

**A GIFTED AND PATRIOTIC  
KERRY MAN.**

For the CATHOLIC RECORD.

It is hard to venture an opinion as to which county in Ireland has pro-

whether rebel Cork, historic Wexford,  
gallant Galway, dashing Tipperary or

the sacred soil of Kerry must be ever  
dearest, because there rests the revered  
dust of my forefathers. There, too,  
the cradle of the great Liberator, the  
immortal Dan. O'Connell, was rocked.  
There his poetic soul was fed and his  
imagination fired with love of freedom.  
During my visit to the World's Fair  
last year I was pleased to see that  
Kerry was well represented in the Irish  
Village. Not only was Kerry repre-  
sented by winsome Irish *colleens*,  
whose sweet, Irish brogue enhanced the  
virtue of their modest demeanor; but  
the Irish press of Dublin, Cork and  
Tralee had as their joint representa-  
tives Mr. T. O'Rourke, of Tralee,  
a patriot in the truest sense of the  
word, and a gifted Irishman.

met Mr. O'Rourke, and I soon learned that he had suffered the cause of Ireland for over thirty years, with tongue and pen, and had suffered for her in prison—a man small in stature but with a resolute face capable of doing, daring, and suffering. I must confess that I became interested in the history of a man who had been closely identified with the hopes and aspirations of the Irish people for thirty years, and had hazarded all at the shrine of her love and hoped for freedom. As I sat down to a company with Mr. O'Rourke, and two or three others discussing Irish affairs, I was struck with the breadth of intelligence and wide knowledge of the Irish, his keen insight into the affairs of government and his accurate information upon not only Irish questions but general, political, social and literary subjects. Truly indeed is the Irishman versatile! Here was a man who had been engaged all his life in the wine and

rocity business in the capital of his native county and whose knowledge of English politics, Irish politics, social economics and general literature was much more comprehensive and accurate than that of many people whose special vocation it is to study them. From the age of fifteen, when Mr. Bourke left school, he had identified himself with every movement which had for its purpose the uplifting and betterment of the Irish race. To the question "When were you born, Mr.

"course?" he replied, "In 1848, the year of the Irish Famine." Perhaps that pathetic event set his soul in the right direction. This is the way that the birth of Irish patriots is registered: the Famine, the Repeal Year—the year of the Famine, The Repeal Year—events of joy or sorrow which mark the birth of a new star. O shall it be ever thus? We shall we out these tear-stained pages from the volume of Ireland's history and transfer her from a Calvary to an Olivet?

The county of Kerry has a strangely peculiar patriotic history. The genius of Kerry patriotism is not given to make up a new movement quickly, but,

either coercion nor cruelty can drive them out of the field. Take, for instance, the Fenian Movement of 1867. The Government of Kerry did not readily acknowledge the Fenian cause, but once having planted the seed there it kept growing in seclusion in the wild fastnesses of the county long after the British Government had uprooted it in all other parts of Ireland.

the same is true of the Butt Home-  
rule movement of 1872. Like many  
other Irish patriot, whose efforts were  
destined to failure, Mr. O'Rourke loved  
Ireland not wisely but too well.  
Macaulay bases the justice of rebellion  
on the hope of success. Irish pa-  
triotism has often lost sight of this.  
It will never be known fully what the  
Irishman uprising of 1867 did for Irish  
Ireland. It has been credited with  
the Disestablishment of the Church in  
Ireland, and perhaps justly so.  
It is not surprising, therefore, that I  
found that Mr. O'Rourke was an active  
sympathiser with that daring band of  
unhappy Irishmen who sought to liberate  
Ireland by the sword in 1867, and was  
elected by a committee appointed to collect

...for the wives and families of the  
...nian leaders—Luby, O'Leary and  
...ckham. Mr. O'Rourke was also an  
...ive leader in the organization of  
...the famous Kerry Tenants' Defence  
...association, acting as its secretary ;  
...ile Mr. J. J. Long, editor of the

James O'Rourke, was its President; but it was as a factor in the Home Rule Movement, led by Charles Stewart Parnell, that Mr. O'Rourke became so prominent and active. He was first to introduce the great Irish question to the tenant farmers of Kerry, and was, during the life of Parnell, his trusted friend and counsellor. When Parnell died, his friend and his friend, Wm. J. O'Brien, established *United Ireland*, in Dublin, in 1881. Mr. O'Rourke was consulted, because of his influence among the people of Kerry, as to the advisability of the O'Brienians to the message of the Gl.

the Act of 1881, Mr. O'Rourke gave evidence on behalf of the Irish Tenant-before "The Bessborough Royal Commission," and his evidence is the only one which stands in the official report in the Blue Book of the House of Commons. Mr. O'Rourke was twice committed to jail, the first time

charge of "Holding an Illegal Land League Court," the second time for upholding the liberty of the press by publishing reports of National League meetings. In connection with the second charge he was offered his freedom provided he signed a docu-

...recanting his former utterances,  
which he indignantly refused to do.



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