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IRELAND'S MISSION.

A SERMON

PREACHED BY AN ENGLISH PRIEST ;

THE REV. FATHER BAKEWELL,

IN ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH, MONTREAL, ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY, 1869.

But I say : Have they not heard ? Yea, verily, their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the whole world.—Romans, ch. 10, v. 18.

DEAR BRETHREN,

When I look around me on this vast multitude, when I reflect, when I cast my eye on this shamrock which I bear so proudly on my breast and which I press with real affection to my heart, think it not egotism if I ask myself, how is it that I who can lay no claim to Irish nationality, am appointed in the decrees of God to preach to you on the festal day of Ireland's patron saint ?

What answer can I give to that which I ask myself ? The only one is this. It is St. Patrick's day. But what response is this to you or me, my brethren ? What right have I, of the nation which has persecuted Ireland, to hold this place ? Brethren, pardon me—I have the two-fold right of duty and of gratitude. I am a Catholic and if in God's mercy such as I am, I am, I have always believed that I as other Catholics of my nationality owed it to St. Patrick.

The Catholic church is for the human race. It is the universal church. It is for the world and it counts its children among every nationality. It is preaching at this moment, and preaching too, the glories of St. Patrick over all the habitable globe. St. Patrick was a Catholic and was sent by God to Catholicise the world. I can say of him almost in the very words of the Royal Prophet, the sound of his voice hath gone forth unto all the earth and his words unto the ends of the whole world.

It is St. Patrick's day and well can I understand,—feel as if infused into my own heart,—these emotions and those sympathies, those sweet yet sad remembrances, which pervade your souls at the thought ever present, yet especially so to-day, of your own beloved land. The very enunciation of the word Ireland attracts your attention, quickens the pulsation of your hearts, causes a loving indescribable thrill in every breast, and yet often—oh, how very often, dear brethren, you apply to your native country another name, a name which comes ever more naturally to your lips and which of itself manifests the generous unforgetting character of Irish hearts. Ireland is not the name of the ocean isle dearest to you, you have every one, and this without preconcerted thought—baptized her by another name. On all your lips this day rises a word engrafted for life in every heart, welling up with deepest feeling, it is the sweetest of all words, home.

Gathered here to-day from every county of your lovely isle, in each of you, sweet memory has depicted a different remembrance of your native land. Its scenery generally possessing a soft beauty, often still presents scenes of grandeur but seldom seen in other climes. The ordinary landscape with its gentle outline of many hills, the brilliant green of its moist lowlands, relieved by the purple tint of its wild turf mosses. Its maze of glen, its melancholy mountain ranges. The quiet beauty of rivers meandering through a luxuriant country, or gently stealing through hills confusedly tossed. The heather clad mountains between whose slips, deep belted with firs, and gigantic ferns and glossy evergreens of the brightest hues, Killarney expands its sheets of silvery waters. The labyrinth of charms when the eye wanders from distant peaks cleaving the Atlantic into a succession of bays. The rough highlands of Donegal. The stern precipices of the northern coast. Its glorious expanse of waters embosomed in heights and gemmed

with islets that break on sight from the top of Croagh Patrick. The gigantic sea wall of Moher flinging its huge shadows over the Atlantic wastes. The cliffs of Antrim towering over the basalt columns of the Giants Causeway. Its ruins ever a puzzle to the antiquarian, the green line of its dismantled castles marking the extreme limit of Norman rule. Jerpoint and Clonmacnoise attesting chivalric Celtic piety. These, and a thousand other softly sad and gentle memories are fresh in your minds to-day, for God has enshrined in the depths of the heart of man, one of the noblest, the most powerful and imperishable of affections, one which makes the human soul throb with generous emotion; the love of country, of the native soil, of that earth which holds in its embrace the bones of our fathers and ought also to receive our own, and among no people is this feeling so vivid as among the Irish. It is the honor of the Irish nation to be passionately attached to their country, to carry engraved on the heart its ineffaceable image, and never to lose its recollection.

