

Gardien de la Salle de Lectur.
Feb. 19 1908
Assemblée Législative

MONTREAL, THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 1908

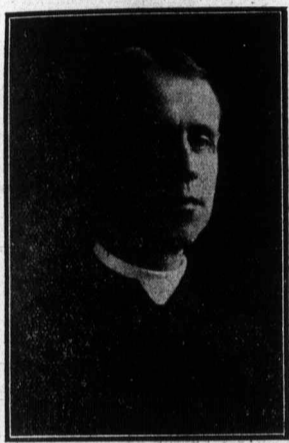
PRICE FIVE CENTS

St. Patrick's Day Celebration.

Fine Procession.—Imposing Ceremony in St. Patrick's Church.—Banquet.—Splendid Speeches, Much Enthusiasm.

Though the sun failed to shine on our great national feast day, yet patriotism, enthusiasm and pride were evident on every hand. The usual procession to St. Patrick's Church marked the opening of the day's programme. The tasteful arrangement of the church was the subject of general appreciative comment. While banners, pennants and flags lend a charm of their own, still the simple arrangement of plants, shamrocks and lights—artistic in the extreme—struck one immediately upon entering the sacred edifice.

The several Irish societies of the city were represented by numerous delegates and an immense congregation filled the church to its full capacity. His Grace officiated pontifically. Numerous priests were present in the sanctuary. The sermon was preached by Rev. D. J. O'Sullivan, who is presently giving the Lenten discourses at St. Patrick's. We give a verbatim report:



REV. GERALD McSHANE,
Chaplain of St. Patrick's Society

THE SERMON.

"We are the children of the saints, and look for that life which God will give to those who never change their faith from him." Book of Tobias, 2nd chapter, xviii.

May it please your Grace:

My dear brethren: You all know that the holy sacrifice of the Mass is offered directly to God alone, because it is a supreme act of divine worship, and yet in a prayer which the officiating pontiff will soon recite at the altar, he will implore the Blessed Trinity to accept that oblation in memory of the Passion, the Resurrection and the Ascension of our Redeemer, and for the honor of the Blessed Virgin, the Apostles Sts. Peter and Paul, and of all the saints, and particularly in honor of these saints whose relics are enshrined in the consecrated altar. Thus, dearly beloved brethren, does our holy mother the Church teach us that wherever the holy sacrifice is offered, not only is God worshipped with an honor due to Him alone, but all the blessed in heaven receive therefrom an increase of glory and happiness. From every altar whereon the Immaculate Lamb is offered up, there flashes a shaft of light up to the face of the Eternal, whereby its divine effulgence shines with greater brightness, and that beauty is reflected through the beatific vision down upon the spirits of the blessed, who thereby receive an ever-increasing degree of felicity.

If this be true of all the blessed in heaven, dearly beloved brethren, may we not believe it with still greater certainty of those saints who have contributed more than others to the increase of God's glory upon earth and to the multiplication of the blessed who are to sing his praises forever in the kingdom of his glory.

In a higher sense our Blessed Saviour claimed for His humanity that right to glory when He said to His Father: "I have glorified Thy name upon earth. I have made Thy name known to men. I have done the work which Thou gavest Me to do; now glorify Me with that glory which Thou hast," and so St. Paul, speaking of his approaching dissolution, proclaimed that God was going to place on his brow a crown of justice, meaning, in a certain sense, that God owes it to His saints to reflect back upon them in the kingdom of His glory the splendor of His infinite perfections, in reward for their having exemplified to men through the sanctity of their lives upon earth, the perfections of the Most High.

Dearely beloved brethren, if this be true, and I believe that we cannot exaggerate the superabundant generosity of God in replenishing the

