

Andalusian peasants. In England the ball game was also a favorite Easter sport in which the City Fathers engaged with due parade and dignity.

Another very peculiar custom existed in France, even as late as the XVth century. At Puy it was customary when, at the first psalm of matins, a canon was absent from the choir, for some of the canons and vicars, with processional cross and holy water, to visit the house of the absentee, sing the "Hæc Dies," and, if he was in bed, to sprinkle him with holy water. He was then led back to the church; and, in punishment, he had to give a breakfast to all who had taken part in the procession. Similar customs existed at Nantes and Angers; but they were prohibited by Diocesan Councils in 1431 and 1448.

Easter tide closes with Low Sunday; but what is the origin of this appellation we have been unable to discover.

P. W. B.



"Insula Sanctorum et Scholarum."

("The Isle of Saints and Scholars.")

"When Erin first rose from the dark swelling flood,
 "God blessed the green island, He saw it was good;
 "The Emerald of Europe, it sparkled, it shone,
 "In the ring of the word, the most precious stone."

From her earliest days, with the exception of the three centuries that followed the death of St. Patrick, we find Erin's sky darkened by an almost endless succession of evil-menacing clouds. While 'tis true that the darkest hour comes before the dawn, it would seem in the instance of Ireland, that each dawn ushered in a dark and a still more foreboding firmament. Fifteen hundred years ago one vast murky cloud was lifted from Ireland's sky never to return to mar the beauty of an Irish day dawn. It was the dark cloud of paganism, swept away forever by the brilliant rays of Christian sunshine, and leaving the Irish nation illumined with the light of Catholic Faith. And, gentlemen, that same light of Catholic Faith burns with just as bright effulgence and warmth to-day as it did in the very freshness of its birth.

You have often read the account of the marvellous rapidity with which the Apostle Patrick converted the Isle to the Catholic