When the true Irishman imbars in one of those vast ships which are to bear him across the ocean to some far distant coast; when he leaves never more to see his dear old Ireland, when he bends on it a long, last, lingering look, what tears spring to his eyes, how eagerly he watches till distance and fast weeping blind his sight, what sighs struggle in his warm manly heart; and when Ireland can be seen no more, the vast leviathan with unrelenting speed and un pitying haste rushing him on to greater distance, what a vivid image remains of the dear far off fatherland, of that land of which he ever thinks and ever names by the tenderest of appellations.

Far off! yet no! Ireland is never far off from him, it is ever present in his heart. The Irishman never has but one country. On whatever coast under whatever sky the waves may have wafted him, his first, his last, after God his only thought, but one sole memory, Ireland! Home still and forever.

Forget Ireland! No, while there's life in this heart
It shall never forget thee, all lorn as thou art,
More dear in thy sorrows, thy gloom and thy showers,
Than the rest of the world in their sunniest hours.

Wert thou all that I wish thee, great, glorious and free,
First flower of the earth, and first gem of the sea;
I might hail thee with prouder, with happier brow,
But oh! could I love thee more deeply than now.

It has often been asked how it was that a people so faithful to God as have been the Irish nation has been permitted by the Almighty to suffer so much! How is it that so many of the Irish people have been obliged as it were to leave that land which they love so well? The sufferings of Ireland have been proposed as an enigma or as a proof of the errors of Catholicism, by those who know not the workings of God's providence; by those who have not faith. And to merely human thought, it is strange that with a people who love their native land as none but the Irish do, there can hardly be seen a spot on earth where an Irishman cannot be found. The limited geographical position of the Country is assigned as a natural reason, but such an explanation would apply with equal force to other lands, and the Irish emigration exceeds far that from other countries. Besides it has been demonstrated time and time again, that, were her waste lands reclaimed, Ireland could sustain a population of from 15 to 20 million, and yet its actual population is but five million and a half, and six million are in other climes. The persecutions to which Ireland has been subjected have been a cause alledged. But the greatest emigration has been since Ireland by emancipation was in a measure freed, when the day was dawning on the dark night which was passing as a cloud, when the pall was lifted in a measure from the land. It is again asserted that the famine is the reason. A cause of leaving, to many indeed it was, but thousands left that had no need, and the Irish emigration exceeded that of other lands long before the famine. No complete memorial has been transmitted of the particulars of emigration in earlier years. We know, however, that in the last two weeks of August, 1773, 35,000 Irish emigrants landed in the city of Philadelphia, and that numbers of British vessels containing mostly Irish emigrants sailed for America that year. It is true that the great period of emigration was in the ten years from 1851 to 1861, when 1,646,028 souls left Ireland. But after all, the Irish did not cause the famine. If I seek the reason I find it not in social or political, but secondary causes. Nations and men are the instruments in the hands of God. I seek it, and I find it in "the great first cause" least understood by finite beings: in God's will to make known the Gospel of his Son. "Hath God cast away his people? God forbid!" Theirs are to be the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things. Their

sound hath gone forth into all the earth and their words unto the ends of the whole world. God's ways are not as man's ways, nor God's thoughts as man's thoughts. The designs of the Infinite are often not manifested in the lifetime of one man, nor during the duration of one century. They to whom the sufferings of Ireland are an enigma, forget the entire teaching of revelation: forget that "the disciple is not to be above his Lord;" forget "to look on Jesus the author and consummator of faith, who having joy set before him, embraced the cross, despising the shame, and sitteth on the right hand of the throne of God;" forget "the consolation which speaketh unto you," dear brethren, as unto children, "neglect not the discipline of the Lord, neither be thou wearied whilst thou art rebuked by Him, for whom the Lord loveth he chastiseth;" God dealeth with you as sons, for if you be without chastisements then you are bastards and not sons; forget not the words of the Sovereign Truth, "Blessed are ye when ye are persecuted for my sake. Amen, Amen, I say unto you, there is no man who hath left house, or brethren, or sister, or father, or mother or children, or lands for my sake and for the Gospel who shall not receive a hundred times as much now in this time, with persecutions, and in the world to come life everlasting."

