

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADES.

BY "CRUX"

This week the subject of St. Patrick's Day parades has been suggested to me by a couple of circumstances that have created an impression upon my mind. My idea is not to deliver myself of an essay upon how demonstrations should be carried out, nor to dictate rules for others who have probably far more experience than I have in such matters. As an outside correspondent, and in no way connected with the management or direction of the "True Witness," giving in my weekly contributions for the sole sake of helping a little and according to my means the grand cause of Catholicism, I do not wish that the organ should be held responsible for any of my ideas or sentiments. So then I preface my few remarks on this subject by stating that whatever I thus write is all my own and I alone am to blame if, by any chance, others might disagree with the views I express. Some time since I saw a letter sent to the "True Witness" signed "J. F. S." and asking to have published in the columns of the paper some of the old Irish songs that were mentioned in different portions of St. Patrick's night. The writer expressed his deep interest in the paper, claimed that it "ought to be in the home of every Catholic family in the Dominion and elsewhere," and gave a list of some of the songs he would like to see reproduced—such as "Come Back to Erin," "The Harp that Once," "Dear Harp of my Country," the "Wearing of the Green," and "O'Donnell Aboon." I am not aware whether the management of the paper will find it advisable to republish all these or not, seeing that they are known to almost every person who reads the organ; but I am sure that the request of "J.F.S." is an indication of very fervid patriotism and a noble Irish spirit. The desire to hear, to read, to learn by heart, in a word, to possess the olden gems of Irish songs is one that cannot be too highly commended, especially in this age of growing indifference and lukewarm patriotism. It is refreshing to know that some of the olden spirit survives, and that it is likely to be transmitted to future generations. It is that spirit that has conserved the Irish nationality intact through long ages of trial, that preserved the faith of St. Patrick all through the centuries of desolation and ruin, and that made it possible for the friends of Ireland and the leaders of her people to carry her cause along until it has reached the portico of success. This may not have much to do with the subject of parades, but it serves my purpose to show that the true spirit of Irish patriotism permeates the people and is to be found in every corner of the world, and in all strata of society.

A STRANGE THEORY. — Now turning to the question of St. Patrick's Day parades, I will begin by quoting from an American contemporary, in which allusion is made to the recently expressed views of "The New Century" on this very subject. This, connected with what I have just written, will give me a text: "Speaking for itself alone, The New Century expresses its gratification that the old days of St. Patrick's Day parade have passed—at least, in this particular section of the world. What good was ever accomplished by the marching and the countermarching, the beating of drums and the squeaking of fife, the cheering and the shouting? And there was often on St. Patrick's Day—a day that should be marked by religious observance—as an accompaniment to the parading and the excitement scenes of disorder that reflected no credit upon Ireland or Irishmen. It is well enough after passing the day becomingly and with dignity, for the sons of the Emerald Isle to meet around the festive board. It is proper there to recount the days of Ireland's glory, to celebrate the deeds of their ancestors in song and story and give expression to the longing hope that the time may soon come when Robert Emmet's epitaph may be written and Ireland again take her place among the nations of the earth."

ABOUT DISORDERS. —The foregoing is only the opinion of one organ, and possibly of only one man—the individual who wrote the article. It can be seen that the objections to outdoor demonstrations on St. Patrick's Day are two-fold. Firstly, the

