of Hibernians at the Town Hall, Sydney, New South Wales, on December 23rd last, His Eminence Cardinal Moran said:—The student of history who looked back into the golden age could not fail to note the singular influence exercised by Ireland in spreading the fame of Christian civilization in many lands. He did not need to dwell on that portion of the history of the Island of Saints and scholars with which they were familiar, but it might be new to many of them that Ireland had retained many monuments of her ancient civilization. Looking at these monuments, it was evident that in the refinement of fine art no country in the world equaled the scholars of Ireland, and yet this was only one branch of enlightenment to which they had set their hands.

He referred to those monuments known as the Round Towers, of which England had but one, Scotland three, while Ireland had still seventy-two remaining, besides the ruins of fifty others. His Eminence went on to describe the metal work known as filigree work of ancient Ireland, which was without doubt the finest in the museums. No work of today could be compared to that to be seen in the Dublin Museum. The British Museum was rich in pure gold work from all parts of England and Scotland. It amounted to forty-eight ounces of such work, but in the National Museum, Dublin, there were 570 ounces of such gold work of the old Irish times. In the same way some of the monuments known as the storied crosses were still to be seen. There are seven of these in Scotland, but no fewer than 32 came from Iona, the great Irish centre of enlightenment, while no fewer than 244 of them belonged to Ireland. And speaking of them, he was happy to say that during his visit to Europe he endeavored to obtain a fac-simile of one of those crosses, which he hoped to have set up for a centre of the Cathedral Fair, Sydney. Even if it did not arrive in time, it would be an enduring monument of the civilizing influence on Europe and the exercises of the ancient art of Erin upon the continent of Europe.

To bring the matter home to them, he might, perhaps, be permitted to refer to the crowning of Charlemagne in the year 800, when might be taken as the turning point between barbarism and the beginning of medieval Christian civilization. The Saxons were the last of the barbarians to come under the sway of the Christian conqueror. In his triumphs over the Saxons he chose Irish officers to lead his own soldiers to victory, for he was remarkable for his Catholic spirit. From Italy he obtained sculptors to aid him in regenerating France and Germany. He handed over all his schools to Irish scholars. The result was that Ireland swarmed with men hastening to France and Germany to carry out the great mission of teaching the Christian faith. As one of the French writers put it, it appeared like the emigration of the whole of Ireland to the shores of the continent. Hence they found that an Irish monk had laid down his life in Switzerland in the year 630. From him the canon surrounding that beautiful centre on the shores of Lake Constance retains the name of St. Gall. And Irish monks and Irish teachers continued to hasten to it for nearly 300 years. A German writer bore testimony to the industry of the monks of St. Gall when he wrote of the goldsmiths' work of all kinds carried out by them. In those works testimony was borne to the industry of the monks.

If they came to later times, there were, perhaps, centuries of unparallel-

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NOTICE. I, the undersigned, will call a meeting on TUESDAY, 16th May, 1904, at 10 A.M., No. 503 Laurier Avenue, Town of St. Louis, of the members of the EQUITABLE MUTUAL FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY, for their approbation to change regularly the Head Office of the Company to the City of Montreal, County of Hochelaga, instead of the Town of St. Louis. S. T. WILLET, President.

ed oppression of their people, and yet, looking around the world to-day he did not hesitate to say the Irish had brought the blessing of Christian civilization to many lands. He quoted a noble eulogy of the Irish race by an American writer, who spoke of them as the bravest people that ever lived, who had nursed liberty despite dungeon and scaffold, and had bathed every battlefield with the blood of the most sturdy and courageous soldiers. His Eminence went on to point out what Ireland had achieved by her great moral force. Catholic Emancipation was thus achieved not only for Ireland but for the whole British Empire, though some statesmen called heaven to witness they would never sign the Emancipation Act, among them the Iron Duke, the fiercest enemy of all of his own native land. It was a matter of the integrity of the Empire demanded, as civil war was being preached that decided the signature. They might rest assured that it was the marshalling of a whole people in one solid phalanx, determined by moral force, which continued to bring the greatest blessings on Ireland herself. She was a model to those using the same weapons of moral force. A few of the results of that force were the abolition of the tithe system, the rotten boroughs, the uprise of the Established Church in Ireland, which had been cut down and hurled with all force into the bottomless pit.