O'Connell has said that the Irish people have received for their earthly mission to be nailed to the cross and to suffer for the propagation of the Gospel. Without unduly striving to penetrate into the designs of God, may not this be—can I not say such has been the working of Divine Providence? If, as I venture to believe, such is the mission of the Irish, it is a most glorious one to the eyes of faith, such a mission as God in his predilection has accorded to no other christian nation. A mission given to a peculiarly loved people to make them thereby "more conformable to the image of his Son."

The Holy Fathers have assigned as the real cause of the growth and extension of the Roman Empire, that God-willed by means of it to prepare for the diffusion of the Gospel. Those men who, from merely human motives carried the Roman Eagles to the utmost bounds of the earth, where in the designs of the Almighty, clearing the way, opening the paths for apostolic feet to tread, creating those links by which the glad tidings of great joy might be transmitted to the most distant lands. In our days the influence of Great Britain has extended itself in every part of the world; she has established colonies

and her language in both hemispheres. Europe, Asia, Africa, America behold her sway. Her language which but a few years ago was only spoken by twenty millions, is now the language of over sixty millions of people. I believe it is not presumption to say that this extension of the power of Britain, allied as it is with ever faithful Ireland has been, in God's design, to propagate the faith of Ireland—the one true faith—throughout the vast extent of the world, and even under a hostile banner to carry the cause of the cross into many lands.

Let us see how God prepared Ireland for, and how she has accomplished and is accomplishing her mission. When the Gospel was first preached in Ireland is not certain, we know, however, that Palladius preceded St. Patrick, that he even found some christians in Ireland, that he converted many people, and yet that God preserved the conversion of Ireland as a nation to our great saint. Pope Celestin in giving him his mission changed his name to Patricius—designating him as the Father in God of the Irish people. St. Patrick enters boldly on his duties—His first Easter in Ireland he spends at Tara and there, in the presence of king Laoghore, and all his tributary princes, nobles, and pagan priests, kindles that material fire which the king did not extinguish, which Druidical foresight foretold as prophetic of rule in Ireland. A fire truly emblematic of that spiritual fire which the apostle came to light, which Christ came to cast on earth, and which was never to fail in Ireland. St. Patrick goes through the length and breadth of the land. A change took place through his labors of which we find no other example in the history of the church. In his own lifetime he saw the entire island united in homage to the cross, noble churches, convents and monasteries spring up on every side, 3000 nobler temples, living temples, also consecrated to God. Apostolic men were not only fitted to become his coadjutors, but to go forth and bear the standard of the cross to other nations, to become apostles to new peoples.

St. Patrick met with little opposition. No Roman consul had ever set his foot in Ireland. God had preserved the people from the infecting influences of Roman corruption. Roman orgies had never blighted or tainted the land, and when Christianity was offered to Ireland, she had not to oppose to it, as a bulwark, the habit of vice and of a profligate morality. She embraced the new faith with ardour; as one of her own poet has said, "with the sudden brightness of a

northern summer." The sons and daughters of the chieftains of the Irish clans rushed at once into the cloisters opened by St. Patrick, and the world saw that not only under the genial rays of an Eastern sun, but in the extremity of Western lands, in the bosom of ocean-mists the monastic life may bloom and flourish. Ireland earned at once, claimed as a right, that title ever her most glorious, The Island of Virgins,—exhaled the fragrant atmosphere of virtue, of that virtue the flower of faith fertile of all others, which enabled her to send forth then, and again to-day, her sons and daughters missionaries to all quarters of the globe.

The Romans left Britain in the year 441; were called home to defend Italy under Valentinian their Emperor and the Empire fell about the year 475. We all know the agencies by which the Roman Empire in the west was undermined and destroyed. The immense imperial fabric whose top had outgrown its base, unwieldy in its irregular dimensions, weakened by its own growth, rotten with its own unheard of corruptions, had accomplished the work appointed by God. Her ancient props loosened from their old foundations by the continuous washings of the several streams around them, in constant, but by times distinct torrents from the north, one by one, soaked, rotted and were swept away. The ancient Empire was at last engulfed. Those countries all formerly dependents became independent, the provinces of Rome all formerly partially christianized, now invaded by ruthless hordes, required again new missionaries. Goth, Vandal, Hun, Ostrogoth, Lombard by hundreds and thousands swept over Southern Europe, devastating its face. Even Rome became a vast mausoleum War, one almost universal continuous war, was raging for centuries.

