

AILEY MOORE

TALE OF THE TIMES SHOWING HOW EVICTIONS, MURDER AND SUCH-LIKE PASTIMES ARE MANAGED AND JUSTICE ADMINISTERED IN IRELAND TOGETHER WITH MANY STIRRING INCIDENTS IN OTHER LANDS

BY RICHARD N. O'BRIEN, D. D., BISHOP OF LIMERICK CHAPTER VI HOW MR. SNAPPER WENT A WOOLING, AND WHAT CAME THEREFROM

There are some men whom good habits destroy. They may escape in a crowd, if their garb be very ordinary; but if they make any effort to adorn themselves, from being ugly they become hideous.

Mr. Snapper, land agent and attorney-at-law, was one of these. Mr. Snapper, however, thought otherwise; and on a morning in the summer of 1844—not so long ago, either—he rose early made many ablutions, and dressed himself a la mode.

Mr. Snapper wore a light waistcoat and gray pantaloons, a profusion of shirt-collar, and a colored necktie—the necktie most particularly directed attention to the crookedness of Mr. Snapper's eyes.

Having been duly "perfumed like a milliner," which class we mean no disrespect by saying so, Mr. Snapper took up his white kid gloves, approached the mirror for the hundredth time, laid his hat upon the dressing-table, and commenced looking at himself as he drew on the said kid gloves—gentlemen always like to see themselves drawing on their gloves.

The learned gentleman remarked that his hand was very large, and looked larger when developed and defined by the kid glove, so he thought he would carry the gloves carefully in his hands. Then he thought he had made a mistake in the matter, and again put on his gloves; but again he looked dissatisfied, and to wear them off his hands was the ultimate resolve.

Mr. Snapper "was going to woo." The gig was at the door—a gig well known to those parts—the whip handle rose gracefully from the left-hand side, the whip itself bowed as gracefully in the "passing breeze"; the horse was shining under brightly-polished harness, and the gig was shining behind the horse.

All parties were engaged in the amorous enterprise of Mr. Snapper. Many congratulations on his looks Mr. Snapper received from Rody and Jude as he made his appearance in the yard. The good girl and man-of-all-work were in ecstasies; but it was because Mr. Snapper was going out, and well that amiable gentleman knew it.

Rapidly Mr. Snapper's gig drove along the road by St. Senadus Well, and was directed towards a charming plantation at no great distance from the road. The undulating ground, the neatly-trimmed walks, the trees so beautifully arranged for shade and ornament; the lake, with its pair of swans, and the house off in the distance among large trees, looking not too large for a moderate income, nor too small for a fair fortune; all were beautiful and attractive,—of course, a man of less taste than Mr. Snapper would admire such a residence.

As Mr. Snapper's eyes wandered towards the hall door, which had green lattice-work in front, a sylph-like young girl, leaning on a handsome young gentleman, were entering the house.

"All right," said Mr. Snapper to himself; "they are at home at any rate," and Mr. Snapper's brow knit very unlike a gentleman "going to woo."

The plantation, dear reader, is "Moor-field" and the lady and gentleman are Reginald Moore and gentle "Ailey."

Thither Mr. Snapper is going to seek a wife, and Ailey is the lady of his love. God help thee, gentle Ailey Moore!

Reginald has ascended the stairs, and Ailey has entered the drawing-room, on the right hand of the hall.

The former has his sanctum—an apartment which no one ever enters but himself. Not even Ailey, the beloved Ailey, has found access there; perhaps because she has not sought it. Some ladies would die if they were compelled to live in the same house with an unrevealed secret; Ailey Moore was quite contented to sacrifice her curiosity to other people's tastes or convenience.

In this, as in everything else, the dear young girl banished all selfishness, and the unselfish are always the lovable.

But what is the secret? Reginald Moore has a passion deep as his own soul. It brings him into familiar communion with the world of glory around him and above him—and even within him. The shape of the summer cloud, and the rich azure in which it lies resting or moves so calmly; the leaf and flower in all their phases of transparent youth and rich maturity; the blaze of the mid-day sun and the gorgeous hues of its setting; the timid glare of the half hidden brook, and the lordly swell of the mountain billow—all things beautiful and sublime speak to Reginald as his soul traverses the landscape or travels in the mid sky—Reginald is a painter. From his very infancy he sought to reproduce the forms of loveliness around him; but even at a youthful period ceased to exhibit his skill. He was too deeply in love with his pursuit—and he would not unveil anything which would not be its triumph. Like a true disciple, he was never satisfied; and like a manly soul, he determined

to be so, some time or another, Reginald was gone to his studio. There was the outline of a female head in the easel—Reginald sat down before it. Around him were pictures which many of the critics would have called magnificent; to his deep ambition—the ambition of a Sanzio—they were nothing.

