



**EDITORIAL NOTES.**

WE MUST thank the number of our subscribers who have been prompt in renewing their subscriptions; we trust that their example will be followed by all others. The truth is, that the more renewals at this season the better. We are anxious to make rapid progress and bring THE TRUE WITNESS to the high level of real Catholic journalism; it is a praiseworthy ambition and in order to attain that end we require the assistance of all our friends—and it seems to us that every Catholic citizen of this Province should be interested in having a solid and reliable organ to give expression to his ideas, principles and faith. In sending in subscriptions please do not forget the notice, which has been repeated several times during the past few weeks, to the effect that all communications should be addressed to the Editor of THE TRUE WITNESS and to no person else.

IF OUR esteemed contemporary from the Western States, that appropriates Walter Leckey's sketches on "Maurice Francis Egan" and other writers, without either mentioning this paper or their author's name, and that takes our editorials without as much as "by your leave," will agree to pay the express charges we will send on our forms every Wednesday evening, after our paper is out. It would save our friends over there considerable unnecessary work and expense; of course the title of the paper would have to be changed, but that is only a secondary consideration. We are most anxious to be accommodating; but we are not particular as far as our own compositions are concerned, yet, we claim that our special correspondent deserves credit for his work—a work that is done, as a special favor, for THE TRUE WITNESS. Moreover it is the intention of that gentleman to publish all these sketches in book-form; it is unnecessary to say any more to journalists on the importance to an author of due credit.

"Oh who may declare how the nations shall rise,  
When Peace scatters light o'er the tempest of doom?  
Vague forms of the future are shaped in the skies,  
Where Cossack and Christian contend in the gloom."

It is now almost beyond a doubt that the massacre of Catholics, by Cossacks, which was reported some days ago, really took place. No wonder that the Czar forbids the publication of any information regarding these barbaric scenes. Russia has a certain veneering of civilization, but so slight is the coat, that we daily see evidence of Napoleon's exactness when she said "Scratch a Russian and you will always find a Tartar." It is lamentable to contemplate such a powerful nation, with all the facilities that our Western progress and invention afford, and constantly in communication with the most civilized parts of the world, still existing as it does, under a cloud of ignorance and barbarism. Not satisfied with persecuting in

a most brutal and unjustifiable manner the Hebrews, these savages turn their swords and guns upon the unoffending worshippers in a Catholic temple. It is a strange sight to behold France—one of the most civilized nations of central Europe—shedding tears of joy upon the neck of the most barbarous and inhuman of modern powers. If it suited Russia to-morrow the old Bear would be glad to put his bloody paw upon the neck of France, and to hug her in no very loving embrace. Europe will never be secure until that northern tyrant is either chained, or else flogged into reason, for the tyrant has no heart and it cannot be touched in that direction.

IN August next the Catholics of Austria will hold their fourth annual Congress. It is encouraging to notice the spirit of Catholicity that is reviving in that country of many parties and diverse interests. All over Europe, to-day, there seems to be a desire to return to the protection of the Church. There is a fevered uncertainty on every side, and it permeates the different strata of society. Italy is upon a volcano, France is playing with an "infernal machine" that may explode at any moment, Spain is threatened with a political storm, Portugal is under a cloud of unrest, Germany—ever boastful and apparently independent of all influences—is gradually drawing in its anti-Catholic horns, and Austria is certainly beginning to turn a weary and anxious eye toward Rome. It is daily more and more evident that the Sovereign Pontiff is becoming the central point of attraction for the powers; he is the leader—if any is required—to lead the people in safety through the Red Sea of a coming strife. May he live long to hold the balance of power.

AN able journalist has recently departed from this life, in the person of Father Francesco Berardinelli, S. J., the director of the Civiltà Cattolica. He died in Rome a couple of weeks ago. Father Berardinelli was a writer of great force and yet beautiful style. He generally laid the foundations of his articles in solid arguments and facts, then the superstructure being logical and exact, the whole frame-work permitted of those ornamentations and brilliant embellishments so familiar to the Italian and so characteristic of the writer. His finest compositions resembled the Gesu of Rome, immutable foundations, perfect walls, elegant spires, and within all the splendor of fresco and all the grandeur that art could lend to beautify a temple.