But while the rest of Europe seemed as if returning to Barbarism, Ireland was in peace. A peace alone disturbed during three centuries by those petty divisions of her kings, which invited Danish invasions during the two following centuries and which were put an end to by the victory of Brian Boromhe at Clontars. Ireland enjoyed five hundred years of comparative peace, cultivating the arts and sciences, instilling into the hearts of her children that love of religion, that attachment to the faith for which they became renowned. The rays of this bright northern light were seen gleaming by far-off lands in semi-darkness, attracting youth in thousands to seek

there and drink deep at the well of knowledge and of piety. Ireland became the garden of European civilization. St. Luan alone had founded over a hundred monasteries, and what did not the St. Mochuas, St. Ruadham, and St. Enna in Arran of the Saints. The monastic city of Bangor contained 3000 persons who gave themselves up to the service of God, to the service of their fellow men in the cultivation of literature, to the service of the poor in clearing the wastes to provide food for their suffering brethren. Her schools were not only open to Ireland's sons, but to the youth of England, France, and Spain, and distant lands. Colleges were established to which the inhabitants of the sister Isle were glad to send their sons to be educated, and some places, even to this day, bear names from these very institutions of learning established there for the special education of England's youth. Men from these institutions went forth to enlighten every part of the continent, and Oxford and Paris, and many of these illustrious universities of Europe, acknowledge Irishmen as their founders, or as the most illustrious persons that gave them strength in infancy.

But it was not enough for Ireland to educate and send to their homes those who had been entrusted to her care. The missionary spirit which has ever distinguished the Irish nation was enkindled. The life of austeritv and retirement which tempers the soul for the Apostolic life, caused the zeal for conversion to flame forth in the hearts of St. Columban and his intrepid disciples. They rush forth from the northern Eden hastening to combat Paganism, to win over to the faith a hundred barbarous nations. Already they have braved the storms of the sea, evangelized the Hebrides, the highlands of Scotland and Northumberland, soon we see them in Flanders, amongst the Austrians, in Switzerland, in the two Burgundies. They traverse the Rhine, on, on, they bear the cross in Bavaria, Germany, to the south of the Danube. They penetrate into Spain the extremity of Italy and the greater Greece. No fewer than eight nations must acknowledge that it was on the altar of religion in Ireland they lighted their torches and brought back faith and piety from your country to their own. The names of a St. Macull, Fridolin, Columban, Kilian, Wiro and Cataldus, are well remembered in many lands. Where is it we do not find traces of their steps? The gospel which they were missioned to carry into these vast regions was, as it were a consuming fire which they could not quench; which continually

kindled them on to the Apostolic task, impelled them forward to preach the gospel to the infidels, to reanimate Christians crushed under barbarous invasions, to arouse to noble action degenerate souls, to elevate powerful nations, to inspire intrepid hearts, invincible to the passions of princes and to the rage of the populace, to rekindle the extinguished lamp of arts and letters, to carry everywhere the light of science and of faith.

The Roman empire had done her work and fallen, but its fall saw left on earth, that institution for the spread of which the empire was to pave the way—an institution stronger than human empires; weak in this world, but strong in the strength of God. Built on a rock; secured by the promises of the Eternal Truth, against which Paganism, Arianism, Barbarism, could never prevail; which, when Rome was crushed remained itself unconquerable. She had bowed her head to the storm, and when the surging wave of invasion had swept past, she too called forth her warriors from the north, her northern army of bishops and of priests. The Church of the living God lifted up her head and the barbarians gazed at her, admired heavenly beauty and fell down in adoration at her feet. The soldiers of one of her greatest conquerors, St. Patrick, had done more than their full share in conquering the enemies of Rome. To them we owe at least more than one century of the life of the Church and of European civilization.