He was, in a moment, lost in thought; his eyes still on the outline. Has the reader ever seen Raphael (painted by himself) contemplating the vision of the Virgin Mary? How beautiful the thought!

SORROW GIVETH PLACE TO JOY

"All praise to St. Patrick!" quavered on the listening air as Patrick gave a last loving pat to the teaming earth he had heaped over one of his choice bulbs.

"All praise to St. Patrick who brought to our mountains The gift of God's faith the sweet light of His love."

"Patrick!" Mrs. O'Donnell stood in her beautiful old garden directing the work. "Patrick," she said crossly, "those weeds must be taken up to-day. You are a lazy, good for nothing fellow. I have been telling you to weed the garden for the last week, and it is not done yet."

Unbounded surprise showed in the old man's gentle blue eyes. "Sure, ma'am," he said, "tis the first time I've heard you mention it." "Well, weed it to-day," answered Mrs. O'Donnell, "and don't be so impatient."

"Mrs. O'Donnell, ma'am," the old man's voice was pathetic, "you don't mean to weed it to-day? Sure 'tis the birthday of the glorious saint himself. You can't have forgotten it, ma'am?"

"Well, what of it?" snapped Mrs. O'Donnell, "weed the garden, and then do whatever you please." And turning, she moved up the path towards the house, a deep frown on her fine old face. The soft light died out of the gardener's eyes.

"Sure," he said to himself sadly as he watched his mistress, "it's changed the mistress in those years since Master Donald's gone away." And with a sigh he turned again to his work, thinking all the while of St. Patrick's day of past years, when he had been granted a holiday and had donned his best suit, kept always for these great occasions—Easter, Christmas and St. Patrick's Day!

And he thought regretfully of the hours spent with a few of his cronies telling stories of Banshees—those weird, fantastically poetic tales so dear to the Irish soul. To-day all was changed, and Patrick's simple old heart was heavy as he bent over his weeding.

Mrs. O'Donnell's thoughts also dwell on the past as she moved along the path, her proud head held high. Though she was already past her seventy-fifth birthday she was still a handsome woman with her silvery hair and delicate features. Her heart, too, was sad, but bitterness was mingled with her sadness. To-day was St. Patrick's Day—"the glorious saint," the old man had said, "Had she forgotten it?"

Could she ever forget it! It was on this day that Donald, her only son, had gone to Natal to fight for the British against the Boers. With all her heart she hated the British—the robber nation, she called them. And to think that her son, on whom, after her husband's death, she had lavished all her love, to think that he had gone to fight for them! Even yet she remembered her words when he informed her of his purpose. She had called him traitor to his country, and hurt to the quick, he had left her. Afterwards she admitted to herself that she had been harsh with him, but her pride prevented her from inquiring after him, though every day she eagerly scanned the newspapers in the hope of gleaming some intelligence regarding him. But never a word had she of him since his departure.

When Mrs. O'Donnell entered the kitchen her two maid servants, Annie and Margaret, were singing and chatting at their work. Their mistress stood a moment frowning at them, then said angrily, "Why are you singing, you shiftless minxes? If you would stop your chatter and work harder you would accomplish more." "Why, ma'am," said Annie wonderingly, "tis happy we are indeed on the feast of our glorious saint. The church is giving a fine outing at Kerry's Field to-day."

"Outing, forsooth!" exclaimed the mistress crossly, "you will have to get the linen laundered before you go to any outing to-day."

"The faces of the girls before her fell." "Tis St. Patrick's Day, Mrs. O'Donnell," said Margaret pleadingly. "You can't have forgotten it, ma'am?"

And what if it is, Margaret O'Neill, snapped the irate lady, as she returned and left the room. The girls looked one at the other in surprise. "Sure," said Margaret, the younger, "I never saw such a heathen as the mistress has grown to be. 'Tis not like herself she is at all, at all. And the fine picnic we were to have, and the new dress I made all by myself. Oh, 'tis cruel she is, and no mistake, and the tears sparkled on her long lashes. But the other girl reproved her gently. "Twas to-day, Margaret," she said, "that she lost her son, Master Donald, poor lad. It broken her heart, and that's the truth."

"Sure, I always forget," said the other tenderly, and she turned once more to her work. "Tis sorry I am

for her, the poor thing." But the girls' day was spoiled, and there was no more laughter and singing as they continued scouring and ironing.

