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TOPICS OF AN OLD-TIMBER

Write on Irish Affairs Fifty-three years ago, reviewing the Condition of the Country—Ireland in More Hopeful Aspect—Ireland now finding a Soul of Her Own—Wonderful—Progress in the Restoration of the Irish Language—Dr. Douglas Hyde Speaks to the People of America—Wonderful Work of the Gaelic League—Folk Love and Tales preserved in the Evse—Scholars seeking a Knowledge of the Language—Presidence of the United States Theodore Roosevelt has Acquired a Knowledge of the Language like former President Thomas Jefferson—The Story of the Celtic Renaissance.

It is fifty-three years since Old-Timer wrote his first article on Irish affairs. That article was written for the Toronto "Mirror" and was two columns in length. That it had some merit was shown by the fact that it was copied into the Montreal "Pilot," then edited by Sir Francis Hicks. The editor of the Toronto Mirror at that time was Samuel B. McCoy, a native of Adair, County Limerick, Ireland. He was a very bright and brilliant man and a ripe scholar, to whom I was personally much attached. In that article I took a very hopeful view of Ireland's future. She was then recovering somewhat from the effects of a succession of famines, the immigrant fever, the failure of 1848 and the very general depression that had existed. It is true that Charles Gavan Duffy had deserted the country and gone to Australia, having left the country "like a corpse on the dissecting table," but there were some able men left yet in the land, including Frederick Lucas, an English Catholic of great capacity; Denis Lane, John Francis McGuire, Maurice Leyne, Dennis Florence McCarthy, the poet, Rev. Dr. Cahill, a great polemic and astronomer; Shearman Crawford, the parliamentary advocate of tenant right, and a number of others. The tenant right cause was that which was uppermost in the people's mind and it was urged with no inconsiderable spirit. The educational sentiment was again taking possession of the people's minds and the people were arousing themselves from the terrible depression of the few previous years. Lord Palmerston, though, was the Prime Minister of England, and he gave no encouragement to Ireland's hopes, for he declared tenant right to be landlording wrong. This, too, was the period of Ecclesiastical Titles Bill discussion, which was very detrimental to Catholic interests. This also was the time when Irish and Catholic representation in the British Parliament was scandalised by the appearance of a number of political adventurers, whose efforts were for their own personal gain. The names of Sadlier, Keough, C'Flaherty and Scully are not to be forgotten for their evil designs. Mr. Goldwin Smith in his new Irish book, speaks of those men to the disparagement of Irish representation, but it must be remembered there had not yet been organized a pledge-bound party like that of Parnell or Redmond to lay down the law for the guidance of Irish members, and evil-minded men like those referred to, were not under control of party discipline. That was the day of political marauders, happily long since passed away.

Now, some fifty-three years later, I have much pleasure in reviewing Irish conditions in a much more hopeful aspect. Home Rule, it is true, has not yet been accomplished, but many reforms have been brought about. The land laws have been completely revolutionized, the state church, with all its abuses, has been abolished, the franchise has been greatly extended; local or county legislation has been established, and many economical conditions of im-

provement set on foot. There is a strong, invincible Home Rule party holding Irish representation with a firm grasp and possessed of a leadership that is not surpassed by any British party; and now a party in power whose sympathy with Irish claims are well understood. From a legislative point of view there is, therefore, cause for hope, large hope indeed.

There are some other acquisitions that give Irishmen cause for rejoicing. Ireland is finding a soul of her own. She had lost her language and is now recovering it. Ireland is not only in a fair way of obtaining Home Rule and self-government, but of recovering her language, her laws and her traditions. She is in a fair way to secure material advantages as well as ethical gains. Since fifty years ago she has become the leader of the Celtic nations and is aglow with race patriotism. Wales, the Highlands of Scotland, the Isle of Man, Cornwall in England, and Brittany in France, are looking up to her for leadership and instruction. They have had a number of meetings in Dublin and Wales with representative men of ability to guide them and assist in reviving the glories of the past. Men of ability have arisen to revive the language, the arts, the music, the games, and even the dances of days gone by. There is a grand revival of Irish sentiment all over the land. With an Irish National League there is a Gaelic League side by side, and the grand old language that existed for over 2,000 years, if not longer, but which in our day was on the verge of extinction, the subscription lists yielded \$5,000 more being spoken on the farms, heard on the streets, and making its way in the schools and academies.

