

## THE SEA-DIVIDED GAELS.

Hail to our Celtic brethren wherever they may be.  
In the far woods of Oregon, or o'er the Atlantic sea—  
Whether they guard the banner of St. George  
In Indian valleys,  
Or spread beneath the nightless north experimental sails—  
One in name and in fame  
Are the sea-divided Gaels.

Though fallen the state of Erin, and changed the Scottish land—  
Though small the power of Mona, though unwaked  
Llewellyn's band—  
Though Ambrose Merlin's prophecies degenerate in tales,  
And the cloisters of Iona are bemoaned by northern gales—  
One in name and in fame  
Are the sea-divided Gaels.

In Northern Spain and Brittany our brethren also dwell;  
Oh! brave are the traditions of their fathers that they tell—  
The eagle and the crescent in the dawn of history pales  
Before their fire, that seldom flags, and never wholly falls;  
One in name and in fame  
Are the sea-divided Gaels.

A greeting and a promise unto them all we send;  
Their character our charter is, their glory is our end;  
Their friend shall be our friend, our foe who'er assail;  
The past or future honors of the far-dispersed Gaels;  
One in name and in fame  
Are the sea-divided Gaels.

—Thomas D'Arcy McGee.

## A GLANCE BACKWARD.

It is twenty-eight years since the laying of the corner stone of what we may now term the ill-fated St. Patrick's Hall. Twenty-eight short years! Yet how many changes have taken place since then? How many have reached the heights of fame and fortune, and alas! how many have seen "Life's golden hopes laid low!" The chief promoters of the plan to erect a monument worthy to bear the glorious name of St. Patrick have passed over to the silent majority, and as we breathe a prayer for their eternal rest let us glance backward and see what they have done, that their memory should live. For years representative Irishmen of Montreal had been endeavoring to collect funds towards the erection of a building, which, besides being an ornament to the city, would be a home for all Catholic societies. This purpose required a large amount of money, and it was not until the year 1866 that the promoters of the plan could see their way to present the question to the public.

On Monday, January 8th, a public meeting was held, in order to obtain the co-operation of the Irish Catholics of Montreal with the St. Patrick's Society in the erection of the proposed building.

The chairman, the late Mr. Devlin, announced that matters had progressed so favorably that he, as president of St. Patrick's Society, had purchased a site on the corner of Victoria Square, extending from Craig street to Fortification lane, having a frontage of 140 feet and a depth of 100 feet.

A board of directors was appointed by the meeting and a stock-book opened, and \$49,290 stock taken by 149 subscribers. The stock was rapidly taken up, and on March 18th, 1867, the foundation stone was laid. An eloquent address was delivered on the occasion by the late lamented Father Dowd. In the cavity of the corner stone were placed two sealed jars containing copies of city papers, and a number of British and Canadian coins. The brass plate which covered the jars bore the following inscription:

"This plate commemorates the laying of the corner stone of St. Patrick's Hall, Montreal, by the Rev. P. Dowd, chief pastor of St. Patrick's Church, on March 18th, 1867, in the 80th year of the reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria; the Right Honorable Charles Stanley Viscount Monck, Baron Monck of Ballytramm, in Ireland, Governor General of British America; Lieutenant-General Sir John Mitchell, Bart., K.C.B., Commander of the Forces, Administrator of the Government of Canada; Henry Starnes, Esq., Mayor of Montreal." The names of the directors, architect, builder, &c., were also inscribed on the plate.

The building had a frontage of 140 feet on Victoria Square and 100 feet on Craig street and Fortification lane. The height from the street level to the cornice was 72 feet and to the apex of the roof 92 feet. The style of architecture was an

adaptation of the Norman, suitable to the requirements of the day as regard to shops, library, reading rooms and Concert Hall.

The building was heated throughout by steam; on the ground floor there were eight first-class stores; the second story contained four large show-rooms and a spacious hall, with committee rooms, &c. The grand hall occupied the whole of the third story. When the hall was first completed it measured 184 feet long by 94 feet wide, and 46 feet high to the centre of the ceiling.

The platform was 52 feet by 25 feet deep, and was at the end next to Fortification lane, while facing it on the Craig street end was an orchestra gallery of similar dimensions. The building was completed, and had been used but a short time when a most distressing accident occurred, which, by the goodness of God, was unattended by any loss of life. The evening of February 3rd, 1869, the hall was leased for a public ball and concert; about midnight an alarm was raised that the roof was giving away, and a rush was made for the doors. Fortunately, in the erection of the building spacious means of egress had been provided, and, although nearly two thousand people were present, the hall was cleared in a few minutes, and the last of the company had scarcely passed out when the roof crashed in. So great was the weight of the falling debris that some of the iron girders passed completely through the lower floors. At first the accident was attributed to the weight of snow on the roof, but it was afterwards discovered that it was caused by the action of the frost on the iron girders which supported the roof.