Meanwhile Patrick was weeding out the flower beds. At best he was slow, but to-day he seemed slower than usual, and occasionally he would shake his head and murmur, "My feast day, too. Sure, what will the boys think of me working on St. Patrick's Day?"

As he stooped over one of the beds, he was startled by a man's voice, and looking up he saw a handsome bearded face just above the hedge, with kind eyes peering down on him. "Pardon me," said the old gentleman, "but would you tell me to whom this grand old place belongs?" Patrick straightened up proudly, and a pleased light came into his faded eyes. "Indeed, sir," he answered with Irish courtesy, "tis the property of Mrs. O'Donnell, descended from the great O'Donnell himself. With undying pleasure the visitor continued, "And tell me now, had she a son?" "She did have," replied the man sadly, "but sure 'tis many long years the day since we've heard of him, and we've given up hope of him long since. He went to Natal with the British."

"Ah!" the gentleman's eyes brightened, "and was his name Donald?" "Why yes, sir," answered Patrick, "do you know of him, sir? Could you tell us of him? With a radiant smile the gentleman hurried down the street till he reached the entrance to the grounds. The old gardener was surprised to see him enter the house with long, quick steps.

Mrs. O'Donnell, standing before a picture of her son in her spacious drawing room was even more surprised when, unannounced, Margaret ushered into her presence a tall bearded man, whose eyes scanned her face eagerly. "Mrs. O'Donnell," he said, warmly, "you must pardon my intrusion, but I have brought you news of your son."

Trembling, the old lady motioned the stranger to sit down, and said weakly, "Where is he?" "He is here, ma'am, here in Dublin," answered the man, then seeing her agitation, he added hastily, "But let me tell you of it. First, I must introduce myself. I am Sydney Brooks, Donald's companion during the war. We've been close friends all these years. Don nursed me through fever in Natal, and then when I got better he took it himself, poor fellow. Oh, the awful days and months we spent there, the misery of it! And all the while he talked of you, Mrs. O'Donnell, and of your words to him when he left to fight down there. We were afterwards ordered to India, and have just come back, and glad we are to be here again. Don seems a little shaken up, but he'll soon be all right, dear old fellow. He is longing to see you, but he daren't come home—here the mother's voice interrupted him, "Oh! bring him home to me, bring him home to me, now!"

And well satisfied with the result of his visit, Sydney hastened to recall the prodigal to a mother's welcome.

Margaret and Annie working in silence in the kitchen were surprised at the sight of their mistress hurrying in to them with tears in her eyes and a smile on her lips. "He's come home!" she cried. "Donald is home! Oh go away to your picnic girls and leave me alone with him! And," she continued, brushing the tears from her eyes and laughing like a child, "take that foolish old Patrick with you!"

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praise of God, the saints are the very channel through which praise is most acceptably given to Him, and if the Scriptures command us to praise the Lord in all His works how much more in His saints—the masterpieces of nature and grace! Let no one, therefore, suppose that we are assembled to-day to dishonor God by honoring His saint; let no one imagine that we are come together to bless and praise other than Our God Himself, "the Father of lights," "for every best and every perfect gift" which He has given us through our great Apostle, St. Patrick. He is "a man of renown," for his work and his name are known and celebrated by all men; and our father in his generation, for he "begat us to God by the Gospel." He was, moreover, "a man of mercy," for, when he might have lived for himself and for the enjoyment of his own ease, he chose rather to sacrifice himself, and to make his life cheap and of no account in his sight, and this through the same mercy which brought the Lord Jesus Christ forth from the bosom of the Father, namely, mercy for a people who were perishing. His "godly deeds have not failed," for the Lord crowned his labors with blessings of abundance. "Good things continue with his seed," for the faith which he planted still flourishes in the land. "His posterity are a holy inheritance," for the scene of his labors, grown famous for holiness, obtained among the nations the singular title of "the Island of Saints."

"And his seed hath stood in the covenants," for it is well known and acknowledged that no power, however great, has been able to move them from the faith once delivered to the saints. "His children for his sake remain forever," for he blessed them, as we read, that they should never depart from the fold of the "one Shepherd" into which he had gathered them, and his prayer in heaven has verified for 1,500 years his prophetic blessing on earth. "His seed and his glory shall not be forsaken," for they are the children of saints, and look for that life which God will give to those that never change their faith from Him.

Seeing, therefore, that all the conditions of the inspired Word have been so strikingly fulfilled in our saint, it is wonderful that we should also desire to fulfill the rest of the command, "Let the people shew forth His wisdom, and the Church declare His praise?" I propose, therefore, for your consideration—first, the character of the saint himself; secondly, the work of his apostleship; and thirdly, the merciful providence of Almighty God toward the Irish Church and the Irish people.

