

versal invocations by families or communities, when any great undertaking, journey, or work was about to be taken or commenced. Some time ago, when reading the late A. M. Sullivan's account of the "Mass on the Ocean," I was so forcibly struck with the grandeur and deep faith of the ceremony, that I attempted a few lines descriptive of it, and with them I will close my humble contribution to the the OWL's St. Patrick's Day number. It was a custom, when the fishing season begun, to collect all the boatmen and their wives and children to decorate a special boat for the priest, and to row out upon the waters and having cast anchor, to have mass celebrated on the ocean. "I have seen," says A. M. Sullivan, "this mass on the ocean—upon a calm day when naught could be heard save the tinkle of the bell and the murmur of the Priest's voice; behind us the distant hills of Bantry, before us nothing nearer than the American coast." Reader, let us attend together

#### "THE MASS ON THE OCEAN!"

Bright the summer sun was rising o'er the distant eastern hill,  
From whose summits, silver-thread-like, danced  
a score of spark'ling rills;  
Bright his rays of golden splendor tipped the far  
off mountains high,  
Blue, eternal, distant mountains, rising upward  
to the sky.  
Gloriously the god Aurora in his robes of saffron  
hue,  
Gazes down upon an ocean broad, expansive,  
tranquil, blue;  
Not a leaf the zephyrs stirring, not a breeze is  
heard to sigh,  
Not a sound, save of the sky-lark's murmuring  
anthem in the sky!

Look! a thousand men are meeting by the tide-  
lashed sand-spread shore;  
Look! the boats are now preparing—if there's one  
there's twenty score!  
Gaily from the bows are streaming banners of a  
hundred shades,  
ce upon the seats are seated children, matrons,  
smiling maids.

There, a boat is decorated far more gaily than the  
rest—  
At its prow a priest is standing, in his priestly  
garments dressed;  
Hark! the signal now is given—bend each good  
man to his oar;  
Now the fleet is slowly moving from the lately  
crowded shore.

On and on they row the wherries, till like sea gulls  
far away,  
Every sail appears a pinion glistening in the morn-  
ing ray,  
Now they cast two hundred anchors—not a breath  
the blue wave curled;  
Now the priest ascends the altar and in solemn  
tones and slow,  
Says the *Introit*, and the listeners answer him in  
accents low;  
Now the *Gospel*, now the *Preface*, now the *Conse-  
cration* word;  
On the distant shore the tinkling of the little bell  
is heard.

Now *Communion*, now the *Blessing*, 'midst a sil-  
ence of the dead;  
Now once more the bell is ringing, and the holy  
Mass is said,  
All is over and the blessings of Almighty God are  
showered  
On the faithful, noble toilers—with new strength  
are they empowered,  
Back across the mirror waters, see the wherries  
flying now;  
Exultation in each eye-glance—hope and faith  
upon each brow!  
In the days now past and vanished, in those days  
that now have fled,  
Thus upon a summer morning were the "Ocean  
Masses" said!

God be with those days now olden! God be with  
those times of love,  
When the sons of Erin ever asked all blessings  
from above!  
When the Faith St. Patrick planted, after years  
of holy toil,  
Flourished fairest flower of Erin on her green and  
sacred soil!  
Sons of Ireland love to cherish recollections of the  
times  
When the voice of God all over called them in the  
Church's chimes!  
They are gone, these days are vanished, and they're  
numbered with the dead;  
God be with those days, now olden, when the  
"Ocean Mass" was said!

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