The directors at once proceeded to make necessary repairs, substituting wooden girders for the iron ones previously used. At the same time, several alterations were made improving the acoustic qualities. For this purpose a false ceiling of cotton was stretched on thin boards, taking the place of the former plaster one, and the stage was removed to the opposite end.

The building was erected of Montreal limestone and was three stories high, the upper story being equal in height to the two lower ones. Scarcely three years had passed when again the hall was visited by misfortune, this time by fire. On October 12th, 1872, fire was seen issuing from the windows of the building next to the hall. The following account is taken from a city paper of the time:

"On Wednesday, the 2nd inst., at about half-past two in the morning, a fire broke out in the roof of Bonayne's shoe factory, situated on the upper flats of Shaw's auction rooms, on Craig street, and separated from St. Patrick's Hall building by an alley twelve feet wide. The origin of the fire is unknown. The alarm was at once given, and as the fire did not look serious it was thought that a stream would soon put it out. Unfortunately, however, owing to the hydrants being out of order, there was not the usual promptitude in getting water to play on the fire, which, gathering headway, soon extended to the front part of the building. A brisk breeze from the eastward at the time fanned the destructive element to redoubled fury, carrying embers far and wide. The fire, which had now got beyond human control, quickly caught on the roof of St. Patrick's Hall, and in a few minutes it also was a mass of lowering flames. The fire, which kindled in the roof and upper windows, burned its way down through the floors. When morning dawned the once fine hall was a mass of ruins. The chief sufferers by the fire are Messrs. Bonayne, in whose premises it originated, and Mr. P. Shaw, the well known Montreal auctioneer. Other sufferers are Messrs. Whiteside & Co., spring mattress-makers; T. Stewart, tea dealer; Higgins Bros., wine merchants; Devany & Co., auctioneers; Jones & Tooley, sign painters. The total loss will be about \$160,000. The Hall was insured for \$55,000 and the stock and furniture of the sufferers are tolerably well covered by insurance."

This last disaster completely discouraged St. Patrick's Society and its helpers, and no attempts were made since to rebuild the hall. Yet there is no reason why Montreal should not have its Hall which Irish Catholics could call their own; and now that there is recognized the great need of a central location and league for Catholic young men, similar to the Y.M.C.A., why should it not take the shape of a new and grander St. Patrick's Hall?—why not, indeed? The

days of Irish chivalry are not passed. Irish generosity is not dead. Irish capital and labor have accomplished wonders in the past, and, in this case, why should not history repeat itself, and show to the world that the Irish residents of this great Catholic city love their faith and nationality

"With a love that will not die,  
Till the sun grows cold,  
The stars grow old,  
And the leaves of the Judgment Book unfold."

SARAH SUTHERLAND.

(I am indebted to Mr. John Horne of the Numismatic Society for dates and account of the fire.—S. S.)

## A CENTRAL HALL.

To the Editor of THE TRUE WITNESS:

DEAR SIR,—In reading, from time to time, in your paper, of the references made to the building of a Hall, the wonder is that it was not lively agitated before now, since the societies existing have all along needed some place for their meetings; besides, Irish Catholics have given a fair share of concerts and entertainments and do give. Now, for instance, some of the societies are over thirty years in existence, and the majority of them pay rent for their rooms here and there in the city, say, on an average, \$20 per month, which in ten years would amount to \$2,400 in rent. We have C.M.B.A., A.O.H., young men's societies, temperance societies and Foresters, say, on an easy guess, about ten different societies, and if their combined outlay for the time mentioned was put together, it would give \$24,000, a sufficient amount to start a building wall and truly. Whether this would resolve itself into a Central Hall is worthy of attention. St. Patrick's Society had a splendid hall before, and why not renew the salt of the earth?

M. B. HUGHES.

Montreal, March, 1895.

## AN OLD PLEA.

To the Editor of THE TRUE WITNESS:

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—There is scarcely a spot on this habitable globe that is unknown to the Irish race. They are, as has often been said, a missionary people. Even in old pagan times they raided France under the last of their pagan monarchs, Dathy, and introduced the arts as well as the sciences of Erin. They taught the Franks how to fight against the tyranny of Rome, and succeeded; but unfortunately the Irish monarch was killed by lightning on his way to Rome. But to return to facts. The Irish flourish everywhere but at home, where nothing in human form flourishes except Scotch land agents, policemen and limbs of the law.