THERE is, perhaps, no city in America as fortunate, and at the same time unfortunate, as Chicago. Scarcely was the great World's Fair closed than the "windy city" leaped at one bound from rejoicings and plenty into misery and hunger. Not only are there thousands out of work in Chicago, but a phantom has appeared on the threshold that

menaces the lives of even the rich and comfortable. Small-pox comes to add its terrors to what might be almost called a regular "Reign of Terror." Considering all the poverty, cold, hunger, exposure and other miseries endured by hundreds and thousands in all the great cities of America, and the absence of work both there and even in Canada, anyone who is able to secure a position here, or to retain one when secured, or in fact to "keep the wolf from the door," should be very grateful and thank God.

IT IS WONDERFUL how old most of the studious men live. Gladstone is an example; Leo XIII. is another; and amongst scientists years seem to be allotted in great numbers to the hardest and most constant workers. Tyndall was a very old man when he died; Professor Michelet, a well-known writer on philosophical studies, who died in Berlin some days ago, was over ninety-two years of age. In fact experience teaches that constant work, be it with "hammer, or chisel, or pencil, with rudder, or ploughshare, or pen," is almost a certain guarantee of long life.

THE Eco d'Italia states that the Holy Father is engaged upon an Encyclical on sacred music which will put an end to all differences with regard to music in our churches. Although the Eco is a Catholic journal yet it is not either an official nor even a semi-official organ, therefore we cannot take as absolutely positive any of its assertions regarding the Pope's intentions; but it is very probable that, in the present instance, the Italian journal is well informed. The subject is one of great interest to the Catholic world at present, and it is one that would certainly be congenial to the fine mind of the present Pontiff.

ON the question of Secret Societies there seems to be a great deal of misunderstanding on the part of non-Catholics, especially regarding the oft-repeated explanations of the Church's attitude regarding them. A writer in the London Athenæum complains:

"That the Catholic Church denounced, as wicked associations to which no good Catholic could belong. Oddfellowship, Forestry, Shepherdry, and other societies, for no other reason than that the admirable societies concerned have their little secret signs and words."

A dignitary of the Church, whose name is withheld, replies to this and explains that only two classes of Secret Societies are condemned. "First, the Freemasons and similar societies which conspire against the Church and lawful authority; and secondly, societies which exact an oath of obedience and secrecy to unknown chiefs." He adds that societies which have only secret passwords and signs are in no way forbidden merely on that account. The Athenæum considers this an important statement, and it immediately puts a false construction thereon, for it claims that the Church dignitary states that Freemasons and

societies are tolerated. No society is condemned on account of its signs or passwords; the reason of the condemnation is that the society has evil aims and had methods, that its members conspire against the Church and State. But no matter how often this is explained, it is always—and generally intentionally—misunderstood.

IN consideration of the present excitement, in certain circles, on the subject of the school law proposed by Hon. Mr. Pelletier, and to be applied to the Board of School Commissioners here, we desire to state that we think it the duty of our local representatives to oppose such an enactment. Almost in spite of a powerful opposition we succeeded in securing a representative on that Board; he is there decidedly against the will of those who rule, or did rule, the entire actions of that body, and we can see clearly that the Provincial Secretary's act is expected to have the effect of getting rid of such representative. Now instead of wishing to have only one we claim that we have a right to two on that Board, (one clergyman and one layman); that is in accordance with population and taxes. It requires no prophet to foretell what the result of the contemplated law would be. We would have to rely entirely on the ecclesiastical authorities for justice, and should anything turn up that might prevent their appointments being made we would be in as bad a fix as ever. We will have more to say on this later on.

TALKING of School Boards suggests the reproduction of the following, from the Liverpool Catholic Times; it is not without its application elsewhere than in England:

"The powers and resources already possessed by the School Boards are enough to discourage many of the friends of religious education and to cause hundreds of denominational schools to be surrendered to State secular control. Their power over the public purse has been made abundantly manifest by the building of magnificent schools, the lavish expenditure on salaries, school furniture, gymnasiums, swimming baths, and so on, but now it appears that they feel themselves at liberty to take another step forward—still, of course, at the expense of the general body of the rate-payers, denominationalist and otherwise. The last meeting of the Manchester School Board affords an indication of what further developments may be expected, unless the Government steps in and informs them that they are exceeding their legitimate functions and assuming powers and responsibilities which Parliament certainly never intended they should possess. A resolution was adopted directing that a site be secured in the southern part of St. Luke's Ward not with a view of erecting a Board school immediately, but to "nurse" it, as it were, till such time as they in their wisdom think it desirable to provide further teaching accommodation in that quarter. In the opinion of the Board the district in question will in a few years be densely populated, and it is said to be good business to acquire it now before its value increases. Parliament never contemplated that School Boards would become land speculators."