

St Aiden's Homeschool



The Saint Patrick of Ancient Ages.

St Patrick

By Heman White Chaplin

Digitally reconstructed by Donnette E Davis

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SAINT PATRICK

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Contents

[I.](#)

[II.](#)

[III.](#)

[IV.](#)

I.

One of the places which they point out on Ship Street is the Italian fruit-shop on the corner of Perry Court, before the door of which, six years ago, Guiseppe Cavagnaro, bursting suddenly forth in pursuit of Martin Lavezzo, stabbed him in the back, upon the sidewalk. "All two" of them were to blame, so the witnesses said; but Cavagnaro went to prison for fifteen years. That was the same length of time, as it happened, that the feud had lasted.

Nearly opposite is Sarah Ward's New Albion dance-hall. It opens directly from the street. There is an orchestra of three pieces, one of which plays in tune. That calm and collected woman whom you may see rocking in the window, or sitting behind the bar, sewing or knitting, is not a city missionary, come to instruct the women about her; it is Sarah Ward, the proprietress. She knows the Bible from end to end. She was a Sunday-school teacher once; she had a class of girls; she spoke in prayer-meetings; she had a framed Scripture motto in her chamber, and she took the Teachers' Lesson Quarterly; she visited the sick; she prayed in secret for her scholars' conversion. How she came to change her views of life nobody knows,—that is to say, not everybody knows. And still she is honest. It is her pride that sailors are not drugged and robbed in the New Albion.

A few doors below, and on the same side of the street, is the dance-hall that was Bose King's-. It is here that pleasure takes on its most sordid aspect. If you wish to see how low a white woman can fall, how coarse and offensive a negro man can be, you will come here. There is an inscription on the bar, in conspicuous letters,—"Welcome Home."

By day it is comparatively still in Ship Street. Women with soulless faces loll stolidly in the open ground-floor windows. There are few customers in the bar-rooms; here and there two or three idlers shake for drinks. Policemen stroll listlessly about, and have little to do. But at nightfall there is a change; the scrape of fiddles, the stamp of boot-heels, is heard from the dance-halls. Oaths and boisterous laughter everywhere strike the ear. Children, half-clad, run loose at eleven o'clock. Two policemen at a corner interrogate a young man who is hot and excited and has no hat. He admits that he saw three men run from the alley-way and saw the sailor come staggering out

after them, but he does not know who the men were. The policemen "take him in," on suspicion.

It is here that the Day-Star Mission has planted itself. Its white flag floats close by the spot where Martin Lavezzo fell, with the long knife between his shoulder-blades. Its sign of welcome is in close rivalry with the harsh strains from Sarah Ward's and the lighted stairway to Bose King's saloon. It stands here, isolated and strange, an unbidden guest. It is a protest, a reproof, a challenge, an uplifted finger.

But while, to a casual glance, the Day-Star Mission is all out of place, it has, nevertheless, its following. On Monday and Thursday afternoons a troop of black-eyed, jet-haired Portuguese women, half of whom are named Mary Jesus, flock in to a sewing-school. On Tuesdays and Fridays American, Scotch, and Irish women, from the tenement-houses of the quarter, fill the settees, to learn the use of the needle, to enjoy a little peace, and to hear reading and singing; and occasionally the general public of the vicinity are invited to an entertainment.

It was a February afternoon; at the Mission building the board were in monthly session. The meeting had been a spirited one. A proposition to amend the third line of the fourth by-law, entitled "Decorum in the Hall," by inserting the word "smoking," had been debated and had prevailed. A proposition to buy a new mangle for the laundry had been defeated, it having been humorously suggested that the women could mangle each other. Other matters of interest had been considered.

Finally, as the hour for adjournment drew near, a proposition was brought forth, appropriate to the season. Saint Patrick's Day was approaching. It was to many a day of temptation, particularly in the evening. Would it not be a good plan to hold out the helping hand, in the form of a Saint Patrick's Day festival, with an address, for example, upon Saint Patrick's life, with Irish songs and Irish readings? Such an entertainment would draw; it would keep a good many people out of the saloons. Such was the suggestion.

The proposition excited no little interest. Ladies who had begun to put on their wraps sat down again. To one of the board, a clergyman, who had lately been lecturing on "Popery the People's Peril," the proposition was startling. It looked toward the breaking down of all barriers; it gave Romanism an outright recognition. Another member, a produce-man, understood,—in fact he had read in his denominational weekly,—that Saint Patrick could be demonstrated to have been a Protestant, and he suggested

that that fact might be "brought out." Others viewed the matter in that humorous light in which this festival day commonly strikes the American mind.