scenes of disorder, not creditable to Ireland, that take place, and secondly the need of a quiet celebration in the form of a banquet, a gathering at the "festive board." Before going further I desire to enter my humble protest against the unmerited slur on Irishmen that the first objection contains. There was a time, in the history of Ireland, when excesses were remarkable, especially on such occasions, but times have changed and men have changed with them. But the days of Mickey Free and of Darby the Blast belong to the very distant past, and even in our day the general reader cannot appreciate such a description as Lever and Lover has given us, for we are totally unaccustomed to them and the customs, manners and characteristics have changed with the transition from stage coach days to those of steam cars, electric railways and the modern telegraph and telephone. And even as it has been in this regard, so has it been with Irishmen and the celebration of the national festival. I have made it almost a special study, for some time past, to note the demonstrations on that day, and I have found that, without one single exception, the press of Canada and the United States gives each year emphatic expression to the reports of orderly parades, absence of disgraceful and even disrespectful conduct, and the existence of a decorum and a dignity that lend a charm to the celebrations and reflect the highest credit upon the Irish people. Not to go beyond the city of Montreal, it is to the knowledge of every person here that our St. Patrick's Day outside demonstrations have not, for long years, been marred by a single case of disorder, riotous or unseemly conduct. In fact, so remarkable has this been that the Irish parades have become model demonstrations from which others can take lessons, and, apart from religious processions of a sacred character, none other evidence so much respect, order and dignity. And despite the fact that the 17th March is a holiday, and that men go forth to enjoy themselves, and that all the temptations of association and good-fellowship are there, it has become remarkable that not a case of intoxication, or disturbance from that cause, is known. It seems to me that the first argument against our national parades is very slim. And even had it a foundation, are not thousands of citizens safer and freer from temptation in the ranks of a procession that lasts all the forenoon, than upon the street corners? But I have dwelt sufficiently upon this phase of the subject. The whole sum and substance of it is, that the day is gone past when the Irish people can be held up as examples of the disorderly class; the reverse is now the case, and we are all the more grateful that it is so.

BANQUET CELEBRATION.—That part of the "New Century's" remarks which speaks of the sons of Erin meeting around the festive board, recounting the glories of Ireland and expressing hopes for the time when she will "again take her place among the nations of the earth" is perfectly correct. But there is nothing new in it. In all great centres, here in Montreal as elsewhere, this form of celebration has become traditional. The St. Patrick's Day banquet is a long-established event, and one of the most enjoyable of all the modes of commemorating the occasion. I find no fault with the words of commendation in regard to the banquet. But I draw the line when it comes to the abolition of all other methods of celebrating the day. The banquet should never be excluded; no more should it exist to the exclusion of all other forms of patriotic demonstration. Two or three hundred citizens can sit down at a grand banquet. But what about the thousands that cannot find place there? Are they to be deprived of any special manner of giving vent to their enthusiasm? What about the tens of thousands who turn out on that day, and by their parade, their music, their banners, their emblems, and above all their fervor and earnestness cause other peoples to pause and admire the spirit that animates them and that lends a particular significance to the occasion? Are they to be condemned to inactivity, silence, and a kind of ostracism, because it is proper that a very small percentage of their number elect to hold a banquet and thus do honor to the Patron Saint of Ireland? Take for example the one who wrote the letter to which I refer in the opening of this contribution:

Is a man, filled with such a fine and patriotic spirit as that, to be deprived of enjoying the traditional demonstration that has made St. Patrick's Day one of marked importance in the record of each year? Surely not. No doubt there are many who do not care to walk in procession on the occasion, and I have no criticism to offer regarding them. They gave good reasons of their own, and by not caring to take part in the parade they do not indicate any lack of patriotism for that reason. It does not suit every person to join in such public demonstrations; and all men are free to select their own methods. But because a few do not wish, or feel inclined or able, to join in the parade form of celebration, that is no reason why it should be abolished and that thousands upon thousands should be deprived of that single pleasure—for in the case of many it is the only real pleasure of the year. I am not in favor of the abolition of olden customs and practices. They are consecrated by time and they are associated with the best and dearest memories of the past. Let us keep our St. Patrick's day parade; let us seek to make them yearly more and more creditable; let us also cling to the annual banquet; and let us not efface in our children a single custom that tradition unites to our ancestors—the love of Ireland must be immortal.

SOME RENOWNED IRISH SAINTS.

(By an Occasional Contributor.)

Last week and the week before, we gave brief sketches of some Irish saints.—No wonder Ireland was called "the Isle of Saints"—and amongst them was Saint Finian. It is wonderful the number of holy men, missionaries, apostles and saints, this one blessed Bishop led to God. It might be timely to refer briefly to a few of them. We will commence with one of great importance.

