

THE GOSPEL OF TOLERATION.

Eloquent Oration Pronounced by Rev. Father Ryan at St. Patrick's Night Entertainment.

Interesting Glimpses into Ireland's Past and Lessons to Draw Therefrom.

"A GLIMPSE OF THE DAYS THAT ARE OVER."

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Were it not that I felt a certain obligation rested on me as an Irishman to accept the invitation extended to me by the Ancient Order of Hibernians, to briefly address you this evening—an invitation supplemented by the wish of your pastor—the pleasant task of so doing might have devolved on someone more gifted than I can claim to be in the art of pleasing a St. Patrick's night audience.

Yet, though time was limited and

the Irish.

Time was, ladies and gentlemen, when the land we celebrate tonight in song and story was strong in the mighty strength of her fearless rulers, and her hillsides and valleys safe in the peace that strength ensured—were dotted with the schools and monasteries of learning that made her name, in the dark gloom of illiteracy that like a pall covered the rest of Europe, shine by contrast with a more intense brilliance. From East and West, North and South, all sorts and conditions of men came to receive from Irish masters the knowledge of the hospitable shores of Erin to re-

accomplished his object, and to this day our poverty stricken country bears eloquently sad testimony of his success.

For us who are of the old land born, or descendants of her sorrowing exiles, one bright ray of gladdening cheer illumines the dark years of Erin's past—time, and a fervent "God love them" heartfelt and tender as the soft winds of her own native clime ascends to God's own throne for the martyred dead who preserved for us that "Pearl beyond Price"—the Gift of Faith—as pure and unsullied as in the days when Patrick himself trod her holy soil.

I need hardly tell you ladies and gentlemen, that Ireland is nothing if not Catholic. Take away the Faith, and you destroy at the same time Ireland's nationality, for the two are inseparably entwined one cannot subsist without the other. Aye, every nook and cranny of Erin's soil, "Every rock that you pass by" every nook and corner of Erin's soil is a land mark of the Faith, and therefore we could not well be other than we are.

While Ireland herself is essentially Catholic, so much so that the words Irish and Catholic are generally accepted as synonymous terms—As even Mr. Birrell, the present chief secretary for Ireland, confessed on his introduction of the defeated Home Rule bill last year, in speaking in the Imperial parliament on the Irish University clause—yet a small proportion of our fellow countrymen are Protestant, and good, wholesome, hearty, kindly Protestants at that.

In the days that we are recalling, under the infamous regime that confiscated our churches, pauperized our Sires and depleted our population, it was the policy of the government to antagonize the Catholics, to breathe dissensions between Catholic and Protestant Irishmen. Alas! with too great success. But when our fellow countrymen realized the purpose of this policy, sinking their religious differences in the common cause of Motherland, like brothers should, shoulder to shoulder they stood together in defence of their native land.

It was a happy day for that distracted land when the Orange and Green, whose colors so well harmonize, blended together in a common cause.

No names more resplendent adorn the pages of Irish history than those of her Protestant children, and what names they are to conjure with: Curran, Wolfstone, Isaac Butt, Grattan, Robert Emmet, and what a varied, chequered story is interwoven with their lives.

Grattan? Oh what a lesson his life teaches us of toleration and kindly feeling and noble endeavor. As Madhew in his Memoirs of him writes, so I say to you tonight, "If you are an Irish Protestant and entertain harsh feelings against your Catholic fellow countrymen, study the works and life of Grattan—learn from him to look upon all your countrymen with a loving heart, to be tolerant of infirmities caused by their unhappy history, and like Grattan earnestly sympathize with all that is brave and generous in their character. If you are an Irish Catholic, and that you confound the Protestant religion with tyranny, learn from Grattan that it is possible to be a Protestant and yet have a heart for Ireland and its people. Think that one of the brightest pages in Irish history was when Grattan, a steady Protestant, raised it to the hour of his triumph, he did not forget the state of your oppressed fathers, but labored through his virtuous life that both you and your children should enjoy unshackled liberty of conscience. But whether you be Catholic or Protestant and whatever be your party, you will do well as an Irishman to ponder upon the spirit and principles which governed the public and private life of Grattan. Learn from him how to regard your countrymen of all denominations. Observe, as he did, how very much that is excellent belongs to both the great

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parties into which Ireland is divided, and should you entertain dispiriting views of Ireland recollect that any country containing such elements as those which roused the genius of Grattan never need despair."