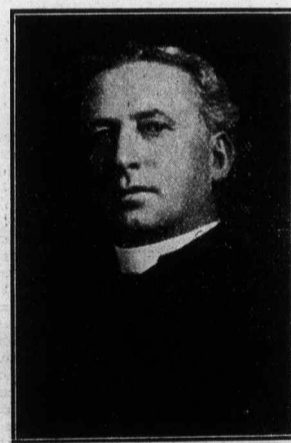
souls of His blessed servants with the communication of His own divine love, what shall we say of our own Apostle, whose glorious feast is celebrated throughout the Catholic universe to-day. Early this morning in the land of our origin, on that sacred soil of Ireland, which is like one vast altar-table saturated with the blood and consecrated by the enshrined relics of thousands of her martyred children, thousands of priests, the spiritual sons of St. Patrick, offer up to the honor of God first, and secondly for the honor of St. Patrick and all the saints in heaven, the adorable sacrifice of the Mass. And all over this broad earth, in every corner of the globe wherever the children of St. Patrick are found to-day, they lay aside all avocations and duties of ordinary life, and they turn their faces towards the altar of God and kneel in adoration, in humility, in atonement for the sins of the past, and in petition that God in His bounty may continue to pour down upon the Irish race those supernatural graces, the preservation of which, more than anything else, has been attributed to the glory, to the permanency, to the strength, and to the moral integrity of the children of St. Patrick.

All over this broad land to-day, thank God, from the icy shores of Labrador to the verge of the Peaceful Sea, hundreds of thousands of Irish men and women, and their children, and those who, through their instrumentality, have been brought into the Church of God, present a magnificent spectacle of a people making a grand manifestation of their faith in God, and this is the spirit, my dear brethren, of this holy celebration, a spirit of thanksgiving to God for the divine gift of faith, a spirit of deepest reverence to God for having not only singled out the Irish nation as one for which peculiar efficacious means should be adopted to bring and to keep them in the Church of God, but peculiar gratitude: a special thanksgiving to the Almighty for having

Almighty God of our origin and of our destiny? What is faith, but the pointing out to us of the road which we must follow in order to attain the end for which we were created? What is faith, but that light which enables us to pass a true estimate upon the things of this world and to prefer to their fleeting beauty the eternal things of God?

It is true that God has asked you to sell all that you have and purchase that one great pearl of holy faith, but, dearely beloved brethren, men and women of the Irish race looking around you to-day, contemplating the position which your race holds in the world, and looking back over the ages and scrutinizing your history, would you be willing to forfeit it all, to surrender all your claims to fidelity, loyalty, integrity, for the grandeur, prosperity and the powers of this world, and when you come to stand before the throne of the Almighty Judge, and the nations, and the tribes of the earth are summoned there to render an account of their stewardship and their mission, will you blush for favours? Will you be ready to exchange yours for the conquests of the great nations of the earth, who perhaps at times, have taunted you with your lowliness, with your humility, with your poverty, with your obedience and your loyalty to the Church of Jesus Christ. There will be no stains upon the standard that you will hold aloft there, and if there be stains, they will be made by your own carelessness, and may be blotted out by your own tears and your own blood shed for Jesus Christ. Throughout the ages, you have left no trail of tyranny, of blood and slavery. Thank God then for that, and thank God for the heroic missioner who was the progenitor of that holy faith to our forefathers.

When God destines a man for a great mission he endows him with the gifts and the faculties which are necessary for its accomplishment: not always the dazzling gifts of genius and human power. God prepares His heroes in a different school from that of the world, and



REV. D. J. O'SULLIVAN,
Preacher of the Day.

raised up and prepared and moulded such a magnificent apostle as our own glorious St. Patrick.

It is needless for me at this time, my dear brethren, to strive to convince you that the gift of faith is the most precious that God could bestow upon a people, and that it is a mark of His special predilection. In our day, perhaps more than in any other, the value of that divine gift is made manifest. We see those that have lost it in the world going mad with pride, ambition, injustice, and the love of sensuality. We see individuals and nations going to ruin and crumbling away, because with their own guilty hands they have shattered the foundation upon which their lives and their stability depend. Our Blessed Saviour Himself tells us that faith is that one great pearl of inestimable price, which a man having found, he went and sold all that he had and purchased. What is faith, my dearely beloved brethren, but the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ, whom He has sent? What is faith, but the true knowledge revealed to us by

that school is generally the school of suffering. Suffering is the crucible in which noble characters are tested. The base and the ignoble are dissolved and broken to pieces, whereas the virtuous man of God comes out of the crucible of suffering purified, refined, and strengthened; and the first element which is necessary for his purification is humility. The weak man, the cowardly man, when stricken down by suffering, repines and murmurs; and although he may have brought his sufferings upon himself, he is always prone to cast the blame and the reproach on someone else; whereas the true man of God bows his head and says: "Thy will be done."