The local governing was passing into the hands of the County and urban Councils. Never before had the funds of these bodies been so wisely administered. As to the land question, they had the landlords taking their farewell to other shore and going with the prayer that they may never come back. Might he not add that even at the present hour Ireland, as an example in promoting Christian civilization, perhaps, stood unequalled in the world. Looking to other lands, they found in France the name of Marshal McMahon, in Spain, that of O'Donnell, and in the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary those of Count Taaffe and Nugent high in the Councils of the Empire. These names were only specimens of the names of families driven from the shores of Ireland, and who chose to be exiles in distant lands. And, referring to this influence in matters of religion, how singular it was that in our day, Ireland is reviving religion in England and Scotland with immigrants from old Ireland. Again, looking to Canada. They found that

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the influx of Irish had brought vigor to the Canadian people until Canada was now universally considered one of the most energetic and enlightened of nations. Might he not also refer to the United States and to Australia as a singular proof that Ireland was pursuing her sacred Apostolate. Remove the Irish element of 20,000,000 from the United States, and what would you find but triumphant paganism. Take away the Irish in Australia and you would find here nothing but triumphant secularism. He asked them to be true to their fathers and follow in the footsteps of those gone before. He trusted the Hibernians would ever be found among the most enlightened, most energetic, and most virtuous of people. In the days of Australia's triumph he trusted it would be the boast of their children that they had done their part in achieving the glorious destiny of Australia. The Cardinal's address was followed with deep interest throughout and frequently applauded.

Finding the Truth

(Continued from Page 1.) round, for they knew that even a worm would turn sometime or other. Let them suppose that the inquirer after truth went to a priest and said to him: "Is it true that you enslave the intellect and interfere with the conscience?" "Yes," said the priest, "we don't call it enslaving, we call it submitting." He (the right rev. preacher) was making the case as bad as he possibly could against the Catholic Church, and he would therefore ask them in fairness to come on the following Sunday, when he would show them that the Catholic Church was the divine remedy for the liberation of the human intellect. Continuing, Mgr. Robinson asked how it was the Catholic Church was hated by the world? It was because it was not a system of human opinion, not merely a system of human teaching. It must be hated, because it was not a school but a kingdom. The teacher of a school—such as Huxley, Darwin and Herbert Spencer—had followers drawn to them, but such teachers were very modest. Such a man would say, "Now, my students if you take that line of thought it is one I recommend, for it is my deduction upon it." In other words, their attitude was summed up in "You may." But the teacher of the kingdom (as he had told that congregation before) was summed up in the words "You must. I command you." No man more than an Englishman agreed with "You may." But the Catholic Church, being a kingdom said, "I come from God, and I command you to put away your private judgment and submit to me." Therefore could they wonder that the world resented it? and if those outside the Church had not faith he (the right rev. speaker) did not blame them for doing so. Mr. Thomas McGovern, M.P. for West Cavan, is dead. He had been ill for some time.

SATURDAY... OUR CURBST OBSERV... Ever since the man family, and save those in the ed, we find floods at different countries proscribed, even tude that spoke but some of the importance, esp their fatal result tion to give nor to dwell up consequences. I experience with limited, and my few. The first quence that I ca occurred in the here in Montrea ders will also r Ann's ward look Young street Canal of Venice front of St. An unlike the Squ when it was ove ous inundations dolars in this cit no means fashio Venice, nor wer in the same pic those of the "Q Years have since perience taught cautions have against floods t ed, generally, th and could never that source. H Our Lord, 1904 more stirring ch of floods. Espec district of Verdu at Point St. Chp at Maisonneuve scenes of 1887 variations. As not on the "curb ing planks sidew boats, I heard a of comment and But that was n the great amoun many cases. BLAME AND moved from one another, I heard nious. Some bla the Harbor Boar Government, and the river and t was each one to other person and one that might b I could not help case of "Bullum That "cause celeb the attention of most as long as eye and Jarency and its applicatio serve me right, t case was somewh Late Rev. (By an Occasione "Sacerdos Magna great priest." R pression is in the a priest, a priest day of his ordina voice pronounced line words: "Th all eternity, accor Melchisedech." in the Church Mil Church Suffering, Church Triumphan the lamented Fat of the parish of S we feel confidenc day he is a prie ranks of the Chr life-work was mo beautifully rounde ary he celebrat day, the twenty-h his priesthood, ah his pastorate at S He took the par organized and perfe of the most splen ada, a magnific number of schools, societies. Last plated all arrang magnificent chime the grand tower, crown his enter was to have let t grown too heavy strength, and to b alling for some time.