The leader of this new movement is Dr. Douglas Hyde, who is now considered to be one of the foremost men in Ireland. This gentleman is now in America telling the Americans what the revival of Erse has done and is doing. He has visited several of the larger cities and has been received with a great deal of enthusiasm. In New York it reached a climax. Over \$6,000 was realised from the sale of seats, the boxes alone netting somewhere in the neighborhood of \$3,500. In addition the subscription lists yielded \$5,000 with the promise of an additional six or eight thousand. Every section and element of the citizenship of New York was represented. Carnegie Hall perhaps never before in its history, re-echoed with more real and spontaneous enthusiasm. Supreme Court judges touched elbows with dignified prelates and priests, Catholic and Protestant Irishmen and lovers of liberty thronged the spacious amphitheatre.

Similar meetings have been held in Philadelphia, Boston and Baltimore, and Mr. Hyde has been invited to speak in several of the American universities, especially Harvard, which has a Professor of Gaelic.

In one of Mr. Hyde's addresses he spoke as follows, describing the progress made:

"A dozen years ago the language was taught in less than a dozen schools. Six years ago it was taught in 105 schools. To-day it is taught more or less in 3,000 schools. Between public and parochial schools, colleges and convents, there cannot be less than a quarter of a million now studying the language and history of their fathers. Six years ago a stranger would never hear a word of Irish or anything to show that Ireland was not one big vulgarised English country.

Now in many towns the street names are put up in Irish and the national daily papers and very many of the weeklies print more or less in every issue. Six years ago an Irish hook was a rarity. Now scarce a week passes but a new one comes from the press and the distribution of books and pamphlets from our own offices alone, amount to a quarter of a million copies yearly. Six years ago if you spoke Irish as well as Owen Roe O'Neill or wrote it as well as Geoffrey Keating, it was not worth a threnene to you. To-day you cannot obtain a place under the corporation in the capital of Ireland or of Mayo, or under the Corporation of Limerick, or in a dozen other places, unless you know the national language of your country."

That the Gaelic League has been largely instrumental in the revival of Irish manufactures was shown by Dr. Hyde when he said:

"Six years ago for any product of Irish brains or of Irish hands to find a sale in Ireland, it was actually necessary for it to bear the hallmark of London or Paris—a terrible com-

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ment on the situation that had to be faced by the Gaelic League. But now we are training up a race for whom an Irish trademark on an article will be the strongest inducement to buy it, and the results of our teaching have been amazing. I am told in every direction that the trade of our woollen mills is doubled, of our paper mills trebled and of every little industry that we have, enormously increased, and I believe it."

In his lecture at Harvard University, Mr. Hyde said:

"It is fortunate for me that my first lecture in America should be in the first college of America to establish a chair of Gaelic and Celtic literature, and the home and working place of one of the greatest students of folk lore, Prof. Childs. The language that I used just now is the language that was spoken in Ireland a century ago in all parts of the country, but which now through social and political causes has been banished and extinguished till, at the present time, it is spoken by only three-quarters of a million of people.

"The Irish language is highly reflected, pure and unmingled with other tongues. The Irish people were probably the first to break off the original Aryan stock. Their language contains many remnants of its old Aryan origin. It bears this resemblance even in its outward surface that it appears so to a casual student of the language, for philological purposes old Irish ranks second only to Sanscrit.

"The children of Milesius have been both blessed and cursed above all others. They alone were not conquered by the invasion of the Romans, the Gauls and the Northmen; they alone retained their own civilization, unshaken by the conqueror. This fact has tended to give to Irish literature a place of its own in the history of the world's literature. The Irish race alone of modern Europe has preserved its race and language of years. It has no parallel but Greece.

"Before the rise of the Neibelung, and the troubadours of the Languedoc and Langueped, Ireland swarmed with bands and poets and singers. The volume of Irish literature is enormous. But it is not of the written literature that I wish to speak, although I deem it necessary to give this short introduction, as Irish literature is very little known in this country. The folk tales go back further than literature; the tales of the peasants carry us back centuries before the art of writing was invented. The folk tales that we find in peasant cabins give us the only possible clew to the habits of these early peoples. The study of folk lore has found a home in Harvard, and Harvard has in its library the best collection of folk lore literature that can be found in the world. Folk fancies and folk tales are recognized as the basis of all literature. In them lie the germs of the novel, the romance and the epic. The great national epics are really built up on folk tales.

"Many folklore stories are transmitted by men of one country traveling to another and there settling and marrying. In time the myths of their native land will appear as folk tales among the new people. As an example of that there is the old Irish tale that I heard repeated among the Minnesink Indians in New

Brunswick. The Gaelic League of Ireland stands for a complete intellectual revolution in Ireland. It desires an intensely Irish Ireland, in which the Irish language shall be spoken, the Irish literature read and written, Irish songs sung and Irish dances danced. We have founded Irish schools, supported by the pennies of the poor, and our aim is to produce Gaelic students who will make their work a credit to their country."