The light of Christianity had burned for more than four hundred years before its rays penetrated to Ireland. For the first three hundred years of the Church's existence the sacred torch was hidden in the catacombs and caves of the earth, or if ever seen by men, it was only when held aloft for a moment in the hands of a dying martyr. Yet the flame was spreading, and a great part of Asia, Armenia, Egypt, Spain, Italy and Gaul had already lighted their lamps before that memorable year 312, when the Church's light, suddenly shooting up in the firmament of the heavens, and the Roman Emperor was converted by its brightness. Then did the spouse of Christ walk forth from the earth, arrayed in all the "beauty of holiness," and her "light arose upon the people who were seated in darkness and in the shadow of death." The Christian faith was publicly preached, the nations were converted, churches and monasteries were everywhere built, and God seemed to smile upon the earth with the blessings of Christian faith and Roman civilization. A brief interval of repose it was, and God, in His mercy, permitted the Church just to lay hold of society, and establish herself amongst men, that she might be able to save the world, when in a few years, the Northern barbarians should have swept away every vestige of the power, glory and civilization of ancient Rome. It was during this interval, between the long continued war of persecution and the first fall of Rome, that a young Christian was taken prisoner on the northern shores of Gaul, and carried, with many others, by his captors, into Ireland. The young man was St. Patrick. He was of noble birth, born of Christian parents, reared up with tenderest care, and surrounded from his earliest infancy with all that could make life desirable and happy. Now he is torn away from parents and friends, no eye to look upon him with pity, no heart to feel for the greatness of his misery; and in his sixteenth year, just as life was opening and spreading out all its sweets before him, he is sold as a slave, and sent to herd cattle upon the dreary mountains the far north of Ireland, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness; and there for long years did he live, forgotten and despised, and with no other support than the Christian faith and hope within him. These, however, failed him not; and so at length he was enabled to escape from his captivity and return to his native land. Oh, how sweet to his eyes and ears must have been the sights and sounds of his childhood! How dear the embraces, how precious the joy of his dear mother when she clasped to her "him that was dead, but came to life again!" Surely he will remain for her now, nor ever expose himself to the risk of losing again joys all the dearer because they had once been lost. Not so, my brethren; Patrick is no longer an ordinary man; one of us. A new desire has entered into his soul and taken possession of his life. A passion has sprung up

within him for which he must live and devote his future. This desire, this passion, is to preach the Christian faith in Ireland, and to bring the nation forth "from darkness into the admirable light" of God. In the days of his exile, even when a slave on the mountain-side, he heard, like the prophet, a voice within him, and it said, "Behold, I have given my words in thy mouth. Lo, I have set thee this day over the nations and over kingdoms, to root up and pull down, and to waste and destroy, and to build and to plant. Gird up thy loins and arise, and speak to them all that I command thee." And when he was restored to his country and to those who loved him, the same voice spoke again, for he heard in a dream the voice of many persons from a wood near the western sea, crying out as with one voice, "We entreat thee, O holy youth, to come and walk still among us." "It was the voice of the Irish," says the saint in his confessions, "and I was greatly affected in my heart." And so he arose, and once more leaving father and mother, how and land, went forth to prepare himself for his great mission. Having completed his long years of preparatory study, he turned his face to Rome, to the fountain-head of Christianity, the source of all jurisdiction and divine mission in the Church, the great heart whence the life-blood of faith and sound doctrine flows even to her most distant members, the new Jerusalem and Zion of God, of which it was written of old, "From Zion shall the law go forth, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem;" and here in Rome St. Celestine the first laid his hands upon Patrick and consecrated him first bishop of the Irish nation.

And now he returns to our shores a second time; no longer a shepherd, but free, and destined to break the nation's chains: "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free;" no longer dragged thither an unwilling slave of men, but drawn by irresistible love, the willing slave of Jesus Christ; no more a stripling, full of anxious fears; but a man, in all the glory of a matured intellect, in the strength and vigor of manhood, in the fullness of power and jurisdiction; with mind prepared and spirit braced to bear and brave all things, and with heart and soul utterly devoted to God and to the great enterprise before him. Oh, my brethren, what joy was in heaven at that hour when the blessed feet of the Bishop Patrick touched the shores of Ireland—the ancient "Isle of Destiny." This was her destiny; surely, and it is about to be fulfilled—that she should be the home and the mother of saints—of doctors and holy solitaires, and pure virgins and martyrs robed in white, and of a people acceptable before the Lord. That the Cross of Christ should be the emblem of her faith forevermore, of her faith and of her trial, of her tears and sorrow, and of her victory, "which conquereth the world." O golden hour amongst the hours! when the sands of the Irish shore first embraced softly and lovingly the beautiful footprints of him who preached peace and good things; when Moses struck the rock, and the glistening waters of salvation flowed in the desert land; when the "Name," which is above all names, was first heard in the old Celtic tongue, and the Lord Jesus, entering upon His new inheritance, exclaimed, "This is My resting place forever and ever; here shall I dwell because I have chosen it."

