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TOPICS OF AN OLD-TIMER

Closing Reference to St. Patrick's Day Celebrations—The "Sons of St. Patrick," all Pats—The "Friendly Sons" of Philadelphia—Scranton Drops the Parade—Review of a Magazine Article, "The Irish in America," in "The Munsey," by Herbert N. Casson—"The Wonderful Race that has been Structural in the Making of America."

"Dying out? the name of Patrick?" Sons of Erin, is it true? Lay the green and gold away, then, march no more in Irish hue. Sunburst flag and Irish shamrock, with the green coat cast away; "Dying out, the name of Patrick?"—with it dies St. Patrick's Day."

The foregoing lines are from the pen of Mary Sarsfield Gilmore, a poetess of no mean order and daughter of the great handmaster, long since deceased. The poem consists of eleven stanzas like the foregoing and is published in the last issue of the "Irish World." From that great paper I am enabled to gather the matter that enables me to close my allusions to the celebration of last St. Patrick's Day in the United States. It is because I was looking for some new features in the manner of celebrating the great Irish anniversary that I quote Miss Gilmore's lines, to precede what follows—the organization of a society in Pittsburgh, Pa., the members of which are all named Patrick. The officers of the "Sons of St. Patrick," as it is called, are as follows: Patrick M. O'Donnell, President; Patrick Harmon, Vice-President; Patrick Farrell, Financial Secretary; Patrick Killgallen, Recording Secretary; Patrick Reagan, Treasurer; Patrick A. Richards, Historian. The formation of a reading circle is one of the objects of the Society.

In Philadelphia, where the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick originated, the one hundred and thirty-fifth annual dinner of that society was eaten. With the name of St. Patrick was linked that of Washington, because the first of Americans was an enrolled member of that society. Chief among the speakers was Charles J. Bonaparte, Secretary of the American Navy. Singular it is that a man of the same name (Campbell) is President of the Society now as when Washington joined it. And there is also a General Stewart a member of the Society now as there was during the war of the revolution. Among others present on the late occasion were Archbishop Ryan, and Mayor Weaver. The "Friendly Sons of St. Patrick" is the oldest charitable organization in the United States. John Dunlop, the first man to print and publish the Declaration of Independence, was a member of it, and the first man to read the Declaration of Independence. John Nixon, was a member of it. As Secretary Bonaparte's great-grandmother was Irish, he, too, was at home among the "Friendly Sons." John Wanamaker, the great Philadelphia merchant, it appears, is a member of the present day society.

At Scranton, Pa., which is considerable of an Irish city, and has had Irish mayors, there was no parade. "They have paraded through mud for hours," says a correspondent, "and have finished the day more or less bedraggled in appearance, but this year it was determined to take a departure from the routine of the years and have a big banquet. It was a fine affair with brilliant speeches and clever repartee." Bishop Hoban of-

ferred the invocation and the feature of the evening was an original poem by John Erigena Barrett, the gifted editor of the Scranton "Truth." The first four lines of it run:

"The long, black night is ending, we hear the people hail
The blessed light of Freedom in holy Inisfail;
The blighting gloom of ages, with all its fears is past,
And Ireland's hills are radiant with Liberty at last."

There are very few notices of parades to be found in the reports of proceedings on St. Patrick's Day in American cities, but dinners, concerts, lectures and other entertainments were very numerous.

THE IRISH IN AMERICA.

Herbert N. Casson is publishing in Munsey's Magazine sketches of the different nationalities in the United States and in the April number the Irish come in for treatment. I do not know anything of Mr. Casson, or what his own nationality may be, but he has put the Irish after the Swedes and the Jews in the order of his arrangement. I do not think this is done out of any disrespect, because he treats the Irish fairly and flatteringly enough. He describes us as "The Wonderful Race that has been Structural in the Making of America."—"Its Work in Pioneer Times, the Revolution, and the Opening of the Great West. The Predominance of Men of Irish Blood in the American Life of To-day," is described.