Dr. Goldwin Smith in his new Irish book disparages this movement. "The revival of Erse," he says, "as a national language, is surely a patriotic dream. How is it possible to revive a language all but dead, with no valuable literature or wealth of printed books?"

The answer to this is given in the statements of Mr. Hyde here copied. Mr. Smith forgets that a people having but one language are at a disadvantage. The other day in Toronto, while traversing the University grounds, two students came out of one of the university buildings with books in their hands and one said to the other the very same thing. Great as the English language is, wide as it is spread, broad as is its literature, it is not equal to the Irish in the number of words, richness of expression and poetic facility. Scholars are studying it as they used to study Greek and Latin and Sanscrit. An Irish friend of mine in Chicago in the employ of the Harvester Company of that city, was a few years since at Copenhagen in Denmark in the interest of that company. A merchant with whom he had business on learning that he was of Irish nationality, invited him to spend an evening at his house where he said he would meet one of the professors of the University who would converse with him in his native tongue, the Erse; but my friend, Irish as he was, spoke no native tongue, and felt his humiliation at the fact. Irish is now being studied in both Europe and America by learned men. In fact the best Irish scholars to-day are in America. Messrs. who are the principal instructors in the language in Europe. It will, no doubt, be surprising news to many to learn that the President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, is an Irish scholar and contemplates writing a book in Irish. Long before him, however, was another President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, who studied the Gaelic in order that he might read Ossian's poems, by McPherson, in the original. It will surprise Mr. Smith, no doubt, to learn that a quarter of a million people in Ireland are now learning the language, and that 700,000 people have already acquired it. Mr. Smith ought to have learned from Wales that this thing is not impossible, for Ireland is now only following the example of that other Celtic nation of the empire which had lost its language and recovered it. And this is the story of the Irish renaissance.

WILLIAM HALLEY.

The Klondikers' Friend

The attention of our readers is directed to a sketch as published in Donahoe's Christmas number and reproduced on page 6 of this issue, of Father Judge, the Klondiker's friend. The sketch of the life of this devoted priest, a life grand in its simplicity, makes most interesting and touching reading. None should miss it.

ALONG THE CANADA ATLANTIC

A Visit to Annprior—Hibernian Enthusiasm.

My first visit to Annprior, which occurred a few weeks ago, will be made memorable through my attending a red-hot gathering of that most patriotic Irish organization, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, which came off in a commodious and well-equipped hall in the "Galvin Block," on the night of the 13th ult. Annprior has been a fertile field for the growth and development of a number of excellent associations, fraternal in their character and beneficial in their results, and whilst heartily wishing success to every one of them, I can truthfully say that none of them has a higher claim on the sympathies and the support of the Sons of Gael than the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

This association is exclusively made up of Irishmen and of their descendants, and has before it a glorious work, stupendous in its magnitude, although not inseparable in its character. Throughout a great portion of the Dominion, I have met with thousands of my fellow-countrymen who, like myself, felt that there existed grave danger of our losing our identity as a race, throwing overboard our distinctive national individuality and abandoning in toto the Celtic Characteristics bequeathed to us by a proud ancestry. To rehabilitate the decaying Irish national sentiment the Ancient Order of Hibernians has manned the breach and well and nobly has it endeavored to fulfil the task. In Canada it has already established several influential branches; in the neighboring republic its ramifications extend to every point, whilst in Old Ireland, with its unquenchable vitality, it assists the Gaelic League to restore that language which was spoken by Irish scholars and Irish statesmen long before the Anglo-Saxon gibberish was heard of, and if the ancient glories of Ireland are to-day sung on the hills, in the valleys and along the highways of that country, in the sweet and expressive language of our ancestors, we owe it largely to the agency of such associations as the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

On the night of the 13th ult., to which reference has been already made, the Irishmen of Annprior looked more than happy, and as the clock told that the hour of eight had arrived, the attractive hall was well filled by Ancient and Modern Hibernians with their invited friends, friends, Messrs. who are the principal instructors in the language in Europe. It will, no doubt, be surprising news to many to learn that the President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, is an Irish scholar and contemplates writing a book in Irish. Long before him, however, was another President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, who studied the Gaelic in order that he might read Ossian's poems, by McPherson, in the original. It will surprise Mr. Smith, no doubt, to learn that a quarter of a million people in Ireland are now learning the language, and that 700,000 people have already acquired it. Mr. Smith ought to have learned from Wales that this thing is not impossible, for Ireland is now only following the example of that other Celtic nation of the empire which had lost its language and recovered it. And this is the story of the Irish renaissance.

