

received at the hands of her glorious apostle. When St. Patrick reached Ireland in the 5th. century so great was his zeal that it brought the Irish people to embrace the True Faith, which gained ground so rapidly that with the "sudden ripeness of a northern Summer it at once covered a whole land." To the glory and permanency of Ireland's Faith, then Gentlemen, do I ask you to join me in a toast."

Mr. Ross Murphy sang "The Dear Little Shamrock," after which Mr. Hanley delivered his reply.

"We are here assembled to-day" he said, "to do honor to the memory of the patron saint of Erin. It is, therefore, most highly fitting that the toast to which I have been called upon to respond, should have found a place on our list; and those of us who are of Irish descent have raised our glasses with more than ordinary enthusiasm to drink to the glories of Ireland's Faith. For dead, indeed, is the soul of any man with a single drop of Irish blood coursing through his veins, who is not filled with sentiments of the most exultant admiration by the mere mention of the faith of his forefathers, and who does not wish for the eloquence of a Demosthenes that he might thunder forth to the admiring world, the wondrous praises due to the sons of Erin's Isle, for having so long, so faithfully and so arduously clung to the beautiful and ennobling creed preached to them by Patrick. Ireland's faith is certainly a subject worthy of the clearest mind and most gifted tongue that ever graced this world of ours.

Fifteen hundred years ago the glorious saint whose memory we celebrate to-day entered upon his apostolic mission. among the pagan clans which then overran the hills and dales of Ireland. How great was his success, we all know well. With high enthusiasm the noble race welcomed him to their midst, and when they heard the beautiful truths falling with

soft and simple eloquence from his inspired lips, they immediately rejected their pagan deities; warrior chiefs as well as tender maids flocked to his standard, earnestly requesting that they too should be enrolled as soldiers under the banner of that faith which they have ever since treasured through weal and woe, as something dearer than their lives. In an incredibly short time the whole island was evangelized. So burning, indeed, was the ardor with which the Irish people welcomed the religion of the true and only God, that it has been well said "It looked as if Ireland was going to cease to be a nation and become a church." Nor was this an ephemeral ardor, like a fire of paper or of straw, flashing into a momentary glow to relapse into deeper gloom. It lasted for several centuries; it was still in full flame at the time of St. Columba, more than two hundred years after Patrick; it grew into a vast conflagration in the seventh and eighth centuries, when many rushed forth from that burning island of the blest, to spread the sacred fire among the sister nations. For while Europe during the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries was in total darkness, Ireland alone basked in the light of science, whose lustre, shining in her numerous schools, attracted thither by its brightness, the youth of all nations, whom she received with an unbounded generosity. Not content with this, she sent forth her learned and holy men to spread the light abroad and dispel the thick darkness, to establish seats of religion and learning as focuses whence should radiate the light of truth on a world buried in barbarism. Is it any wonder, then, that Ireland was looked upon as a great and glorious land, and that the other countries of Europe, beholding and admiring the lustre of learning and sanctity which shone forth from the holy Isle, united in conferring upon her the proudest title ever yet given to a land or to a people—"The Island of Saints and Scholars?"