Ireland, thanks to God and St. Patrick, had obtained the title of Island of Virgins, had merited to be styled Island of Confessors, but one title was wanting—she had yet to win another crown,—to become the Island of martyrs. Alone, perhaps, of all the countries of the earth, Ireland had not been baptized in the blood of her children, and in the providential designs of God the blood of Irish martyrdom was yet to become the seed of the Church.

And now I must needs come, let me say it, to the most glorious, since the cause of heroic christian triumph, and yet the most painful page of Irish history. No! it is not a page, it is a book of natural woe. To that time when princely crime and royal rivalship caused Dermott McMurragh an Irish king to sell Ireland to a hostile country. Then were forged those manacles which have bound Irish hands, but never fettered Irish hearts, from that awful moment to the present hour. Pardon me, dear brethren, if I open not, if I merely take a glance at the exterior of this book of shame. It is not for a son to pu-

blish a mother's crimes; no where do they inflict a deeper, more rankling wound than in her own child's heart. Never have I been able to bring myself to fully peruse, it is too painful even faintly to remember the sad history of Ireland's wrongs.

The stranger shall hear thy lament on his plains,
The sound of the harp shall be sent o'er the deep,
Till thy masters themselves as they rivet thy chains,
Shall pause at the song of the captive and weep.

Besides, dear brethren, this is not the place, nor does it be-
hoove the sacred character which privileges me to speak to
you to-day to harrow up past injuries. Neither would it be
a compliment to yourselves, for the Irish are a generous, and
above all a christian people, they have forgiven, they do for-
give, and it is their best wish to make every effort to forget.
The 16th, 17th and 18th centuries have procured for Ireland
the martyr's crown. They witnessed those sanguinary per-
secutions, those wholesale confiscations, those atrocious laws,
those laws of which the celebrated Burke has said "none better
fitted for the impoverishment and degradation of a people ever
proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man," monasteries,
institutions of learning were ruthlessly destroyed. The ever
faithful people assisted at mass with guards placed on distant
hills and under no other canopy than the blue vault of heaven
and yet, Ireland arose; arose, holding in her hand, grasping
more firmly than before, that cross now more dearly loved
since dyed with the purple stain of her own sons' blood.

The time of penal enactments had not yet entirely passed
away when the nation showed the strength of its faith as soon
as it was in its power to do so. The cold of winter would seem
to have destroyed all verdure, and to have deprived the earth
of its vegetating power, yet scarcely doth the spring make its
genial heat appear, when the shrubs and flowers budding forth
prove that the power was only dormant, and enables it to show
itself with greater vigor by the beauty and luxuriance of its
new productions. So with the faith of Ireland, when the day
of comparative peace and prosperity began to dawn, the num-
ber of churches and institutions of charity dotting over the land
gave clear proof of the power and strength of the faith which
had existed all the while. But another severe test was to be
applied to her fidelity, force having been tried in vain, by offers
of false patronage, efforts were made to lay hands upon that

church in which the faith of the nation was enshrined. Emancipation was offered on condition that government might obtain some influence in the nomination of bishops and the direction of the church. Then noble Ireland, her wounds yet bleeding, stood up in the whole strength of her faith, and holding up her shackled hands to heaven, swore to refuse emancipation, rather than permit any bonds to be placed on the freedom of that church which her people loved above all earthly things.

Ireland has resisted, and resisted successfully. She has come forth with glory. And yet she was never more truly grand than in that long death of centuries, or rather in that life, ever dying, yet ever fresh in life. The Irish have come forth with souls unharmed. You, dear brethren, you are my witnesses, how they have come forth from these centuries of agony, a people ever generous and ever kind. Their nationality still subsisting along with the other features of their national character, qualities which must be honored and venerated by all hearts that sympathise with whatever does honor to humanity; the love of native land, sincere and tender devotion to old habits and customs, ardent reverence for the past. These qualities of their race, these traits of their national character, they have preserved, notwithstanding the oppression of ages

Still better have they preserved with a fidelity tried in the fire, the faith of their fathers. Nothing has been able to detach them from that; indomitable in courage they have been indomitable in faith. The great apostacy which swept over Europe like an infection left Ireland untouched. While the faith of other nations went away, the sport of winds or of kings, neither heresy nor schism could find place in her. The Virgin Island preserved her virgin faith. Ireland has suffered all things save one. One only thing she has not borne, and could never bear and that is—apostacy.