The motion prevailed. Even the anti-papistic clergyman was comforted, apparently, at last, for he was heard to whisper jocosely to his left-hand neighbour: "Saint Patrick's Day in the Morning!"

A committee, with the produce-man at the head, was appointed to select a speaker, and to provide music and reading. It was suggested that perhaps Mr. Wakeby and Mrs. Wilson-Smith would volunteer, if urged,—their previous charities in this direction had made them famous in the neighbourhood. Mr. Wakeby to read from "Handy Andy;" Mrs. Wilson-Smith to sing "Kathleen Mavourneen,"—there would not be standing-room!

So finally unanimity prevailed, and with unanimity, enthusiasm.

The committee met, and the details were settled. The chairman quietly reserved to himself, by implication, the choice of a speaker. He knew that it would be an audience hard to hold. The occasion demanded a man of peculiar gifts. Such a man, he said to himself, he knew.

II.

The single meeting-house of L—— stands on the main street, with its tall spire and its two tiers of gray-blinded windows. Beside it is the mossy burial-ground, where prim old ladies walk on Sunday afternoons, with sprigs of sweet-william.

Across the street, and a little way down the road, is the square white house with a hopper-roof, which an elderly, childless widow, departing this life some forty years ago, thoughtfully left behind her for a parsonage. It is a pleasant, home-like house, open to sun and air, and the pleasantest of all its rooms is the minister's study. It is an upper front chamber, with windows to the east and the south. There is nothing in the room of any value; but whether the minister is within, or is away and is represented only by his palm-leaf dressing-gown, somehow the spirit of peace seems always to abide there.

There is the ancient desk, which the minister's children, when they were little, used to call the "omnibus," by reason of a certain vast and capacious drawer, the resort of all homeless

things,—nails, wafers, the bed-key, curtain-fixtures, carpet-tacks, and dried rhubarb. Perhaps it was to this drawer that the minister's daughter lately referred, when she said that the true motto was, "One place for everything, and everything in that one place."

Over the chimney-piece hangs a great missionary map, showing the stations of the different societies, with a key at one side. This blue square in Persia denotes a missionary post of the American Board of Commissioners; that red cross in India is an outpost of a Presbyterian missionary society; this green diamond in Arrapatam marks a station of the Free Church Missionary Union. As one looks the map over, he seems to behold the whole missionary force at work. He sees, in imagination, Mr. Elmer Small, from Augusta, Maine, preaching predestination to a company of Karens, in a house of reeds, and the Rev. Geo. T. Wood, from Massachusetts, teaching Paley in Roberts College at Constantinople.

Thus the whole Christian world lies open before you.

Pinned up on one of the doors is the Pauline Chart. Have you never seen the Pauline Chart? It was prepared in coloured inks, by Mr. Parker, a theological student with a turn for penmanship, and lithographed, and was sold by him to eke out the avails of what are inaptly termed "supplies." You would find it exceedingly convenient. It shows in a tabulated form, for ready reference, the incidents of Saint Paul's career, arranged chronologically. Thus you can find at a glance the visit to Berea, the stoning at Lystra, or the tumult at Ephesus. Its usefulness is obvious. Over the desk is a map of the Holy Land, with mountain elevations.

The walls of the room are for the most part hidden by books. The shelves are simple affairs of stained maple, covered heavily with successive coats of varnish, cracked, as is that of the desk, by age and heat. The contents are varied. Of religious works there are the Septuagint, in two fat little blue volumes, like Roman candles; Conant's Genesis; Hodge on Romans; Hackett on Acts, which the minister's small children used to spell out as "Jacket on Acts;" Knott on the Fallacies of the Antinomians; A Tour in Syria; Dr. Grant and the Mountain Nestorians, and six Hebrew Lexicons, singed by fire,—a paternal inheritance.

There are a good many works, too, of general literature, but rather oddly selected, as will happen where one makes up his library chiefly by writing book-notices: Peter Bayne's Essays; Coleridge; the first volume of Masson's Life of Milton; Vanity Fair; the Dutch Republic; the Plurality of Worlds; and Mommsen's Rome. That very attractive book in red you need

not take down; it is only the history of Norwalk, Conn., with the residence of J. T. Wales, Esq., for a frontispiece; the cover is all there is to it. Finally, there are two shelves of Patent Office Reports, and Perry's Expedition to Japan with a panoramic view of Yeddo. This shows that the minister has numbered a congressman among his flock.