The conversion of Ireland, from the time of St. Patrick's landing to the day of his death, is, in many respects, the strangest fact in the history of the church. The saint met with no opposition; his career resembles more the triumphant progress of a king than the difficult labor of a mission-ary. The Gospel, with its lessons and precepts of self denial, of prayer, of purity, in a word, of the violence which seizes on heaven, is not congenial to fallen man. His pride, his passions his blindness of intellect and hardness of heart, all oppose the spread of the Gospel; so that the very fact that mankind has so universally accepted it, is adduced as a proof that it must be from God. The work of the Catholic missionary has, therefore, ever been, and must continue to be, a work of great labor with apparently small results. Such has ever been amongst all the nations; and yet Ireland seems a grand exception. He found her universally Christian. He left her universally Christian. She is, again, the only nation that never cost her apostle an hour of sorrow, a single tear, a drop of blood. She welcomed him like a friend, took the Word from his lips, made it at once the leading feature of her life, put it into the blood of her children and into the language of her most familiar thoughts, and repaid her benefactor with her utmost veneration and love. And much, truly, had young Christian Ireland to love and venerate in her great Apostle. All sanctity, coming as it does from God, is an imitation of God in man. This is the meaning of the word of the Apostle "those whom he foreknew and predestinated to be made conformable to the image of His Son, the same He called, and justified and glorified." Conformity to the image of God is therefore Christian perfection or sanctity, "the mystery which was hidden from eternity with Christ in God." But as our Lord Jesus Christ, "In whom dwelt the fullness of the God-head corporally," is an abyss of all perfections, so do we find the saints differing one from another in their varied participations of His graces and re-

semblance to His divine gifts, for so "stars differeth from stars, in glory." Then, amongst the apostles, we are accustomed to think and speak of the impulsive zeal of Peter, the virginal purity of John, etc., not as if Peter were not pure, or John wanting in zeal, but that were all was the work of the Spirit of God, one virtue shone forth more prominently, and seemed to mark the specific character of sanctity in the saint. Now, amongst the many great virtues which adorned the soul of Ireland's Apostle, and made him so dear to the people, I find three which he made especially his own, and these were, a spirit of penance, deepest humility, and a devouring zeal for the salvation of souls. A spirit of penance. It is remarkable, and worthy of special notice in these days of self-indulgence and fanciful religions, how practical the gospel is. It is pre-eminently not only the science of religious knowledge, but also of religious life. It tells us not only what we are to believe, but also what we are to do. And now, what is the first great precept of the gospel? It is penance. My brethren, what is penance, for the kingdom of God is at hand." And when, on the day of Pentecost, the Prince of the apostles first raised up the standard of Christianity upon the earth, the people "when they heard these things had compunction in their hearts, and said to Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, What shall we do, men and brethren?" and Peter said to them, "do penance, and be baptized, every one of you." This spirit of penance was essentially Patrick's. His youth had been holy; prevented from earliest childhood by the blessings of sweetness, he had grown up like a lily in purity, in holy fear and love. Yet for the carelessness and slight indiscretions of his first years, he was filled with compunction, and with a life-long sorrow. His sin, as he called it, was always before him, and with the prophet he cried out, "Who will give water to my head, and a fountain of tears to mine eyes, and I will weep day and night." In his journeyings he was wont to spend the night in prayer, and tears, and bitter self-reproach, as if he was the greatest of sinners; and when he hastened from "Royal Meath," into the far west of the island, we read that when Lent approached, he suspended his labors for a time, and went up the steep, rugged side of Croagh Patrick, and there, like his Divine Master, he spent the holy time in fasting and prayer; and his tears were his food night and day. Whithersoever he went he left traces of his penitential spirit behind him; and Patrick's penance and Patrick's purgatory are still familiar traditions in the land. Thus, my brethren, did he "sow in tears," who was destined to reap in so much joy; for so it is ever with God's saints, who do his work on this earth; "going, they went and wept, scattering the seed, but coming they shall come with joy." His next great personal virtue was a wonderful humility. Now, this virtue springs from a twofold knowledge, namely, the knowledge of God and of ourselves. This was the double knowledge for which the great St. Augustine prayed, and which he knew thee, and know myself, that I may love thee and despise myself;" and this did our saint possess in an eminent degree. This knowledge of God convinced him of the utter worthlessness of all things besides God, and even of God's gifts, except when used for Himself; and therefore he did all things for God and nothing for self, and of "his own he gave Him back again;" he lost sight of himself in advancing the interests and the cause of God; he hid himself behind his work in which he labored for God; and strangely enough, his very name and history come down to us by reason of his great humility, for he would write himself a sinner, and calls himself "Patrick, an unworthy, and ignorant and sinful man," for so he saw himself, judging himself by the standard of infinite holiness in Jesus Christ, by which we also shall all be one day judged. Looking into himself he found only misery and weakness, wonderfully strengthened, not by himself, but by God; poverty and nakedness, clothed and enriched, not by himself, but by God; and, fearful of losing the Giver in the gifts, he put away from him the contemplation of what God had made him, and only considered what he was himself. Thus was he always the most humble of men. Even when seated in glory and surrounded by the love and admiring veneration of an entire people, never was his soul moved from the solid foundation of humility, the twofold knowledge; and so he went down to his grave a simple and an humble man. And yet in this lowly heart there burned a mighty fire of love, a devouring zeal for the souls of his brethren. Oh! here indeed does he shine forth "likened unto the Son of God;" for like our Divine Lord and Master, Patrick was a "zealous lover of souls." He well knew how dear these souls were to the sacred heart of Jesus Christ—how lovingly the Lord of glory had spent Himself, and given His most sacred and precious blood for them; how it was the thought of their salvation that sustained Him during the horrid agony of His passion; in the agony of His prayer; when His sacred flesh was torn at the pillar; when the cruel thorns were driven into His most holy brows; when, with drooping head and wearied eyes, and body streaming blood from every open wound, He was raised up on the cross to die heart-broken and abandoned, with the anger of God and the insults of men poured upon Him.

