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ILLUSTRIOUS SONS OF IRELAND.

JUST PUBLISHED.

A New and Beautiful Engraving, "The Illustrious Sons of Ireland," from a Painting by J. Donaghy. This magnificent picture is a work of many years. It comprises the Patriots of Ireland, from Brian Borou to the present time. The grouping of the figures are so arranged and harmoniously blended as to give it that effect which is seldom got by our best artists. It embraces the following well-known portraits:—

Brian Borou, Major-General Patrick Sarsfield, Oliver Plunkett, D.D., John Philpot Curran, Hugh O'Neill, Thomas Davis, Oliver Goldsmith, Thomas Moore, Archbishop MacHale, Father Mathew, Daniel O'Connell, Wolfe Tone, Edmund Burke, Robert Emmet, Richard Lalor Shiel, Henry Grattan, M.P., William Smith O'Brien, Gerald Griffin, John Mitchell, Rev. T. Burke, O.P.

In the background of the picture may be seen the Round Tower, Irish Bard, the old Irish House of Parliament, the Maid of Brin, Irish Harp, the Famous Siege of Limerick, and the beautiful scenery of the Lakes of Killarney, with many emblems of Irish Antiquities.

This beautiful picture is printed on heavy plate paper, 24x32 inches, and will frame 22x28 inches. Price, only \$1.00. A liberal discount will be allowed to canvassers and those purchasing in quantities.

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Every man who loves Ireland should possess one of these beautiful Engravings.

FATHER BURKE'S SPLENDID LECTURE,

ON THE

"Apostle of Ireland."

The following splendid lecture, on Ireland's Apostle, by Ireland's greatest living orator, will be read with unusual interest, as one of the best efforts of the latter:—

"Let us now praise men of renown, and our fathers in their generations; * * * those 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 show their wisdom, and the Church declare their praise."—Eccles 44.

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 been ever 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 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 life, his love, 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, nothing else, as described to us in Scripture, than a "vapor of the power of God, and a certain pure 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 is His saints—the masterpieces of nature and grace! Let no one, thereby 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 was "a man of renown" for his work and his name are known and celebrated by all men; "and our father in our generation," for he "begat us to God by the Gospel." He was, however, "a man of mercy," for, when he might have lived for himself and the enjoyment of his own ease, he chose rather to sacrifice himself, and to make his life cheap and of no account in his own sight, and this through the selfsame 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, 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 1500 years prophetic blessing on earth. "His seed and his glory shall not be forsaken," for "they are the children of the 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 show 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 man, 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, appeared in the heavens, and a 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 unto 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.

THIS 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 his 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 tend cattle upon the dreary mountains of 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 sight and sounds of his childhood! how dear the embraces, how precious the joy of his aged mother when she clasped to her "him that was dead, but came to life again!" Surely he will remain with her now, nor ever expose her 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 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, houses and lands, 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 lifeblood 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 returned to our shores a second time; no longer a bondsman, but free, and destined to break the nation's chain: "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 solitaries, 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 fears and sorrow, and of her victory, "which conquereth the world." O golden hour amongst the hours! when 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 Celtic tongue, and the Lord Jesus, entering upon his new inheritance, exclaimed: "This is my resting-place for ever 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 missionary. 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 his 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 it ever been amongst all the nations; and yet Ireland seems to be a grand exception. She is, perhaps, the only country in the world, that entirely owes her conversion to the work of one man. He found her, universally Pagan; 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, and making 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 predestined 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 resemblance of His divine gifts, for "so star

differeth from star, 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 was not pure, or John wanting in zeal; but that was all 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 devoting 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 prominently 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, "do 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 blessing 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 life-long sorrow. His sin, as he called it, was always before him, and with the prophet cried out: "Who will give water to my head and a fountain of tears to my 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 were 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 to the steep, rugged side of Croagh Patrick, and there, like his Divine Master, he spent the holy time in fasting prayer, and his "tears were his food, night and day." Whithersoever he went, left traces of his penitential spirit behind him, and Patrick's penance and Patrick's purgatory are 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 in 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 of which the great St. Augustine prayed: "Lord, let me know Thee, and know myself;" and this did our saint possess in an eminent degree. The knowledge of God convinced him of the utter worthlessness of all things besides God, and even God's gifts, except when used for himself; and therefore he did all things for God, and nothing for himself, 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, 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 one day be 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, an humble and a simple man. And yet, in this lowly heart there burned a mighty fire of love, a devoting 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 willingly the Lord of glory had spent Himself, and given His most sacred and precious blood for them: how it was the thought for their salvation, that sustained Him, during the horror

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, and with the anger of God and 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 as accused 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 a 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, to consider his increasing wants; but his voice was clear and strong, and his arm untiring, though he had reaped a harvest of many years, and had born "the burden of the day and of 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 this land, caring and tending with prayer, and blessing, and tears, 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, Christian meant one thing, one doctrine, one faith, one authority, one baptism; now, in our day, this same Christianity, though as undivided, as true, 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 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 Usher 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 na tuampla 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 into a soothsayer's 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 "oblations for the dead;" in the most ancient Irish missals 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 profit the dead." But, my brethren, as in the personal character of the saint there were some amongst his virtues that shown out more conspicuously than the others, so in his teachings there were certain points which appear more prominently, which seemed