

his lips. The rich millionaire as he rolled forth from his palatial mansion, in his gilded chariot; the poor man as he wended his joyous way from his clean and modest cabin, had a warmer smile of welcome, a heartier hand-clasp, a kindlier word of greeting for his friend for this was St. Patrick's Day. You who have witnessed this morning's ceremonies, who have passed a few minutes in closer communion with your God, need not be told that Irishmen celebrate this feast, not because Patrick was a booted and belted warrior bold, whose frown caused all men to quake with fear, whose iron-clad hand traced anew the map of Europe; not because he was a gifted statesman, upon whose lips listening senates hung; not because he was a silver-tongued orator whose burning, living words caused a tear of sorrow to trickle down the cheek, or who lashed men's hearts to fury; but because Patrick was the first of Ireland's Soggarths Aroon.

Ireland's first Soggarth Aroon was the only Apostle that ever found a nation entirely Pagan, and left it entirely christian. Ireland marched triumphantly into the fold of Christ, without asking her Apostle to weep a single tear of sorrow, to shed a single drop of blood. No sooner had Ireland blossomed as a rose in the garden of the church, than she stood pre-eminent among the nations for the purity of her faith and her reverence for the priesthood; her warriors, kings, and statesmen yielded first place in the hearts of the Irish people to the Soggarth Aroon.

Ireland is priest-ridden. Irishmen are fettered and manacled in the wily coils of their clergy, is the popular cry. I take up the gage of battle and fling it back in the teeth of such maligners of Ireland's priesthood; Irishmen are bound and shackled by their priests, but their chains are the sweet, silken bonds of love that unite the heart of man to that of his fellow man. And why? Pierce through the

long vista of ages and you will read the answer. The heart of the Irish Soggarth Aroon has ever beat in unison with the noblest thoughts and holiest aspirations of the Irish people. When a dense cloud of ignorance overshadowed the whole European continent, the one rift in that cloud was as it broke over the Emerald Isle. From all the corners of the earth, students flocked to the beacon-light of science erected by the Irish priests on the sacred soil of Erin. Ireland was then the school-house of the world, the hallowed abode of sanctity and learning. Ireland's Soggarth Aroon had made the holiness, the melody, the sanctity of her people; the heroic devotedness of her priesthood; the immaculate purity and wondrous beauty of her daughters, proverbial among the nations of the world. Ireland's priests had written for her a glorious history before the coronation of Charlemagne, before the Crescent waved over the rolling plains and smiling valleys of sunny Spain.

The scene is changed. A war-cloud bursts over the land. The sword brightly flashes from the scabbard, for Ireland's enemies raise the cry, "down with the altar, down with the Cross." But the Cross and the altar are up in Ireland to-day, though the less I say about the up or down location of her enemies, the better. In such a case, speech is silver; silence is golden.

Freedom, liberty, national existence were offered the Irish people if they would play the part of Judas to their faith; they spurned the offer with contempt—not that they loved Ireland less, but that they loved their martyred Soggarth Aroon, their outraged God, more.

Persecution, riches and golden store could not be made "the thirty pieces of silver" for the Irish people; they had higher hopes, nobler aspirations, holier aims taught them by their Soggarth Aroon. Even under the deadly shadow of persecution, when Ireland passed under the confiscating