

THE DAY WE CELEBRATE.

Full Account of Sermon—Demonstration in
St. Patrick's Church—Status of
our Irish Societies.



REV. HUBERT J. ZILLES, C.S.S.R.,
Preacher of the Day.

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Once again is dear old St. Patrick's Day with us. It is a day of joy, a day of loyalty, a day of enthusiasm, a day of religious fervor for our people. At an early hour this morning the city was astir with the strains of Irish music, while the trolleys, the Shamrock, and green ribbons were worn by a large percentage of Montreal's population. All were proud to wear

"The chosen leaf
Of Bard and Chief,
Old Erin's native shamrock."

The various Catholic societies assembled at their halls at 8 o'clock and shortly afterwards, preceded by bands and banners, proceeded to St. Patrick's Church to assist at the religious celebration. The scene at the church was one of grandeur. The beautiful sanctuary was hung in streamers of white and green, while potted plants and shamrocks were seen in profusion. The myriads of colored electric and other lights shed their radiance over the scene, and the dear old Irish parent church was seen at its best. The attendance of the laity was very large.

At 9.30 the procession of sanctuary boys and priests entered the sanctuary amidst the stirring strains of "St. Patrick's Day," "The Harp," and "Let Erin Remember." Solemn high Mass was sung by Rev. Luke Callaghan, D.D., assisted by Rev. P. J. Heffernan as deacon and Rev. J. Killoran as sub-deacon. In the sanctuary were Right Rev. Bishop-elect Racicot, Rev. Fathers M. Callaghan, P.P., St. Patrick's; O'Meara, P.P., St. Gabriel's; P. Brady, P.P., St. Mary's; J. E. Donnelly, P.P., St. Anthony's; P. Rioux, C.S.S.R., St. Ann's; J. P. Kiernan, P.P., St. Michael's; Casey, P.P., St. Agnes; T. Heffernan, St. Anthony's; M. L. Shea, St. Anthony's; P. McDonald, St. Mary's; E. Strubbe, C.S.S.R., D. Holland, C.S.S.R., E. Flynn, C.S.S.R., J. McPhail, C.S.S.R., St. Ann's; A. Cullinan, St. Mary's; R. E. Callaghan, St. Michael's; F. Singleton, St. Agnes; T. Fahy, St. Gabriel's; E. Polan, St. Patrick's; L. McGinnis, Verdun; G. McShane, S.S., Notre Dame Church; W. Fitz-Henry, C.S.C., W. H. Condon, C.S.C., St. Laurent College.

Inside the sanctuary were the Montreal College boys and St. Patrick's Cadets, who acted as a special guard of honor. Outside the altar-railing were the Hibernian Knights and the officers of St. Gabriel's Juvenile Total Abstinence and Benefit Society. At the elevation the St. Patrick's Cadets and Hibernian Knights presented arms. The music

was of the highest order, and lent an additional charm. The choir had prepared a fine musical service. The Kyrie, Gloria and Credo were from Professor Fowler's Mass of the Blessed Virgin, and the Sanctus and Agnus Dei from Ambrose Thomas' Messe Solennelle. At the Offertory Mr. Lamoureux sang Panis Angelicus by Dubois. The solos were rendered by Messrs. F. Cahill, J. P. Kelly, G. A. Carpenter, J. F. Walsh and W. J. Walsh. Prof. Fowler played some of Ireland's beautiful melodies at different parts of the service.

THE SERMON.

The sermon was, as usual, one of the leading features of the morning's celebration. It was preached by Rev. Father Hubert J. Zilles, C.S.S.R., of Saratoga, N.Y., who is engaged at present in giving a retreat at St. Patrick's Church. It was an eloquent and masterly oration, one that was practical in its entirety, breathing forth piety and patriotism in its sentiments. It set before the mind the eternal principle on which depend the happiness of a people here and hereafter. The following is the sermon in full:

The preacher took his text from the Book of Ecclesiasticus: "Let us now praise men of renown, and our fathers in their generation. But these were men of mercy, whose godly deeds have not faded; good things continue with their seed. Their posterity are a holy inheritance and their seed hath stood in the covenants; and their children for their sakes remain for ever: their seed and their glory shall not be forsaken. Let the people show forth their wisdom and the Church declare their praise." Eccles. 44.