ST. COMGALL. —This abbot was one of the most illustrious founders of monastic orders in Ireland. Born of noble parents in Ulster, in 516, he was brought up under Saint Finian, in the monastery of Cluain-Ardnech, in what is now known as the Queen's County. He came out of that school of piety and discipline an accomplished master, and founded, about the year 550, the great abbey of Beanchor, or Bangor, in the County Down which was the most celebrated of all the monasteries of Ireland. St. Comgall exceedingly propagated the monastic state in Ireland, and is said to have governed Bangor and other houses, three thousand monks, all of whom were employed in tillage and other manual labor. St. Columbanus, who was a disciple of Bangor, extended his rule through France, Britain and Italy, and many other Bishops, Abbots and Saints were trained to the way of perfection by this great Saint. He died on the 10th May, in the year 601.

ST. BRENDAN. —Another disciple of St. Finian was St. Brendan. The Irish Annals fix the birth of this illustrious Saint in 527, and his death in 599. In his youth he studied some time in Wales, under a celebrated and holy abbot named Docus, and afterwards in Ireland, under St. Finian, to whose famous school his monastery of Cluain-Irraid, the lovers of true wisdom repaired from all parts. The zeal and labors of St. Canice in propagating the practice of Christian perfection through Ireland have ranked him among the most glorious saints whose virtue has been the greatest ornament of that Island. He was intimately connected by holy friendship with St. Columbkille, whom he sometimes visited. He founded himself the great monastery of Achabo, which grew into a town, and was once the seat of the Bishop of Ossory, who now resides in Kilkenny, a city which takes its name from this Saint—that

word signifying the cell or Church of Canice or Kenny.

ST. KEVIN. — There are two other Saints of that period to whom brief allusions would fit in here. St. Kevin was born of parents of the first rank in Ireland, in 498. He was educated with great care by holy men, and at the age of fifteen he assumed the monastic habit. Some time afterwards he founded the great monastery in the lower part of the valley of Glendalough, so well known to all lovers of the picturesque, where extensive ruins still attest the ancient glory of the foundation of St. Kevin. The reputation for sanctity of his monastery and of himself drew thither such a conflux of people that Glendalough soon grew up into a famous and holy city. St. Kevin being raised to the episcopal dignity, erected a Cathedral Church under the invocation of Saints Peter and Paul, near the Church of his abbey. He lived to a great age, and having some time resigned the episcopal charge to confine himself to his Abbey, he died on the 3rd June, in the year 618, being one hundred and twenty years of age. The ruins of Glendalough are the most extensive and beautiful in all Ireland.

ST. FIACRE. — In Paris the ordinary cab, or hack, is called a "fiacre." How many Frenchmen, or Irishmen who visit the French capital, are aware that when the cabbies at the station shout "fiacre, Monsieur," they are pronouncing the name of a renowned Irish Saint? Yet it was he who gave his name to those vehicles of public conveyance. St. Fiacre was nobly born in Ireland and educated under the care of Conan, a holy Bishop. Looking upon all worldly advantages as dross, he left friends and country in search of some solitude where he might devote himself to God. Divine Providence conducted him to St. Faro, Bishop of Ineaux, in France, who, charmed with marks of extraordinary virtue which he found in the stranger, gave him a solitary dwelling in a forest, which was his own patrimony at Breuil, in the province of Nice, near Meaux. In this place the holy hermit made himself a cell and built an oratory to the Blessed Virgin, where he passed most of the days and nights in devout contemplation and prayer. He served the poor with his own hands, and often miraculously restored the sick to health. An inviolable rule among the Irish monks forbid the entrance of any human being into the enclosure of their sanctuaries; this rule was strictly observed by St. Fiacre, and a religious respect has caused this custom to be observed to this day, both with regard to the chapel where he lived, and the place where he is buried. Mabillon and Du Plessis say that those who attempted to transgress it have been punished by visible judgments. The shrine of St. Fiacre became famous by frequent miracles, and Du Plessis shows that the name "Fiacre" was first given to hackney coaches, because hired coaches were first made use of to convey pilgrims who went from Paris to visit the shrine of St. Fiacre. Thus it is that a name is perpetuated in a most extraordinary manner, while the shrine is one of the few in France that has escaped all desecrations.