Mr. Casson put before himself a pretty hard task in undertaking this work. The chief requisite for it is the capacity for condensation. To string a lot of names together is little more than any man, however expert he may be, can do, but he does it cleverly. In this sense Mr. Casson has made a good job of it, and filled some nineteen pages of the magazine, with good, attractive and glittering names; but to suppose that they fill up the measure of Irish contribution to the American national family, would be a very sad mistake. Having given the subject some study myself, I am in a position to write of it advisedly. Mr. Casson frankly admits that "the historian who shall do full justice to the Irish branch of the human family has not yet appeared, either in the United States or elsewhere. Consequently there are few races, if any, which have been so persistently misunderstood and undervalued. Even in this country, where such a mistake is least excusable, there has been a tendency in some quarters to regard the Irish merely as an element of the rank and file. The truth is that they have contributed their share of leaders and pioneers in almost every line of progress." Very true indeed.

A writer who would do full justice to the Irish name in the making of America would have to go back to the beginning and come down to the very day on which he writes, and even then his omissions would be more numerous than his enumerations. How many readers of American magazines are aware that an Irishman long preceded Columbus in the discovery of America? Or know that an Irishman accompanied Columbus on his first voyage of discovery? Not in a thousand; yet these statements are capable of proof. I could hardly expect Mr. Casson, however, to refer to these, even if he were aware of them, as they would provoke controversy and involve him in arguments for which he has no space.

When he advances the statement that the Irish in America have been structural, he is correct. I have heard the Irish in the States ridiculed for being sentimental, too sentimental, but what people have been more material in their employments, building up structures, breaking up prairies, and hewing down forests? They have never sought to live on wind or gain a livelihood on "hot air." They hewed down the primeval forest. The canals of America could not be cut without them. The railroads could not be laid nor run without them. Nor could the grain transporting vessels be filled nor emptied without them. They were the Hercu-

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les that came to America with the muscle that preceded steam and electricity. Says the writer: "If the handwork of the Irish were painted green, the average American city would be splashed on all sides with Emerald hues." Yet there are few who are aware of this, even among the Irish themselves. I remember, away back in the fifties, when Fernando Wood was mayor of New York, that gentleman asserting at a St. Patrick's banquet, that the prominence and prosperity of that city was due to the Irish. Even at that time the Irish were as a people handicapped by want of education. Even so, they were not without their men of art and eminence.

But now the writer says: "A New Yorker, for example, may rise in the morning, bathe in water that comes from Croton Dam, built by James Coleman, ex-president of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick; breakfast on Cudahy bacon; then take the subway built by John B. McDonald, past the new college of the city of New York, built by Thomas Dwyer, in his office in a skyscraper built by John D. Crimmins, where he will cable to Alaska over a line built by David Lynch, to order certain freight sent via James J. Hill's Great Northern Railroad. Then, with a cigar bought from one of George J. Whelan's three hundred cigar stores, he will read the New York 'Sun,' published by William M. LaFan and delivered by the American News Company, founded by Patrick Farrell—and remark to an English friend:

"Yes, of course, this is an Anglo-Saxon country."

The writer refers to us as "the fighting race," as exemplified by Clarke's famous poem on "Kelly, Burke and Shea." Courage, I own, is an admirable quality and no people were ever great without it; but I for one do not like to have the "fighting race" stamped upon our face as one of our best traits of character. They have had to take up fighting for a living as a matter of necessity and a sad necessity it has been, and I would much rather have them known as "constructionists" than as "fighters," no matter how many Fontenays they may have won or how brave they have been. But they have done more things in America in this line than the writer knows or the Irish know themselves. Does he know that the two bravest men the State of Virginia ever knew besides Washington and Lee, were one of Irish birth and another of Irish blood—John Lewis and "Stonewall" Jackson. Jackson's name is familiar but who now knows anything of John Lewis? Yet his statue confronts that of Washington in the State House of Virginia at Richmond.