It is with joyous and happy hearts we have assembled to-day in this beautiful temple of God dedicated to the glorious St. Patrick. The worship of God is always dear to the hearts of the Irish people, but it never finds truer and more expressive manifestation than on this, their national holy day. We are at all times pleased to find the opportunity to give expression to our faith by glorifying God and assisting at the renewal of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary's Hill, yet our pleasure is increased immensely for the reason that this day is all our own. Indeed a day of faith and of characteristic joy shared by all who are united to us by faith and blood. A due appreciation of our holy faith and a deep-seated love of nationality has brought us to-day to the altars of our forefathers. The same sentiment gladdens all hearts to hear the priest preach the life and labors of the great and glorious St. Patrick,

the Apostle of Ireland. His life is well known to all from birth to death. Since it is my pleasant duty to pronounce his eulogy, let me do so by speaking of the faith which he brought to you.

A GREAT MORAL CONQUEST.

The annual recurrence of this day presents to our minds one of the greatest of moral conquests in the history of the world. Millions of a scattered race are celebrating to-day the name and memory of a man who has been dead for fourteen hundred years. Who was he and what has he done to warrant such enduring and enthusiastic remembrance? Was he the founder of a race that so extolls his praise? Was he a great ruler or some brilliant leader, winning for them wide possessions of wealth and commercial influence?

The glorious St. Patrick accomplished a conquest far superior and extensive. Although ever alien to the Irish in race, he had been commissioned by the all-ruling Providence of God to be the extraordinary messenger of His councils, the oracle of His wisdom, the instrument of His grace and the channel of His boundless mercies to a people in a remote corner of the then known world, who, as the Scripture phrase expresses it, "were sitting in the darkness and the gloomy shades of death."

CONVERTED IRELAND.

He rooted up infidelity and planted Christianity in Ireland; he banished vice and immorality and promoted the practice of true piety and solid virtue both by his word and example. As his many biographers state, he had been pre-eminently qualified in every respect by the Almighty for the arduous enterprise. Being gifted with profound faith, indefatigable zeal and rare sanctity, founded on a singular spirit of self-sacrifice, he was well chosen to diffuse the light of the Gospel all over the Island and establish most effectually and permanently its spirit. An old chronicle furnishes a most beautiful summary of the characteristic virtues and sanctity of St. Patrick:

"A just man, indeed, was this man: with the purity of nature, like the patriarchs; a true pilgrim, like Abraham; gentle of heart, like Moses; a praiseworthy psalmist, like David; an emulator of wisdom, like Solomon; a chosen vessel for proclaiming truth, like the Apostle Paul; a man full of grace and the knowledge of the Holy Ghost, like the beloved John; a fair flower garden to the children of grace; a flaming fire; a lion in strength and power; a dove in gentleness and humility; a serpent in wisdom to do good; a servant of labor and service for Christ; a king in dignity and might, for binding and loosening, for liberating and convicting. St. Patrick, a man most eminently qualified to be a veritable apostle. We have reason to believe that the Gospel was preached in Ireland before St. Patrick, but through Divine Providence Ireland was converted by St. Patrick."