Patrick knew all this, and it filled him with transports of zeal for souls, so that, like the great apostle, he wished to be sacrificed for them; and to die a thousand times rather than that one soul purchased so dearly and the offspring of so much love and sorrow, should perish. Therefore did he make himself the slave and the servant of all, that he might gain all to God. And in his mission of salvation no difficulties retarded him, no danger frightened him, no labor or sacrifice held him back, no sickness subdued him, no infirmity of body or mind overcame him. Old age came upon him, yet he spared not himself, nor did he for a moment sit down to count his years, or to number his triumphs, or to consider his increasing wants; but his voice was clear and strong and his arm untrifling, though he had reaped a harvest of many years and had borne "the burden of the day and the heat;" and his heart was young, for it was still growing, in the faith of those around him. Even to the last day of his life "his youth was renewed like the eagle." He repeatedly journeyed throughout the length and breadth of the land, and being with prayer, and blessing, and planting the plants which he had planted in this new vineyard of God; and grace was poured abroad from his lips, and "virtue went forth from him," until the world was astonished at the sight of a whole nation converted by one man, and the promise made of old was fulfilled in Patrick, "I will deliver to you every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, and no man shall be able to resist thee all the days of thy life." And now we come to the question, What did St. Patrick teach, and in what form of Christianity did he expend himself for God? For fifteen hundred years, my brethren, Christianity meant one thing, one doctrine, one faith, one baptism, now, however, in our day, this same Christianity, though as divided as truth, as exclusive, as definite as ever, is made to signify many things; and men, fondly imagining that our ancestors had no greater unity than ourselves, ask what form of doctrine did St. Patrick preach to the Irish people? I answer: He preached the whole cycle of Catholic truth as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be to the end of time. He taught them that Christ's most sacred Body and Blood are really and truly present in the Blessed Eucharist, so that we find an Irish writer of the same century (Sedulius) using the words "we are fed on the body and the members of Christ, and so we are made the temples of God;" again, the language used by the Irish Church at the time, as even the Protestant Bishop Fisher acknowledges, concerning the Mass, was "the making of the Body of the Lord." In support of the same truth we have the beautiful legend of St. Bridgid— which, even if its truth be disputed, still points to the popular faith and love whence it sprang—how, when a certain child, named Nennius, was brought to her, she blessed him, and prophesied that his hand should one day give her the Holy Communion; whereupon the boy covered his right hand and never again let it touch any profane thing, nor be even uncovered, so that he was called "Nennius nua laumh glas," or Nennius of the clean hand, out of devotion and love to the Most Holy Sacrament. St. Patrick taught the doctrine of penance and confession of sins and priestly absolution; for we find, amongst the other proofs, an old penitential canon of a synod held under the saint himself in 450, in which it is decreed that "if a Christian kill a man, or commit fornication, or go in to a scotshayer after the manner of the Gentiles, he shall do a year of penance; when his year of penance is over, he shall come with witnesses, and afterwards he shall be absolved by the priest." He taught the invocation of saints, as is evident from numerous records of the time. Thus, in a most ancient life of St. Bridgid we find the words, "There are two holy virgins in heaven who may undertake my protection—Mary and Bridgid—on whose patronage let each of us depend." In like manner we find in the synods of the time laws concerning the obligation of giving the dead in the most ancient Irish missal Masses for the Dead are found with such prayers as "Grant, O Lord, that this holy oblation may work pardon for the dead and salvation for the living;" and in a most ancient life of St. Brendan it is stated that "the prayer of the living doth much profit the dead." But, my brethren, as in the personal character of the saint there were some amongst his virtues that shone out more conspicuously than the others, so in his teaching there were certain points which appear more prominently, which seemed to be impressed upon the people more forcibly, and to have taken peculiar hold of the national mind. Let us consider what these peculiar features of St. Patrick's teaching were, and we shall see how they reveal to us what I proposed as the third point of this sermon, namely, the merciful providence of God over the Irish Church and people. They were the following: Fidelity to St. Peter's Chair and to Peter's Holy See, the same; His devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary; prayer and remembrance for the dead; and confiding obedience and love for their Bishops and priests. These were the four great prominent features of Patrick's teaching; by the first, namely, fidelity to the Pope, he secured the unity of the Irish Church as a living member of the Church Catholic; by the second, devotion to the Blessed Virgin, he