At the meeting in a brief but very appropriate speech, at the close of which he introduced the County President, Mr. Michael Havey, who was well received. Mr. Havey, who has done much to foster the growth of Irish national sentiment all over the valley of the Ottawa, delivered a brief but stirring address, in the course of which he aroused much enthusiasm, and at its close was heartily cheered. The chairman in appropriate terms, now introduced the orator of the evening, Rev. Father Harkin of Almonte. Seldom have I listened to an intellectual effort of greater force or greater beauty. A man possessed of a wide range of knowledge, of commanding figure, charming personality and gifted with a voice capable of filling the largest hall, I am not surprised to learn that he has now the reputation of being one of the ablest pulpit orators amongst the many clever priests in the Ottawa valley. I deeply regret that it is out of my power to give anything like a verbatim report of the eloquent effort, and can only

say that, from his thorough grasp and conception of historical incidents interesting to an audience such as he was addressing, from the picture which he drew of our forefathers' struggles for liberty of conscience, from his eloquent counsels on behalf of union amongst Catholics, and from the fond hope he expressed of Ireland ultimately winning the blessings of self-government, his Annprior speech will be long remembered by those who had the good fortune of listening to it, and it is almost superfluous to say that at its close he sat down amidst vehement cheering.

Rev. Father Duquette, the zealous curate of Annprior, was the next speaker and in the course of an interesting address, all but succeeded in proving himself an Irishman. Rev. Father Chaine, the faithful pastor of Annprior, was the next speaker introduced, and was received as he always is, by the Irish portion of his congregation, with the heartiest enthusiasm. Father Chaine is a native of Grand Old France, and like thousands of his fellow-countrymen, is now, and for many years has been, engaged in spreading God's Gospel in the wilds of the Western Hemisphere, but had it not been for his accent, we would have claimed him as an Irishman born either on the banks of the Boyne or the Shannon, the Liffey, the Lee or the Blackwater.

The next speaker was a gentleman well known in every section of the County of Renfrew. I have no desire to speak disparagingly of any man who does the best he can, nor do I enter into a criticism of this gentleman's speech in a hostile spirit, but I think I voice the sentiment of the whole meeting when I say, more in sorrow than in anger, that speechmaking is an art which he should abandon at once and forever.

RAMBLER.

Death of John G. Malone

Mr. John G. Malone, one of Almonte's most esteemed residents, died last Thursday at his home, and was buried Saturday morning. He was a devout member of St. Mary's church, belonged to the Ancient Order of Hibernians and was treasurer of St. Mary's Conference of St. Vincent de Paul Society. He leaves, besides his mother and widow, five children and five brothers. The children are: Frank, Isabelle, John, Charles and Valda. His brothers are: George of Ottawa, Michael, James, Peter of Almonte, and Thomas of Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.

At the funeral on Thursday the attendance was remarkably large, and all the members of the Hibernians, 85 in all, were present. The pall-bearers were: Messrs. John Fitzgerald, J. J. O'Connell, P. Rooney, J. O'Donoghue and Michael Hogan.

Bishop Dowling Present at High Mass

For the first time since his return to the city from St. Joseph's Hospital, Guelph, his lordship Bishop Dowling was present at a high mass on Sunday, when he gave his episcopal blessing in St. Mary's Cathedral, Hamilton, in the morning.

His lordship will celebrate solemn pontifical high mass in the cathedral on Christmas day as usual. Either on next Sunday or Christmas day the new electrical effects in St. Patrick's church will be turned on for the first time. This work about the altar is very beautiful, and will add greatly to the handsome spectacle this church always presents on Christmas.

Never Buy a Pig in a Poke

It is said that some wags at Northampton Market put a cat in a bag, or poke, and sold it to a countryman as a pig. Upon going to a tavern to have a drink over the bargain, the buyer opened the bag, and of course the cat jumped out. This is stated to be the origin of the proverb: "Never buy a pig in a poke," and also of "You have let the cat out of the bag." The word poke is still used for sack in the south of England.

Controller Ward

Controller Ward is out again for re-election and if a clean record both as alderman and controller commend themselves, then Mr. Ward ought to find commendation in the mind of every ratepayer in Toronto. The success of Controller Ward in the coming election is already certain, but this should not interfere with his friends giving him their most hearty support.

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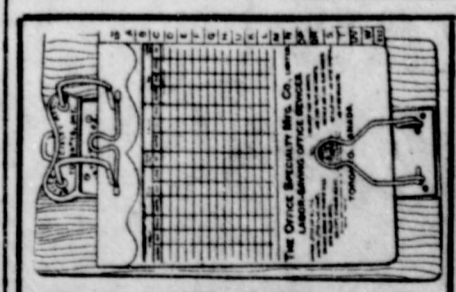
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