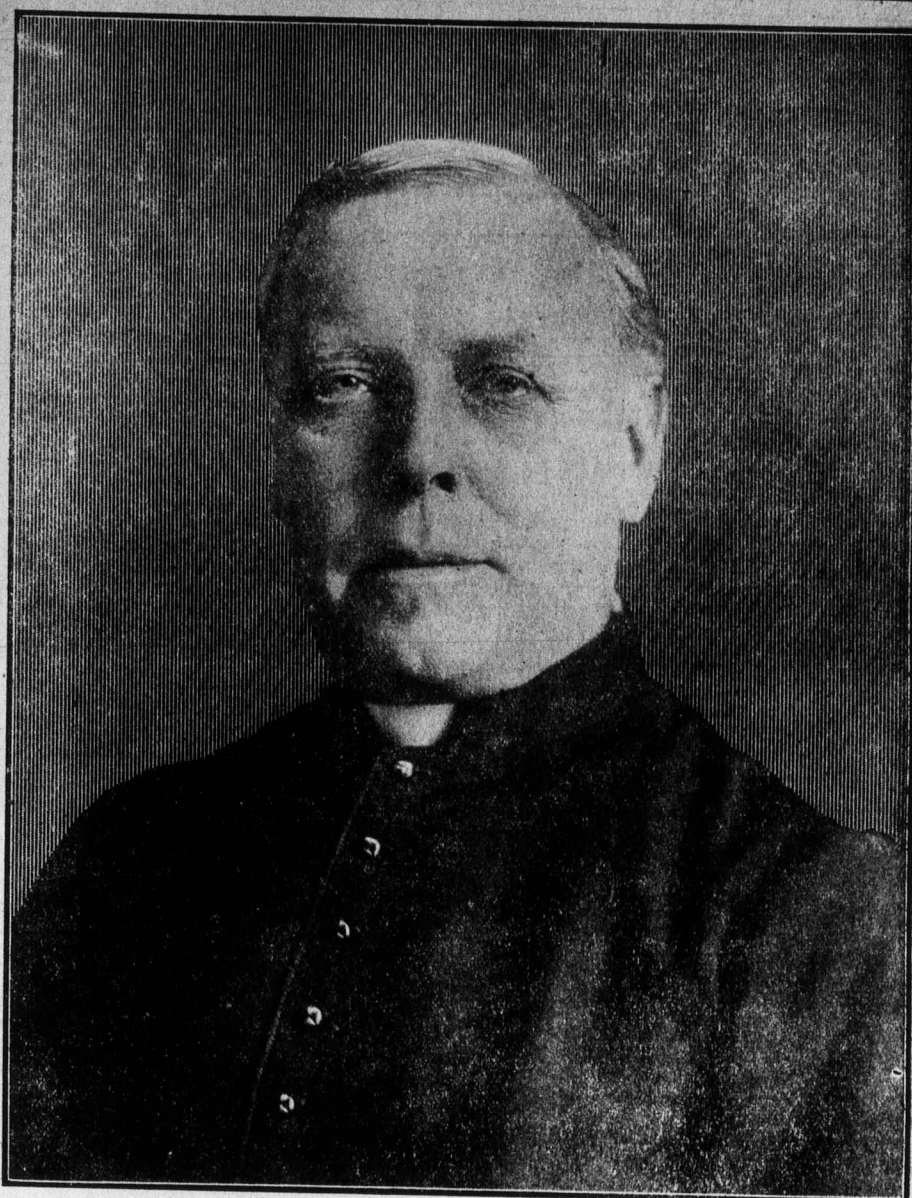
THE BLOODLESS CONVERSION OF AN ENTIRE NATION.

When St. Patrick preached the great truths of Christianity to its people, they bent their minds like one man captive to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Christian message was received without disturbance or opposition, without the torturing persecution let loose against the evangelists of greater and more cultured peoples. It is the only instance on record, besides the conversion of Armenia by St. Gregory Illuminator, of the bloodless conversion of an entire people. Other nations received the faith slowly and only faintly opened their eyes to the truth, but Ireland received it in a moment and with all the brightness of the noonday sun, not only to maintain it, but also to spread it all over the land.

MAINTENANCE AND SPREAD OF FAITH.

St. Patrick erected 365 churches, consecrated as many Bishops and ordained a thousand priests. National monasteries were at once created, a national priesthood and a national episcopacy. To other apostles of nations it was given only to see the bare foundations of their work in place, but to St. Patrick, before he closed his eyes in the rest of the just, it was given to see the work accomplished in its plenitude. His dying eyes could rest on a national Church established in all the branches of the Christian spiritual life and firmly fixed by the bond of faith to the chair and rock of St. Peter's See.

It is said that what is easily acquired is easily lost—yet Ireland is an exception to the adage. Receiving the faith through the ministry of St. Patrick, she has always remained faithful to the legacy bequeathed to her as a national characteristic. A pious legend tells that when the dying prelate lay on a poor couch in his monastic cell in Down, he gathered all his remaining strength to



REV. MARTIN CALLAGHAN, P.P.,
ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH, WHERE CELEBRATION WAS HELD.

bend his faltering knees in holy prayer. But one request he asked of God as a reward for forty years of apostolic work, that the people to whom he had preached should never lose the faith. It was his last spoken word on earth, the answer he heard in heaven. Fourteen hundred years of time are a witness of the answer of his request.

CLAIMS TO DISTINCTION.

There is no other nation that did not at some time set up some heresy or anti-pope. Ireland alone of all nations never set up a heresy, but always remained true to the successor of St. Peter. Henry VIII. robbed the Anglo-Saxon of his faith, but Ireland, divided in questions of nationality and political economy, was always one in questions of religion.

The Dane was resisted to death, not because he invaded the nation, but because he invaded its sanctuaries. Every man was willing to war against the invader, being told by his faith if he fell in such a cause he could claim a martyr's crown. During four hundred years, during which Ireland was a vast battlefield, Henry VIII. found that the nation which was incapable of defending its own liberty because of political divisions, became the very personification of unity when he touched its religion. Like one man, all arose and exclaimed: "The King can rob us of our possessions; he can exile us, he can put us to death, but he can never separate us from the See of Rome or the successors of the Apostles."

NATION OF MARTYRS—SEED OF THE CHURCH.