I have said that the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries witnessed the hand of time place on Ireland's brow the Martyr's crown. May I not say the 19th too? Is it not martyrdom to give one's life for the faith? To die, rather than eat meat offered in homage to a false religion? Oh! on to day, when the torment and agony have been endured and are passed away, now that Heaven has been peopled anew by a conquering host, can we not glory in thinking of that heroism to which our own life times can bear a testimony? That land, which in our own day

preferred the agonizing death of hunger to the bribe of the tempter, is the same dear Ireland, the land of the martyr yet. What a victory was that of faith over the world, when the tempter entering the lowly cabin, saw the wasted skeleton form of one who, but a few weeks before, gloried in the pride of conscious manhood, viewed the companion of his life and labours stretched in death throes on the ground, the little ones yet spared, deprived of all things save life itself; the father's heart broken with grief, that noble, manly heart, that he would so gladly have changed into bread were it possible and given therewith to wife and child to eat, when the insidious voice was heard, as in the garden 6,000 years ago, "Come and eat. Come and join us and gain food and work, and health and strength, and life." Then an answer could be heard, a hoarse whisper, uttered with all possible energy, and yet with weakly bated breath issuing from a starving throat, a whisper which penetrated the very depths and made Hell tremble—for even Hell believes; a whisper which pierced the vault of Heaven and rose before the Throne of the Most High—the voice of the Saints, like the hymning of many waters—"Never will I raise my wife from her bed of straw with wages of hypocrisy; never will I clothe my children with the pay of perjury; the chalice of perjury and hypocrisy shall never touch my lips, when the price of it is the betrayal of the Cross of Christ." The Church in all the glories of her eighteen centuries past, can allege to us no more touching tribute to the faith, than Ireland has furnished in our own times.

But I must hasten on and briefly trace the glorious fruits of St. Patrick's labours in other lands. I have presumed to say that in God's design Ireland was to missionarise the British Empire and I must needs go around the globe to seek the jewels in the heavenly crown of him, some of his glories I would fain announce to day. What would have been the actual position of Catholicism in this vast English speaking world had not Ireland remained faithful to the teachings of St. Patrick? If the sister Isle had succeeded in engaging her in a revolt against the Church? The British Empire containing more than one tenth, the English speaking world one fifth, of the Catholic Episcopate of the world would have been indeed like another Russia or another China in which the priest dare hardly put his foot. England herself has she not owed much? Does she not owe very much to St. Patrick? We know that

sometime before he entered Ireland he came to Britain to preach the saving faith; that he was sent from Britain into Ireland, that for a brief space he left Ireland to have pity upon Britain; that before taking ship at Liverpool in the presence of the hundreds who accompanied him to the coast to manifest their gratitude, to receive the blessing of one to whom they owed so much, he erected a cross as a lasting remembrance, a cross which for centuries did bear his name. And I have often thought that, there invested with that prophetic light which God has given to many of his Saints, viewing into the future, he implored the blessing of the Almighty, the remembrance of the cross, for those of that nation he bore the nearest to his heart and with whom he was to spend his life, who in years to come should in the decrees of God, sail from that same port to other lands to bear with them that faith which he was taking ship to preach. We know what great things he did in the Isle of Man. That on his return from Rome he yet took Britain on his way and established many monasteries there. This is what England has owed him in the past, but is this all England owes to him? No! God forbid! There is no English Catholic heart that clings not with the greatest gratitude and fondness to the memory of him whose festival we celebrate to-day.