And this was the first element of St. Patrick's character, that of humility, for, although repeatedly taken a prisoner by the roving bands which overrun those countries in those days, although treated with cruelty and ignominy, he never repined, he never uttered a word of reproach nor a threat of revenge, but he bowed his head and said: "O my God, I thank Thee, for during the

days of my youth I ignored Thee. O Eternal God, I did not lend a docile ear to the words of my parents, and I forgot Thy precepts and now I am punished for my sins." And there, dearely beloved brethren, during these first six years of his captivity in Ireland, while yet a young man, St. Patrick began to be purified and strengthened in the crucible of suffering. He began already to practice those works of prayer and penance which made him such a wonderful saint. In all his writings St. Patrick, notwithstanding the marvellous achievements he accomplished, refers to himself as an ignorant man who knows nothing, who does not speak from any acquired knowledge, but who speaks because God in His mercy sees fit to enlighten him, and, yet, dearely beloved brethren, St. Patrick was a fountain-head of divine and human knowledge.

After having been released from his captivity, he was inspired with the holy thought of going back to that land of the Irish and striving to



MR. W. P. KEARNEY,
President of St. Patrick's Society.

lead them into the fold of Christ. He began his preparation in a most careful and assiduous manner. First he went to a monastery near Tours, presided over by his uncle, St. Martin, and there he applied himself to serious sacred and profane study for some years. He afterwards went to Rome, the seat of authority and of truth, and there he spent three years in the study of theology. He afterwards came back to France and put himself under the direction of the great St. Germain of Auxerre, and by his advice St. Patrick repaired to the famous monastery of Leuans, where he spent nine years more in the study of the sacred sciences, and then went a second time to Rome to consult with the Pope, St. Celestin concerning his mission to Ireland, and from that Pope, the representative of God upon earth, the vicar of Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, he received the mandate: "Go in the name of God and preach the faith to the children of Ireland." Thence he came to Normandy, where he was consecrated bishop, and in 432 he landed at Downpatrick in the present province of Ulster, and then he started that wonderful career which perhaps has not its parallel in the history of the Church of God.

My dear brethren, we cannot claim for any saint the monopoly of greater perfection. The saints reflect upon the world the perfections of Almighty God, some in one man and some in another; some have a call to enter the cloister to lead lives of contemplation, prayer and mortification; others are called to the active life, to the military life of the Church in the world, and St. Patrick was a brave man in spite of his humility and his diffidence of himself. When he was called upon to speak or to act in the cause of his Master, he knew no fear, and he was mild and gentle and prudent with all, not unnecessarily provoking opposition, hostility and hatred on the part of the enemies of God.

About one year after his arrival in Downpatrick he made his way to Tara, where the great High King was holding his annual court. He arrived in the neighborhood on the very vigil of Easter, and on Easter Eve he commanded his monks to light the paschal fires which were to be the symbols of that fire, that torch of faith, that flame of torches which I hope were never, never to be extinguished in the land of Erin. It was customary on that very day for the Druids of old to light their fires on the Spring Festival, and every one was forbidden under pain of death to light any other fire in



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that neighborhood while the torch was burning. The Irish King in his wrath and fury summoned Patrick before him, and the next day, upon Easter morning, he appeared in his dignity, in the majesty of a pontiff, and the representative of God and His Holy Victim, and then without arrogance, without contempt, he explained the doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ, and he immediately won to him many of the most learned among his hearers.

For sixty years St. Patrick labored in the work of the conversion of Ireland. It is true that the soil was prepared to receive the seed of divine faith, because although almost a pagan land, yet even in that state, Ireland was a land of learning and of culture. The Irish were not the wild and fierce barbarians that some men are inclined to represent them to be. On the contrary, although they were warlike and fearless in their battles in their domestic and social lives they were gentle, they were kind-hearted, and they were just. Those qualities, therefore, may help to make us understand how St. Patrick in that space of sixty years accomplished that wonderful miracle of changing a nation of idolaters into a nation of saints and scholars. He was not far from the whole of Ireland, he visited all the large cities himself, and when he finished his career he left seven millions of Catholics, three hundred bishops and three thousand priests. He had raised up innumerable schools, monasteries and institutions of learning, from which missionaries and teachers soon began to swarm over the continent of Europe. But, dearely beloved brethren, it would have availed us very little to have St. Patrick for the Apostle of our ancestors, if our own forefathers had not preserved in its beauty and its integrity that divine gift of faith, and after God Himself, to St. Patrick we owe the preservation of that unspeakable gift, because he not only sowed his life in preaching the word of God, but he offered up