WHAT'S THE HARM?

What's the harm in publishing the details of crime in a newspaper that is taken into the family circle? Is there any harm in admitting to the home one who habitually talks scandal and gives full details of crime? Do not the careful parents wish to send the children out or to bed before the man opens his mouth? Certainly. They well know that "evil communications corrupt good manners," and that familiarity breeds contempt and leads persons first to pity and then to embrace crime.

Is not the newspaper that gives the full details of crime and which dresses it up in a sensational manner more dangerous and destructive of morals than the man who comes to the family circle with his sensational or nasty talk? The man may come uninvited, but the newspaper never does. The parents are responsible for the open admission of the newspaper which corrupts by its sensationalism.

The editorial columns may attack cherished principles of faith, not always, but now and then, and sometimes frequently. The news columns give full details of police or divorce court news. The advertising columns tell of methods and medicines that presuppose sin and crime. Is there no harm in this? Is there no responsibility on the part of those in charge of the household? Thieves are not permitted to handle the family jewels, yet the more precious jewel

OUR CURESTONE OBSERVER.

ON CIGARETTE PICTURES.

During the past two sessions legislators in our Federal House of Parliament have been trying to secure enactments prohibiting the manufacture, importation and sale of cigarettes. How far they will succeed is more than I can tell; but the subject connected with something that I read the other day, makes me reflect upon what I have observed in some of my wanderings along the city curbstones. Not the cigarettes, but the packages that are ornamented in various ways, and the attractive little pictures they contain, caused me to think seriously of much of the harm that is being done to the youth of our age. I will begin by quoting what I read, and will then tell of what I saw and observed.

PREMIUM PACKAGES — An amendment to the Revised Statutes has been moved at Washington, with a view to preventing the putting into or upon packages of tobacco, cigars, and especially cigarettes, anything beyond the proper labels and stamps. In presenting this amendment some of the evil results of these premium packages and pictures have been explained; but what most attracted my notice was the following comment:

"Some years ago press, pulpit and educators united in a demand for the suppression of an insidious device for undermining the morals of half-grown boys, in what was known as the 'cigarette picture.' Enclosed in each package of certain brands of cigarettes was a little picture card, which was supposed to add to the ordinary attractions of the tobaccoists' wares. A man who smoked cigarettes, if indifferent in taste, would buy whatever brand contained the prettiest class of pictures, of which he would make presents to his children or his neighbor's children; and the juvenile mania for collecting was temporarily diverted from stamps and monograms and postmarks to cigarette cards. The rivalry between manufacturers, and the development of the premium idea, gradually increased the variety of styles of pictures until it became necessary to discover some new lines of differentiation. This led to the concept of issuing pictures in sets or series, such as twenty-five flags of various nations; the complete list of military uniforms worn in our army, from commanding general to stretcher-bearer; the coats-of-arms of all the forty odd States and territories, etc. The boy or girl who collected a full set of any of these groups and returned them to the manufacturers would receive in exchange a book of colored prints. To compete with this class of premiums, rival manufacturers offered photographs of stage beauties—at first actual stars, and later of the half-clad dolls of the ballet and the 'living picture' specialties. It was an easy step from the flag coupon to the coupon which enabled the holder to participate in a disguised lottery and from nude art under a stockinet veil to miscellaneous pictures risqué or even unblushingly indecent. Meanwhile, moreover, the patronage of the cigarettes had passed in large measure from the benevolent adult who gave the pictures away to the immature lad who bought the cigarettes himself for the sake of the pictures, and, while learning to smoke, imbibed a taste for the lottery or sullied his mind by contact with the salacious prints."

of childhood's innocence are exposed to the polluted columns of unprincipled journals. Perhaps not unprincipled, as the ruling principle is to make money at almost any cost by means of sensational news and immoral advertisements.