Glance at Great Britain as she is. What a change within the past few years! How is it that the Catholic population is increasing about four times as fast as the general population? That since 1849 there has been an increase of about ninety per cent in the number of clergy and of churches? That in 1867 seventy-six new churches were built in England? Fifty years ago in 1779 there were in England but thirty-five churches and private oratories, no convents, no monasteries and but 100 priests; and in 1868 England has an Archbishop, 12 Bishops, 1283 churches, 1639 Priests, 227 convents, 67 monasteries and 21 colleges and preparatory schools. Is not the secret to be found chiefly in the fact that a large part of the population of England and Wales are natives of Ireland, that their children born in England are tabulated as English, that there is an annual emigration of about 18000. To whom are due the fine churches to be seen growing up in the large cities? In a great measure to the Irish Catholics. It is true that within the past 25 years upwards of 59 churches have been erected by English converts at their own expence, besides doubtless

large contributions to others in course of erection—but what is this to the vast number built? If England has made fast advances in the faith; if Archbishop Manning has received during the past year in London alone 1000 into the one fold, if Catholicity is known and respected is it not due in a great measure to the Irish people. And if it is true that a considerable number of England's sons are now Catholics and are devoting heart and soul to carry on the work, yet, under God, the glory and the praise is due to those who have borne and who are bearing the burden and the heat of the day. And an English Catholic would be the last to refuse that meed of acknowledgement which is so justly due. If many of her best geniuses have been converted yet this would be like so many green spots in the desert, beautiful indeed, but only serving to show forth in darker colors the depths of the desolation by which they are surrounded. And to what cause are those conversions due? Chiefly to the power of prayer, especially to the prayers of the children of the slave of Melcho, of that great saint whose festival we celebrate to-day, who whilst performing the most menial offices, "when" as he tells us "saying a hundred prayers by day and almost as many by night, when he rose and prayed in the frost and snow and rain with the spirit of God warm in him" prayed for the conversion of those who had forced him away from home, comfort and friends; that prayer which his children have learned from him; that prayer of Jesus, desolate, persecuted, agonizing on the cross "Father forgive them;" that prayer for those who have injured us, which obtains swiftest audience at the throne of God; the prayer of those in whom the spirit of Jesus and St. Patrick lives, uttered so often in ages past and now again to-day which has brought the Mannings, Spencers, Newmans back to save England at last, and obtain of God in mercy her conversion, for fifty just are left.

A new empire is rising in Australia, and in it are 500,000 Catholics, an Archbishop, seven Bishops, Convents of Sisters of Mercy, Asylums, Monasteries, Colleges and Schools. The Church is already there on more than an equal footing with other denominations. The first sight that meets the eye on nearing Victoria, is Emerald hill and on its summit an Asylum. Like some of the old Irish Abbeys erected along the sea shore by Catholic piety as a refuge for ship-wrecked mariners, it forms the shelter of many a child who otherwise would be lost in that vast oceanic world. In the British possessions in continental Africa, the Irish Catholics hold their own. In India with its 20 Bishops, 900 Priests, and so in all the British possessions. And to whom is this due? I say it with gra-

titude, almost alone to Irish faith, to Irish arms, and Irish faithful hearts.

And what shall I say of this great continent on which we are? In Lower Canada, we owe the foundation of this work to another nation's faith. What you have done to further it dear brethren, I need not speak, though it is proudly present to my mind to-day, it is known unto yourselves; its memory is treasured up in the eternal mind of Him who alone can mention, can give the fit reward, that reward so rich that of it no human lips can speak. That the foundation is due to another nation's faith is, as it were, a fresh joy to you to St. Patrick's fellow country men, to St. Patrick's native land. That land which has sent out so many glorious missionaries foremost among whom is our great Saint. That land which shares with Ireland her own glorious mission. Ireland and France—two apostolic nations given by God to the world. By a different dispensation of the Deity, France has been prosperous and potent, and Ireland has lived for ages under the shadow of the cross, has borne on her brow only the crown of her sorrows, and has been made more conformable to the likeness of Him whose earthly crown was one of thorns. Yet be their devotedness to the cause of Christ they have ever known any loved each other as sisters. France has ever had the glory of having Irish priests in her land, sometimes in her hierarchy, and Ireland has never been without a French priest upon her soil. The French priests have ever felt an instinctive love for the Irish priest, and the Irish for the French. Faith is the bond which binds Irish and French hearts as one; the victory which does away with all uncatholic feelings of nationality.