In writing history Americans have minimized the services of the Irish. Why should Paul Jones be given precedence over John Barry in rank in the American navy? Jones was a brave man to be sure and did great service to the country that hired him. But for all that he was a free fighter, serving for pay, as was shown by his subsequent services in the French and the Russian navies. Barry was equally brave but more patriotic, because he confined his services to his adopted country, never betrayed a trust nor missed an opportunity, and leaves a record unsurpassed by any man, not excepting Washington himself. And he undoubtedly is entitled to be recognized as the "Father of the American Navy."

I know of so many men with Irish names in American annals who have done something, who have achieved something, and deserved something, that I feel a disappointment at the omission of their names in this magazine article. It is written from a New York view. What Irishmen have achieved in New England, in the South, in California and the great West, is in many instances overlooked.

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL QUESTION

The following letter appears in the London Times:

Sir,—In several communications to your columns on the "Education Question," the American State system of imparting purely secular teaching in the schools and leaving all religious training to the churches and Sunday schools, has been held up as being quite satisfactory to those who have had experience of it. The Rev. T. A. Lacey, for example, is represented in "The Times" of this morning as saying, at a meeting of "Liberal clergy," that "he had never yet come across a single American who objected to it, or who dreamt of substituting anything else." This certainly was not my experience when in America a year and a half ago. I then met many people of all religious denominations who deeply deplored the results of this experiment in Godless education on a large scale, which were becoming more and more apparent year by year.

I would ask for permission, as the question is such a very important one, to quote the opinions of some few Americans who, as will be seen, are not content with the State system. These quotations could be multiplied without difficulty, and, in fact, in my note-books I have dozens of the kind. An Episcopalian clergyman, the Rev. W. Montague Geer, preaching at St. Paul's Church, New York, in September, 1901, said that the assassination of President McKinley was a visitation of God on America, and attributed it to "our Godless system of education, a far worse crime than slavery or intemperance. The question now is, to what extent can we remodel and remodel our educational system? Almost any system is better than the present one."

The "Methodist" (Literary Digest, Vol. VII., Nov. 7) writes editorially on this question:

"Our judgment of the denominational schools of the land, as compared with the purely secular or state schools, are, on moral grounds, incomparably the safer. Our State institutions, as a general thing, are the hotbeds of infidelity, not less than of vice. That infidelity should be fostered and fomented therein is not unnatural. We thoroughly believe that our Church should invest at least \$10,000,000 in the next ten years in denominational schools. Why? Because we believe this system is the American one and the only safe one."

To take one more example. A writer in the "North American Review," January, 1898, says:

"I am a Protestant of the firmest kind. . . . The Catholic Church has insisted that it is its duty to educate its children in such a way as to fix religious truths in the youthful mind. For this it has been assailed by the non-Catholic population, and Catholics have been charged with being enemies of the people and of the flag. Any careful observer in the city of New York can see that the only people, as a class, who are teaching the children in the best way will secure the future of the best civilization are the Catholics; and, although a Protestant of the firmest kind, I believe the time has come to recognize this fact and for us to lay aside prejudices and patriotically meet this question."

Lastly, for those who are saying that the experience of America proves that Church and Sunday school is amply sufficient to supply all the religious education needful, I would ask them to ponder over the words of Dr. Levi Seeley, of the State Normal School, Trenton, N. J., Writing in the "Educational Review," February, 1898, he says:

"A little less than 50 per cent. of all the children of our country frequent any Sunday school. The meaning of these figures is simply overwhelming. More than one-half of the children of this land now receive no religious education. . . . Even this feature does not show the truth. It seems to admit that those who attend Sunday schools are receiving proper religious instruction, but every one knows that this cannot be granted."

I may add that I was assured two years ago that the proportion of those trained in State schools who go to any place of worship or to any Sunday school has fallen considerably since 1898.

I have said nothing about the opinions of Catholics, because the very

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION AT THOROLD

The Church of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, Thorold, was the scene of a most impressive and devotional ceremony on Sunday, March 25th, when eight aspirants were admitted to the Society of the Children of Mary.

