

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

An Annual Retrospect!

THE CELEBRATION OF THE NATIONAL FESTIVAL IN MONTREAL.

Scenes at St. Patrick's—The Pontifical High Mass—The Sermon, by Rev. Father Doyle—The Procession—The Different Concerts in the Evening, and the Lecture.

Each year the Irish people, all the world over, rejoice upon the occasion of the great national festival, the seventeenth of March. In bygone years varied have been the feelings which animated the children of the "Ancient Race" upon the occasion of St. Patrick's Day. Sometimes gloomy clouds of deep sorrow hovered over their banners and shadowed the light that should have played upon their features; at other times there were gleams of hope shooting through the darkness around and flinging rays of anticipated happiness upon the countenances of the "scattered Gael." This year of Our Lord, 1893, is one in which the light prevails over the dark, and the shadows, although they have not wholly vanished, are golden, like the flush of the dawn upon the eastern hills. There was hope and consequent jubilation upon the St. Patrick's Day of this year. And good cause has there been for such an aspect in the affairs of the Old Land and in the celebrations that have taken place in the New. A year ago, it is true, there was every sign of promise upon the sky of Ireland's future; but this year these signs have brightened into herald beams of almost certain legislative autonomy for Green Erin. Before we enter into the details of the day's proceedings, let us cast a hurried glance over the twelve months just gone past.

The seventeenth of March this year, as far as Montreal is concerned, was a glorious day. The strong, bracing air of our pure Canadian climate was filled with the glories of a glowing sun, shedding its refulgence through a sky of the deepest blue. It was a day of good omen; it gave a fresh courage to all who participated in the celebration, and it harmonized with the brightness that filled each breast and pulsed in each heart. Since St. Patrick's Day, 1892, very potent events have taken place, potent for great good and pregnant with untold blessings for the future of the Irish race. During the last twelve months the great general election for the Imperial House occurred; the seemingly invincible strength of Salisbury vanished before the universal endorsement of the Grand Old Man's policy. It is true the majority

with which Mr. Gladstone was returned was not very large, considering the immense representation in that assembly, but it was sufficient to show that the tide had set in in favor of the Home Rule cause. A vast majority, antagonistic to the Irish interests, was turned into a considerable minority by the voice of the people. The event of that election brings us to another one that most particularly concerns the descendants of Irishmen in Canada.

Ever since the battle for Home Rule commenced, ten years ago, the people of Canada have been foremost in sending material and expressed encouragement to the men doing battle for the cause in the Old Land. In parliament our repre-

sentatives spoke by means of the different resolutions proposed and adopted endorsing the Home Rule cause. In the country, outside of Parliament, the faithful children of Celtic blood, contributed freely and almost constantly to the support of the soldiers that were fighting the national battle upon the field of British Politics. Amongst others whose names became household words on account of their eloquent tributes to the Irish patriots, and their manly defense of the principles for which they struggled, was that of Hon. Edward Blake of Toronto. His powerful voice

had found echo even in the remotest regions of the land whose cause he so strongly advocated. The consequence was that a few months ago Mr. Blake was invited to accept a seat in the Imperial House, for an Irish consistency, and to there lend his magnetic eloquence and untiring energy to the men who needed every support that could be secured. The story of Blake's departure, his election, his universal popularity throughout Ireland and England, and above all his mighty effort when he delivered his maiden speech in the British House of Commons, is too fresh in the memory of every reader of the TRUE WITNESS to require any recapitulation. Suffice to say that Blake's advent

this potent step, even should Ireland not succeed in gaining Legislative autonomy, still this year will be marked as one of the most important in the history of our race, since the dawn of the nineteenth century, while Gladstone's figure, venerable and sublime, will forever be associated with the celebration of St. Patrick's Day 1893.

Coming back from the general events of the year that has just passed, we might remark that a new spirit has been infused into the Irishmen of all Canada, and of Montreal in particular, a spirit of buoyancy and hope that had too long remained a stranger to our race. It was only necessary to glance at the demonstration of Friday to perceive how strongly the people felt the influence of more inspiring news from those who are struggling in the arena of Home Rule. During the year that has elapsed Montreal has sent considerable amounts to swell the funds that are destined to support the cause now in its severest crisis. It was only the other day that the Treasurer of the Blake Home Rule Fund sent five hundred dollars to that honorable advocate of the Irish suit for liberty. The men of this city have ever been in the van and during the last year they have given evidence that their patriotism has not chilled and their generosity has not diminished.

We have seen what a giant stride has been made during the year that is gone: can any one foretell what advance will be made during the year to come? Is the cup for which Erin has so long thirsted about to be dashed again from her lips, just as she is to quaff the draught? Or will the National festival in 1894 dawn upon a new Parliament House in Dublin? We cannot pretend to the spirit of prophecy, nor are we able to cast the horoscope of the future with the certainty of any inspiration, yet it seems to us, that, before the next twelve months shall have rolled away, there will be a wonderful change in the prospects of Ireland, that the shadows of centuries will give place to the glow of future prosperity, that the tears of affliction will be replaced by the smiles of peace and contentment, that the last link in the chain of the Union will be broken, and the first ring in the bond of another Union will be welded.

No matter how grand the celebration that took place on last Friday, it would only be a prelude to that of next year, should the hopes of the people be realized; yes, this one would be simply a foretaste of that which will take place when the sunburst is run up to the mast head over a new Irish Legislative Hall. And still the celebration in Montreal this year was one of the grandest and most enthusiastic that our city, perhaps, ever beheld. It was a united, harmonious, spirited, truly national celebration. The grandeur of the mass, the eloquence of the sermon, the magnificence of the procession, the enthusiasm of all the citizens, the successful entertainments in the different halls, the able lecture of the learned Paulist Father, and every



REV. A. P. DOYLE, C.S.P.

REV. FATHER DOYLE, of the world-famed Order of the Paulists, is the subject of the foregoing sketch. He was the orator of the occasion. Father Doyle's life, as he says himself, is somewhat uneventful, as far as the world is concerned; but we must say it has been quite the reverse if taken from the missionary and apostolic standpoint. Father Doyle was born thirty-six years ago in California, and was the first child of the generation of gold-seekers that was ever ordained a Catholic Priest. He was educated with the Paulists, and having imbibed the spirit of Father Hecker, he has ever since walked in the footsteps of the glorious founder of the Order. He is to-day one of the most renowned pulpit orators in the United States, and to hear him is a real education.

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