It seems to be the business of these agents of an unfair government to torture and extort, and in the end make him fly from his native land to some foreign and friendly country. Placed by circumstances either by lot and chance in any part of the United States or Canada he compares favorably with men of other nationalities. While men from other countries seek easy jobs such as insurance agents, stablemen or footmen, which positions require a certain amount of laziness, the Irishman, even when well educated, as a rule avoids nothing, but takes his chances of the first thing that offers. He will not go around with numberless testimonials from young men's Christian associations, nor will he spend months seeking for a chance to work at some easy job. It is the same with our Irish girls, (God bless them) they do not come with characters from some reformatory or Magdalen's home to take service with some of the upstart madames of society on this side of the water. What would a good many of our genuine ladies do without some of these so-called Biddies or Peggies? Many of our select Protestant ladies will tell you that an Irish Catholic girl is a treasure, whereas the servant ladies who come from England are in the end a disappointment, and those from the States and from some parts of Canada want so many concessions and presume so much on the good nature of employers that they are half the time idling their time in boarding houses for servants. The reason why is evident. In America now-a-days girls are not brought up nor trained as servants. When once they touch an old disabled piano at home they imagine their future to be devoted to ease and affluence, and the others from the other side come laden with so

many recommendations from suspicious persons that they very soon destroy the effect of their characters in writing.

The penitent homes, or houses for the reformation of young girls, in England and elsewhere, have much to answer for. In England or Scotland, a young girl ruined by some scoundrel may reform and become good, but the Irish girl, even if she emigrates, loses caste, because unfortunately she is the party to be blamed in Ireland, and not the scoundrel. Her fate follows her, God help her, and she has not a line nor a friend even within the family circle to defend or restore her good name. No wonder we Irish are accounted a chaste nation, especially the women of Ireland.

I intended at first not to intrude on your columns so much, as I intended to refer to the people of St. Mary's parish, among whom we have men who started in life here without the superfluities of purse or education and who are to-day the pride of the parish. They look forward to the coming festival as gladly as do our Irish school boys who have never had the good fortune of touching Irish ground. Nevertheless they are well trained in the love of dear old Erin.

The teachers in the school (St. Mary's Boy's) always teach Irish history and I hope it will aid the national feeling for the dear land.

I may ask the question, would the teaching of Irish History be tolerated in any other school in the city? No, decidedly not. They could be taught the history of Morocco, Spain, or any other country but Ireland. The French Canadians I must say are a very liberal race, but it never occurred to them that there was a nationality here as jealous of the ancient fame and history of its country as French Canadians are just now of La Belle France.

FRANCIS D. DALY.

## HONORED THEIR TEACHER.

A PRESENTATION AND ADDRESS TO MR. ANDERSON, OF SANSFIELD SCHOOL.

Parents of the pupils attending Sansfield school and a number of others interested in the work of the institution, assembled in the schoolroom last Friday evening to show their appreciation of the labors of Mr. Anderson, the principal, who completed his silver jubilee in connection with the school. A complimentary concert was given, and at the close of the first part of this Mr. Anderson was presented with an address in English and one in French by Messrs. Daly and Boisvert respectively, whilst Mr. Wall, Ald. Turner and Dr. Delorme handed to him a more substantial mark of the appreciation of the well-wishers of the school in the shape of a well-filled purse, and Mrs. Anderson was the recipient of a splendid basket of flowers. The testimonials congratulated Mr. Anderson on the completion of so long a period of service, spoke of the great success which had been scored by many of his pupils, both in the United States and the Dominion, and referred to his unceasing endeavors to elevate and promote the educational interests of the locality in which the school was situated.

In replying to the address, Mr. Anderson briefly reviewed his quarter century's work in connection with Sansfield School, and said that during that period he had learned to appreciate the kindness which in manifold forms had been shown him. Whatever glory was attached to the Sansfield School was to be attributed, not to him, but to the indefatigable and conscientious efforts of each individual teacher in furthering the interests of the school. The moral interests of the school had always been secured by the co-operation of the rev. gentleman in whose parish the school was located. Rev. Father O'Meara had been unceasing in his efforts to advance the educational interests of the schools in his parish. In conclusion, he expressed thanks to all who had worked to assure the success of his jubilee. Those who contributed to the concert, which formed a most pleasant part of the evening's proceedings, were Mr. H. Quintal, McKee's orchestra, Misses T. Doherty, L. Dore, Lotta Fetherstone and Josephine Doherty.

It is estimated that nearly 40,000 persons in Berlin are wrestling with influenza.

The proprietors of Florida winter resorts are compelled to order oranges from California for their guests. The first carload left Pomona, Cal., Monday for St. Augustine. One hotel keeper at St. Augustine has ordered the shipment of a carload every week.