himself in contemplation and prayer with his hands and eyes raised toward heaven, and then for a little rest he laid his weary body down on a bare rock. And what was he doing during all this time of prayers and mortifications? Oh, thank God, he was praying for us all, praying that his children might be always faithful, praying that his labors, and his troubles, and his penances, and his prayers might not be in vain, asking of God to deny everything else, if it were His will, to Ireland, but to never allow her to lose the precious gift of faith. "Thanks be to God, this has been done, and to-day, therefore, dearely beloved brethren, your chief duty will be to join with your bishop and your priests around the altar of God, around that sacrifice which has never left the soil of Erin since St. Patrick offered it up, and thank God for the grace of faith. To-day he looks down upon you with love and he says to you: "You may have had ten thousand teachers in the faith, but you have but one Father, for I taught you the gospel of Christ Jesus," and resolve, dearely beloved brethren, to remain faithful yourselves to that sacred trust which has come down to us from our forefathers. Oh, we have reason to be proud of our history in the past. Esto fides: "Be you faithful and you will receive an everlasting crown." It is true, my dear brethren, that the various teachers, the bright ones of this earth, may come to you and ask you to sell your inheritance for the mess of pottage of worldly pomp and grandeur. It is true that they may come to you in the name of salvation as they came to our Lord, and offer you the powers and kingdoms of the earth, and say to you: "All these things you may have; oh, yes, you may have political power, prestige, supremacy, and you may be yet the master of the land and the sea, if by bowing down you will adore me;" and in the words of Jesus Christ you will answer: "He gone thou tempter, it is written the Lord thy God thou shalt adore, and Him only shalt thou serve."

This is our hope, dearely beloved brethren, particularly for those who may be vacillating in the faith or in their true loyalty to the tradition of their forefathers. We pray for them, we ask for them the blessing of St. Patrick, which will be conferred upon you by the hand of our most revered Archbishop.



MR. FRANK J. CURRAN.

his soul and his body as a constant sacrifice for the obtaining of perseverance for the children of his love, dearely beloved brethren, if I were to enumerate to you the prayers and the religious exercises and the works of penance that were performed by that Apostle they would seem incredible to you, but in reading his life we must be convinced that St. Patrick lived a miraculous life in the perpetual presence of God. Scarcely a single moment in the day was the heart or mind of that saint detached from Almighty God. We are told that each day he recited the whole psalter, consisting of 150 psalms, canticles and other prayers. Two hundred times in the day he bent his knee in prayer. Not satisfied with the labors and the prayers of the day, he spent his nights in communion with God, and in the mortification of his body. We are told that at night he began first by reciting again 100 psalms, and then after a short interval he recited the other 50 psalms, and during the second part of the night plunged into chilling waters. He re-

After grand Mass the processionists reformed and passed along the route given in last week's issue. They certainly made a splendid showing both in numbers and appearance, the boys of St. Patrick's School, in their pretty new uniforms, deserving special mention. The afternoon and evening were devoted to entertainments of different kinds, each being well patronized.

THE BANQUET.

Good cheer, speech and song were the watchwords of the banquet under the auspices of St. Patrick's Society at the Windsor Hotel on St. Patrick's night. Among those present at the guest table were Sir Charles Fitzpatrick, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada; Sir Alexandre Lacoste, Rev. Gerald McShane, pastor of St. Patrick's; Rev. Dr. Paterson-Smyth, Mr. Charles Murphy, K.C., Ottawa; Messrs. Thomas Gilday, president of the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society; J. C. Beauchamp, president of St. Jean Baptiste Society; Lieut.-Col. Gardener, president of St. Andrew's Society; J. H. Tremholme, president of St. George's Society; J. Albert McLean, first vice-president of the Caledonian Society; David Roberts, president of St. David's Society; Ald. T. O'Connell, acting Mayor and representing the city of Montreal; Rev. Father Gagnier, S.J., rector of Loyola College; Mr. Justice Curran, Mr. Justice Guerin, Mr. J. C. Walsh, M.P.; Dr. J. J. Guerin, Mr. T. J. Drummond, president of the Board of Trade; Mr. George E. Drummond, and Rev. Isidore Kavanagh, S.J.

(Continued on Page 5.)