Ireland received the faith without bloodshed, but its retention and maintenance was purchased at the price of their martyr's blood which became the seed of the Church. "Their posterity are a holy inheritance and their seed hath stood in the covenants." (Eccles., 44, 12.) Education became a crime, worship a felony. Ireland became the scene of the most violent and atrocious persecutions and sufferings, until it seemed as if nothing could tell the history of the past, but blood. The land was wasted over and over again, flooded in blood, steeped in tears, the whole aboriginal race was stripped of every thing they had in the world and driven out to die in the wasted places of the land.

All in vain. Ireland's Catholicity, like the mountain oak, like the Cedar of Lebanon, defied every storm for 14,000 years, and strange to say, but glorious—became the means of spreading the Catholic Church, driven from their homes, they

brought with them to the lands of the stranger, their faith. England received through Irish emigration an increase of Catholic altars and a restoration of its episcopacy.

It is quite certain, humanly speaking, says a certain author, that the Catholic Church would have died out utterly in the English-speaking countries, had not the Irish been there to keep it alive. Deprived of their national tongue, and made to speak in the alien tongue of the English, our Lord made them the standard-bearers of His Church among a powerful people. The Irish race has been wonderfully preserved and providentially scattered to the vast extent of twenty millions over the earth, to be the leaven in the mass of English-speaking Protestantism.

NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

The faith of the Irish is, moreover, a realistic reflection of their religion. The Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God has always been a favored belief in the Catholic Church; St. Patrick's faith taught the Irish maiden the purity of Mary, and the Irish mother her love. So much so that for fifteen hundred years the Irish maiden has been the type of purity and the Irish mother the type of love. Another characteristic of St. Patrick's mission is filial love. Irish children having left their parents at home, though asking out a scanty and poor existence in the land of their adoption, are known to send a portion of their earnings to their fathers and mothers in the old country.

One other characteristic which stands out in bold relief deserves special mention. It is their respectful devotedness to their priests. The Irish priest is always faithful to his people, and the people to him, and the sacred ties which bind them together were strengthened rather than weakened by suffering and persecution. Even though they had lost their institutions, their homes, and their churches, they had left to them their priests, to whom they clung as the representatives of the Church, the anointed of the Lord, the tie that connected them with St. Patrick.

Their love and practical loyalty to their faith is even illustrated in external demonstrations. The civic procession of to-day in this city of Montreal, as well as in the States and elsewhere is essentially a Catholic parade. As Catholic priest and missionary, and the exponent of St. Patrick's eulogy to-day, I hail you all, delegates of the Irish Catholic societies of the city of Montreal. May I express a wish that the present movement in the United States

of Catholic Federation may be also taken up in Canada, so as to cement and unite more closely all under the one common banner of our faith, constituting, we hope, by united efforts, a Catholic power in the land.

IRELAND'S GLORY, PATRICK'S GLORY.

In extolling Ireland's glory I have eulogized St. Patrick's glory. On other Saints' days we bless God for the graces He bestowed upon them; on the feast of St. Patrick we bless God, not so much for having manifested His glory in His saints as for having glorified Himself in His people. Ireland's glory is St. Patrick's glory, and St. Patrick's glory is Ireland's glory.

This day, I repeat what I said in the beginning of my discourse, therefore, is pre-eminently a day of faith. Let your hearts abound with holy joy and gratitude to God for the greatness and permanency of its legacy. Let us raise our hearts towards heaven, the home of the faithful friends of God, the reward of our glorious saint and patron. Let our prayer be for the old faith that it may never be disgraced neither in you nor in your foreign born children nor in their children's children. Beloved brethren, I call upon you to-day to remember, like the Irish fourteen hundred years ago, to illustrate the faith received by sanctity of life. Let us make our lives worthy of the martyred dead, worthy of our noble ancestors.

O glorious St. Patrick! hear today our prayers and the prayers of thy scattered children, particularly the supplications of suffering, well-nigh breaking hearts for faith, for home, for liberty. Amen.

Immediately after the services at the church the procession, which was a worthy one, being marked by enthusiasm and good spirit, formed on Beaver Hall Hill, under the chief marshaling of Mr. W. J. Ryan, of the Young Irishmen's Literary and Benefit Society. The route was along Craig street to DeLormier avenue, to St. Catherine street and St. Alexander street to St. Patrick's Hall, where the procession disbanded.

The following was the order of the procession:

Marshal-in-chief and aides.
The Hibernian Knights.
The Ancient Order of Hibernians.
The Congregation of St. Gabriel.
(Not members of any society.)
St. Gabriel's Juvenile T. A. & B. Society.
St. Gabriel's T. A. & B. Society.
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