Whilst these brilliant Irishmen in their time fought for social equality and liberty of conscience, it would ill-become us to pass him without a word who stands pre-eminent in Irish history, and who in his day did so much for the land of his love—Daniel O'Connell. The Liberator. Physically and intellectually a giant—one who "among ten thousand, a stranger's eye would at once have fixed on, as the King". So majestic grand was he—the work he did for Ireland was in keeping with that splendid physique and towering train. Time, however, is wanting in which to say more on the subject of O'Connell than this, that though taunted by his enemies as the means of spreading dissensions among his people, no man worked harder to pacify the divergent elements of Creed, and his own words which I will bear testimony to his sense of fair play and freedom from intolerance.

Speaking on the repeal of the Union and phantom raised by the English government that the repeal would be followed by sectarian animosity he addressed to his fellow countrymen these noble words:

"Men of Ireland! Your duty is to conduct yourselves so as to obliterate every such apprehension. Exert yourselves unremittently to exhibit kindness, affection, conciliation and cordiality towards persons of all sects and of every persuasion."

Let us leave the settlement of our religious differences to grace, to the merits of the adorable Redeemer.

Irishmen, the more Christian qualities you exhibit, the more Christian clarity you display, the more moral virtues you practise, the more proximity, to the mercies of God, to the found is your piety before the throne of your Redeemer, the more shall you advance the moral and civil liberties of your native land.

It is a blessed consolation patriotism and religion run in the same channel; and if all Irishmen were to-morrow practical Christians their legislative independence, fraught with every blessing and every prosperity would at once burst with renewed existence amidst the joyful acclamation of all.

As in the days of these giants of thought and forceful action in their country's cause, so it has always been among the leaders of the Irish whether Catholic or Protestant—a spirit of kindly toleration and respect each for the others religious convictions has ever characterized them.

Smaller minds, it is true, among both parties, are apt to forget these lessons of Christian forbearance, and it sometimes happens too, that feel-

(Continued on third page.)

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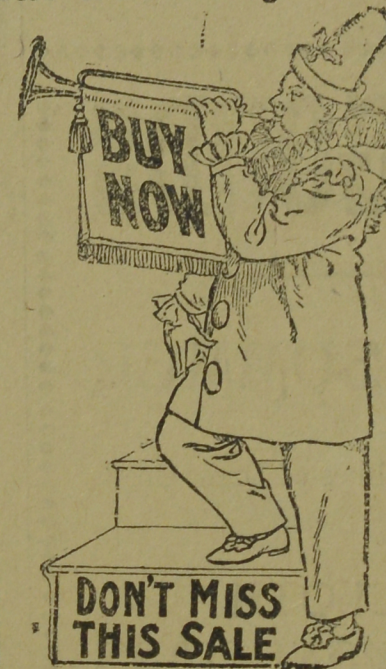
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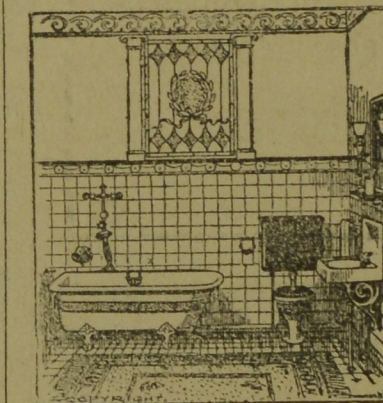
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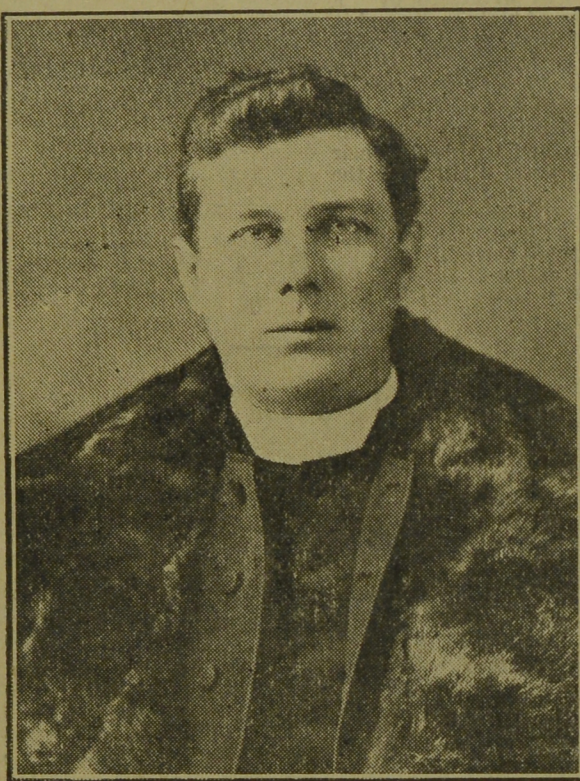
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the experience a novel and unique one for me, I resolved to trust myself to your tender mercies and so relieve my conscience of a refusal that as an Irishman, I might afterwards regret.