A prominent non-Catholic educator said, in a late address given in New York city: "One of the most usual and most continually operative causes of crime is the vast volume of criminal suggestion flowing in upon the public mind through various means, but especially through the public press. In the detailed accounts of criminal actions in the average newspaper there is minute instruction in crime as a fine art. The reader is taught both how to perform the criminal part and how to evade the merited punishment." This is the opinion of President Hopkins, of Williams College. The New York Globe admits that there is some truth in the indictment, but denies that it runs against all papers. The real offender says the Globe, is the yellow journal seeking to produce

MY OBSERVATIONS. — Nothing could be more true than the closing sentences of the foregoing quotation. I could multiply my own observations by the dozen, but I will only state one case; and that of recent date, to illustrate the danger that tures. In fact, we need not go to premiums, for some manufacturers place a picture in each cigarette package as an inducement to young people to buy the wares.

Outside a small store—a kind of candy and tobacco shop where newspapers are sold—in the north end of the city, I had occasion to stop for a few moments one evening not long ago. A number of young lads ranging from ten to sixteen, were gathered in the light, opening packages and handing around for inspection cigarette pictures. I was at first not very much attracted by them, but on overhearing their talk I began to pay more particular attention. I was not able to get a glimpse of the tiny cards, or pictures, that they had, but I saw the name of the brand of cigarettes on one of the boxes. I became very curious, especially on hearing boys of such tender years using language and passing remarks that would put any decent adult to the blush. I went in and bought a package for myself, and on opening it I was not surprised to find that it contained the explanation. The little picture was nothing more or less than a nude figure of a female performer, some kind of dance, and under it was printed one word, "Dolly." I suppose that all the other packages were equally loaded with this person. After all I concluded that the smoking of the cigarettes would be a virtue compared to the contemplation, by young lads, of such immoral pictures. I did not wonder that they made use of the language that I had overheard. But the most serious consideration is the future of these young boys. What kind of citizens—not to speak of Christians—will they make? How can parents, no matter how good themselves, or teachers, ever expect to see their boys grow up good men, virtuous citizens, when their young minds are warped and dried up with the evil that comes upon them like a foul disease? Would any one of the manufacturers ever allow the pictures that they sell to enter their own homes? Would any one of them give his own boy these abominations to contemplate? Not likely. But I find the world to be the same all over. Men have little care for the souls and lives of others as long as they can secure what they need for their own homes and families.

CONCLUSION. — While, then, our Solons are seeking to legislate and to do the impossible, for they can never regulate the traffic in cigarettes by mere Act of Parliament, they might do well to consider the other and more deadly evil that, like the serpent under the rose bush, lurks in the cigarette packages. The amendments moved at Washington is based on good sound common sense, and on moral rectitude, and I hope it may eventually become law. We, too, have laws against the importation and sale of immoral literature; why not extend them to take in this hidden evil which is the worst of all, because it corrupts the young, the innocent and the less sturdy of our race?

sensations rather than to print news. The fault of the depraved press lies not so much in the prominence given to police annals as in its treatment of them. To journals that belong to this class the murder, or assault, or theft which is reported in the news of the day is regarded merely as material for "a story" in which, if the victim is not a person of importance, the criminal is made the central figure, the hero of what is in many cases turned into a mere romance. Hence every detail, whether real or imagined, that will heighten the effect is brought into requisition, the sole effort being to produce in the reader a thrill of excitement. The plain record of an ordinary crime has no value for this purpose.

There is as much reason in many places for the Church newspaper as there is for the Church pulpit. This fact is recognized by the Holy Father by the Bishops and by the priests. It should be recognized by the Catholic people. The flock must be guarded while the wolves are prowling.—Catholic Universe.