ST. PATRICK

SERMON DELIVERED IN ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, NEW YORK, ON SUNDAY, MARCH 17TH, 1872, BY VERY REV. THOMAS S. BURKE, O. P.

Let us now praise the saints, the good men of mercy, whose godly deeds have not failed; 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 forever; their seed and their glory shall not be forsaken. Let the people shew forth their wisdom, and the Church declare their praise.

We are assembled to obey the command of God expressed in my text. One of the great duties of God's Church, to which she has ever been most faithful, is the celebration of her saints. From end to end of the year the Church's saints are the theme of her daily thanksgiving and praise. They are her heroes, and therefore she honors them; just as the world celebrates its own heroes, records their great deeds and builds up monuments to perpetuate their names and their glory.

The saints were the living and most faithful representatives of Christ our Lord, of His virtues, His love, His actions, His power, so that He lived in them, and wrought in them, and through them, the redemption of men; therefore the Church honors, not so much the saint, as Christ our Lord in the saint; for, in truth, the wisdom of saintliness which she celebrates, wherever it is found, is nothing else, as described to us in Scripture, than "a vapour of the power of God, and a certain emanation of the glory of the Almighty God;" the brightness of eternal light; and the unspotted mirror of God's majesty, and the image of His goodness; and through nations she conveyeth herself into holy souls, she maketh the friends of God and prophets." Nor does the Church's honor of the saints derogate from that of God, as some say; otherwise the Lord, who is jealous of His divine power and glory, would never command us to praise the saints as he does in the words of my text, and in many other parts of the Holy Scriptures; "Praise ye the Lord in His saints," "God is wonderful in His saints," etc., etc. Nay, so far from lessening our love and

praise of God, the saints are the very channel through which praise is most acceptably given to Him, and if the Scriptures command us to praise the Lord in all His works how much more in His saints—the masterpieces of nature and grace! Let no one, therefore, suppose that we are assembled to-day to dishonor God by honoring His saint; let no one imagine that we are come together to bless and praise other than Our God Himself, "the Father of lights," "for every best and every perfect gift" which He has given us through our great Apostle, St. Patrick. He is "a man of renown," for his work and his name are known and celebrated by all men; and our father in his generation, for he "begat us to God by the Gospel." He was, moreover, "a man of mercy," for, when he might have lived for himself and for the enjoyment of his own ease, he chose rather to sacrifice himself, and to make his life cheap and of no account in his sight, and this through the same mercy which brought the Lord Jesus Christ forth from the bosom of the Father, namely, mercy for a people who were perishing. His "godly deeds have not failed," for the Lord crowned his labors with blessings of abundance. "Good things continue with his seed," for the faith which he planted still flourishes in the land. "His posterity are a holy inheritance," for the scene of his labors, grown famous for holiness, obtained among the nations the singular title of "the Island of Saints."