At home and abroad, on this the National Festival of Ireland, Irish men and women are gathered together to commemorate the sorrows and joys, disasters and glories of the sainted land amid whose green hills and gleens their young years were spent, and beside them, equally enthused, equally happy in listening to the story of the Memorial Past—sit the stalwart descendants of her exiles. Now it is a right and laudable thing, Ladies and Gentlemen, for the children of the Gael wherever they may be on this day beyond all others dear to their hearts

"To bring the days of Glory back, Ere yet the Emerald Gem Illumined with purest, richest ray The strangers Diadem."

because in this era of so called advanced thought and activity when all that life holds most sacred is apt to be involved in the vortex of insatiable greed and ambition. "A glimpse of the Days that are over" is an incentive, not alone to patriotic endeavor but to the conservation of all that is noble and upright in the Irish nature, for who "looking back through the mists of centuries, to a better realization of his own duties towards God, towards his country and his fellow men?"

As is said of those who remain unmoved by the touching melodies of their native land—that music now so sweet and sad and low and lonely, and anon so thrillingly vibrant in the effervescing Celtic humor and spirit. "Cold, cold must the heart be and void of emotion That loves not the music of Erin go Bragh."

So too can it be said of those whose hearts beat not responsive to the story of Ireland—that they are but sorry specimens of a grand old race.

Why should we be behind any other of the races of Celtic origin in proclaiming our love of country and our pride and glory in that country's history, for where beneath the broad expanse of heaven's dome, and I speak without fear of correction, is there to be found a lovelier home, a grander history, and harder, braver purer, warmer hearted people than

ledge denied them at home, and the unparalleled spectacle was presented to a wondering world of thousands, aye tens of thousands of strangers of all nations and tribes and tongues and peoples living together in brotherly love—rivals only in their thirst for the acquisition of learning.

It was the golden epoch of her history, an age when her saints and scholars carried their faith and their knowledge to far distant lands, and when at home hand and hand with science walked Christian chivalry and virtue—an age tritely and beautifully depicted by our own gifted poet. I listen to him but a moment and picture to yourselves the magic charm of those golden days of old in the land of your sires:

"Rich and rare were the gems she wore And a snow white wand in her hand she bore But Oh! her beauty was far beyond Her sparkling gems or her snow white wand!"

Lady, dost thou not fear to stray So lone and lovely through this bleak way, Are Erin's Sons so good or so cold As not to be tempted by woman or gold?"

Sir Knight, I fear not the least alarm, No son of Erin shall offer me harm For though they love woman and golden store Sir Knight, they love honor and virtue more.

On she went and her maiden smile In safety lighted her round the green isle, And best forever was she who relied On Erin's honor and Erin's pride.

But the days of innocence and peace and earthly glory were not to be always her portion here below. A shadow loomed up on the horizon of her prosperity, and all too soon, though it had lasted three hundred years, the era of happiness set in a sea of ever-revolving sorrow.

The stranger then came to Dublin to "disorder" in the lapse of time and he wars and means which it is not my purpose to touch on tonight.