As a most fitting preparation for the great occasion, the Sodality received Holy Communion in a body at the early Mass, and sang in honor of the feast of their Immaculate Mother. High Mass was sung at 10.30, and a most touching sermon delivered by the zealous and devoted pastor, Rev. Father Sullivan. He exhorted his hearers to love and honor their Blessed Mother, for in so doing they were following the example of saints, angels and our Divine Lord Himself. Her power is as great to-day as when she gave her consent to the Incarnation on that 25th day of March when the angel visited her humble home, at Nazareth.

In the evening the beautiful church presented an unusually festive appearance. The altar of the Blessed Virgin was aglow with lights and the sweet perfume of flowers mingled pleasingly with the odor of incense.

At seven o'clock the aspirants, wearing white veils, entered the church and took their places in the centre aisle nearest our Lady's Altar. They were followed by the members of the Sodality, wearing their blue ribbons and medals, emblems of their consecration to Mary Immaculate. After the Rosary had been recited the hymn "Come Holy Ghost," was feelingly rendered, after which Rev. Father Sullivan again delivered an eloquent sermon. He referred to the power and influence of a Child of Mary; she was, as it were, to be a guardian angel to her own family, a guiding star to all the parish, keeping always before her as her model, Mary the Mother of God. His words were soul-stirring, and could not fail to make a deep impression on all present.

After the sermon the candidates, bearing lighted candles, approached the railing while the sodality sang the beautiful and appropriate hymn, "Children of Mary." When the ribbons and medals had been blessed, each postulante recited aloud her Act of Consecration, after which the Director invested her with the Badge of the Society. As they resumed their places, the church was filled with the strains of the hymn, "Unfold, Unfold, Ye Golden Gates of Heaven." The Magnificat was then chanted, and the day's ceremonies were fittingly brought to a close with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

NELLIE M. MCGILL,
Secy. B. V. Sodality.

Diocese of Hamilton

The Forty Hours Devotion at St. Patrick's Church closed last Sunday evening after Vespers. The attendance was very large and devout. The preacher at Solemn Mass was Rev. Father Sullivan, O.M.I., from Lowell, Mass. His Lordship the Bishop was present at Mass and officiated in the evening at the closing exercises. On Monday evening the devotions began at St. Lawrence Church.

Two new parishes have been lately formed, one St. Ann's in East Hamilton, and another at Hespeler. New schools have been erected at Mt. Forest, Kenilworth, Chestnut Mission and Proton, and another is to be established in the new parish of St. Ann's.

The new parish of St. Ann's has been placed in charge of Rev. Father Lehnur and the parish of Hespeler in charge of Rev. Joseph Crofton. Rev. Father Geil has been transferred to Preston. Rev. Father Hoken to St. Joseph's (Hamilton). Rev. Father Donovan, who is to be superintendent of schools, to the Cathedral. Rev. Joseph Englist from Brantford to Dunville, and Rev. Father Ferguson from the Cathedral to St. Basil's, Brantford.

existence of their own schools, built and supported entirely by themselves, whilst still called upon to pay their rates for the State secular schools, is proof of their intense belief in the necessity of training the minds of children during school in the principles of their faith and in the moral obligations of their religion.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,
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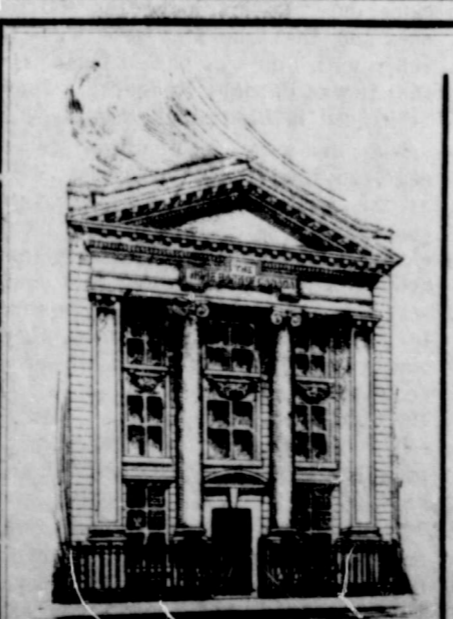
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