And for the rest of this vast northern continent, the other vast British possessions, the immense territory beyond the limits of our Dominion in every town and settlement of which, what is, is due to the children of him who are celebrating to-day in the largest city, and in the lowest hamlet the memory of the great one whom we all so dearly love. That vast Republic which fifty years ago had but one bishop, sixty-eight priests, and eighty churches and missionary stations, and now has sixty-one bishops, two thousand five hundred priests, and nearly four thousand churches and stations, and a Catholic population of five million and a-half; ask of the lips of every bishop and priest you meet, they whose "lips keep truth and are to utter knowledge," let them be Irish, French, German, of what nationality you will, ask who has ministered to his wants? Who has built these numberless churches, colleges, asylums, hospitals, schools? Their answer is but one. It manifests, I think, the fulfilment of the decrees of God. It is "the children of St. Patrick."

The feast of Ireland's patron Saint is truly the feast of faith. There is not a page in the history of Ireland, however dark and disastrous in other respects, that is not brightened by the heroic fortitude, the generous self-sacrifice, the perseverance which has been exhibited in the defence and propagation of the faith. Its memorials are to be found on her mountain tops and in the depths of her valleys, not the less because inseparably linked with the holiest affections of a persecuted people, nor the less enduring because crimsoned in the blood of her martyrs. The verdure for which Ireland is famed springs from grass rich with the bones of the saints of God. Those that now walk on it are but a handful to those who sleep beneath its surface, who have passed to the eternal re-

sence of Him who has said "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

They who have hitherto been alone faithful, found among the faithless; who have presented to the world an example of unflinching constancy of attachment to much valued truth, to principles dearer than life itself; who endured the most galling civil disabilities rather than compromise its principles or endanger its purity, a spectacle of constancy on the part of a whole nation such as the world has never seen. They and their descendants—all children of St. Patrick—wherever they go, plant the saving cross of Christ. Thanks be to them for it, this sign ever designates the extreme boundaries of civilized life. Thanks be to them for it, the banner of the cross is borne by loving hearts and sturdy arms into lands just known, and is gleaming aloft yet more surely than before where it seemed as if trampled into dust. The Emerald Isle, old Ireland is to-day the brightest jewel in the Church's crown. Over the entire face of the globe, the Church beholds not a people, more devoted to Catholic unity, to that Holy Roman Church which is its immoveable centre. Ireland has ever been attached by the cords of faith and love to Rome and Rome to Ireland. May it ever be so! It was formerly the pride of her prosperity; it has been the consolation of her sorrows; and now brighter days are dawning on her, may her deathless attachment to the most sacred of principles and her generous devotion in the noblest works of her charity form the glory of Ireland's future history, as they have been the brightest record of her past. It is the favor I ask of God for Ireland through the intercession of St. Patrick, the sound of whose voice has gone forth unto the earth, and whose words have reached the ends of the whole world. It is the blessing for Ireland which is wished also, and especially on to-day, by another priest on earth, by the great successor of Celestine whose long pontificate furnishes proofs how he has cherished Ireland and her sons, entitled by himself "his ever faithful and most dearly beloved people." To-day he has traversed the streets of Rome, and entering the Church of St. Agatha in the vestry room of which is securely kept the silver urn containing the sleeping dust of O'Connell's golden heart; the earthly father of the world, now in the glorious autumn of his life, has lifted up his hands in blessing Ireland, in thanks to God for all he granted to St. Patrick, in prayer, that that zeal for faith, that faith which is the bond uniting man to God, and should also unite man to fellow-man, may ever be kept alive in Irish hearts and Irish homes.

This blessing God's angels have borne on every clime and it has reached ourselves. A blessing which, will you, dear brethren, but crush out that spirit of division—bear in mind and heart the Shamrock the symbol of most perfect union,—will bring you peace and prosperity in this life and in the world to come that everlasting rest and joy the sure heritage of the true children of the Cross.—AMEN.

Note.—We trust our readers will not think it ill that we omitted all other matter to give the foregoing discourse in full.

Imprimatur, Jos. Thom., Bishop of Ottawa.