"And his seed hath stood in the covenants," for it is well known and acknowledged that no power, however great, has been able to move them from the faith once delivered to the saints. "His children for his sake remain forever," for he blessed them, as we read, that they should never depart from the fold of the "one Shepherd" into which he had gathered them, and his prayer in heaven has verified for 1,500 years his prophetic blessing on earth. "His seed and his glory shall not be forsaken," for they are the children of saints, and look for that life which God will give to those that never change their faith from Him.

Seeing, therefore, that all the conditions of the inspired Word have been so strikingly fulfilled in our saint, it is wonderful that we should also desire to fulfill the rest of the command, "Let the people shew forth His wisdom, and the Church declare His praise?" I propose, therefore, for your consideration—first, the character of the saint himself; secondly, the work of his apostleship; and thirdly, the merciful providence of Almighty God toward the Irish Church and the Irish people.

The light of Christianity had burned for more than four hundred years before its rays penetrated to Ireland. For the first three hundred years of the Church's existence the sacred torch was hidden in the catacombs and caves of the earth, or if ever seen by men, it was only when held aloft for a moment in the hands of a dying martyr. Yet the flame was spreading, and a great part of Asia, Armenia, Egypt, Spain, Italy and Gaul had already lighted their lamps before that memorable year 312, when the Church's light, suddenly shooting up in the firmament of the heavens, and the Roman Emperor was converted by its brightness. Then did the spouse of Christ walk forth from the earth, arrayed in all the "beauty of holiness," and her "light arose upon the people who were seated in darkness and in the shadow of death." The Christian faith was publicly preached, the nations were converted, churches and monasteries were everywhere built, and God seemed to smile upon the earth with the blessings of Christian faith and Roman civilization. A brief interval of repose it was, and God, in His mercy, permitted the Church just to lay hold of society, and establish herself amongst men, that she might be able to save the world, when in a few years, the Northern barbarians should have swept away every vestige of the power, glory and civilization of ancient Rome. It was during this interval, between the long continued war of persecution and the first fall of Rome, that a young Christian was taken prisoner on the northern shores of Gaul, and carried, with many others, by his captors, into Ireland. The young man was St. Patrick. He was of noble birth, born of Christian parents, reared up with tenderest care, and surrounded from his earliest infancy with all that could make life desirable and happy. Now he is torn away from parents and friends, no eye to look upon him with pity, no heart to feel for the greatness of his misery; and in his sixteenth year, just as life was opening and spreading out all its sweets before him, he is sold as a slave, and sent to herd cattle upon the dreary mountains the far north of Ireland, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness; and there for long years did he live, forgotten and despised, and with no other support than the Christian faith and hope within him. These, however, failed him not; and so at length he was enabled to escape from his captivity and return to his native land. Oh, how sweet to his eyes and ears must have been the sights and sounds of his childhood! How dear the embraces, how precious the joy of his dear mother when she clasped to her "him that was dead, but came to life again!" Surely he will remain for her now, nor ever expose himself to the risk of losing again joys all the dearer because they had once been lost. Not so, my brethren; Patrick is no longer an ordinary man; one of us. A new desire has entered into his soul and taken possession of his life. A passion has sprung up

within him for which he must live and devote his future. This desire, this passion, is to preach the Christian faith in Ireland, and to bring the nation forth "from darkness into the admirable light" of God. In the days of his exile, even when a slave on the mountain-side, he heard, like the prophet, a voice within him, and it said, "Behold, I have given my words in thy mouth. Lo, I have set thee this day over the nations and over kingdoms, to root up and pull down, and to waste and destroy, and to build and to plant. Gird up thy loins and arise, and speak to them all that I command thee." And when he was restored to his country and to those who loved him, the same voice spoke again, for he heard in a dream the voice of many persons from a wood near the western sea, crying out as with one voice, "We entreat thee, O holy youth, to come and walk still among us." "It was the voice of the Irish," says the saint in his confessions, "and I was greatly affected in my heart." And so he arose, and once more leaving father and mother, how and land, went forth to prepare himself for his great mission. Having completed his long years of preparatory study, he turned his face to Rome, to the fountain-head of Christianity, the source of all jurisdiction and divine mission in the Church, the great heart whence the life-blood of faith and sound doctrine flows even to her most distant members, the new Jerusalem and Zion of God, of which it was written of old, "From Zion shall the law go forth, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem;" and here in Rome St. Celestine the first laid his hands upon Patrick and consecrated him first bishop of the Irish nation.