It is here that Dr. Parsons is diligently engaged, this cold March afternoon, to the music of his crackling air-tight stove. He is deeply absorbed in his task, and we may peep in and not disturb him. He has a large number of books spread out before him; but looking them over, we miss Lange's Commentaries, Bengel's Gnomon, Cobb on Galatians,—those safe and sound authorities always provided with the correct view.

The books which lie before the Doctor seem all to deal with a Romish Saint, and, of all the saints in the world, Saint Patrick. In full sight of his own steeple, from which the bell is even now counting out the sixty-nine years of a good brother just passed away in hope of a Protestant heaven,—tolling out the years for the village housewives, who pause and count; under such hallowing influences,—beneath, as it were, the very shadow of the Missionary Map and the Pauline Chart, and with a gray Jordan rushing down through a scarlet Palestine directly before him, suggestive of all good things; with Knott on the Fallacies at his right hand, and with Dowling on Romanism on his left, the Doctor is actually absorbed in Papistical literature. Here are the works of Dr. Lanigan and Father Colgan and Monseigneur Moran. Here is the "Life and Legends of Saint Patrick," illustrated, with a portrait in gilt of Brian Boru on the cover. Here are the Tripartite Life, in Latin, and the saint's Confession, and the Epistle to Co-roiticus, the Ossianic Poems, and Miss Cusack's magnificent quarto, which the Doctor has borrowed from the friendly priest at the factory village four miles away, who borrowed it from the library of the Bishop to lend to him.

Perhaps you have never undertaken to prepare a life of Saint Patrick. If so, you have no idea of the difficulties of the task. In the first place, you must settle the question whether Saint Patrick ever existed. And this is a disputed point; for while there are those, like Father Colgan, whose clear faith accepts Saint Patrick just as he stands in history and tradition, yet, on the other hand, there are sceptics, like Ledwick, who contend that the saint is nothing but a prehistoric myth, floating about in the imagination of the Irish people.

Having settled to your satisfaction that Patrick really lived, you must next proceed to fix the date of his birth; and here you enter upon complicated calculations. You will probably

decide to settle first, as a starting-point, the date of the saint's escape from captivity; and to do this you will have to reconcile the fact that after the captivity he paid a friendly visit to his kinsman, Saint Martin of Tours, who died in 397, with the fact that he was not captured until 400.

Next you will come to the matter of the saint's birthplace; and this is a delicate question, for you will have to decide between the claims of Ireland, of Scotland, and of France; and you will very probably find yourself finally driven to the conclusion—for the evidence points that way—that Saint Patrick was a Frenchman.

Next comes the question of the saint's length of days; and if you attempt to include only the incidents of his life of which there can be no possible doubt, you will stretch his age on until you will probably fix it at one hundred and twenty years.

But when you have settled the existence, the date of birth, and the nationality of Saint Patrick, you are still only upon the threshold of your inquiries; for you next find before you for examination a vast variety of miracles, accredited to him, which you must examine, weeding out such as are puerile and are manifestly not well established, and retaining such as are proved to your satisfaction. You will be struck at once with the novel and interesting character of some of them. Prince Caradoc was changed into a wolf. An Irish magician who opposed the saint was swallowed by the earth as far as his ears, and then, on repentance, was instantly cast forth and set free. An Irish pagan, dead and long buried, talked freely with the saint from out his turf-covered grave, and charitably explained where a certain cross belonged which had been set by mistake over him. The saint was captured once, and was exchanged for a kettle, which thenceforth froze water over the fire instead of boiling it, until the saint was sent back and the kettle returned. Ruain, son of Cucnamha, Amhalgaidh's charioteer, was blind. He went in haste to meet Saint Patrick, to be healed. Mignag laughed at him. "My troth," said Patrick, "it would be fit that you were the blind one." The blind man was healed and the seeing one was made blind; Roi-Ruain is the name of the place where this was done. Patrick's charioteer was looking for his horses in the dark, and could not find them; Patrick lifted up his hand; his five fingers illuminated the place like five torches, and the horses were found.

You see that one has a good deal to go through who undertakes to prepare a life of Saint Patrick.

But our thoughts have wandered from Dr. Parsons. He has gathered the books before him with great pains, from public

and private libraries, and he religiously meant to make an exhaustive study of them all; but sermons and parish calls and funerals, and that little affair of Mrs. Samuel Nute, have forced him, by a process of which we all know something, to forego his projected subsoil ploughing and make such hasty preparation as he can.

He has read the Confession and the Epistle to Coroticus, and he has glanced over the "Life and Legends," reading in a cursory way of the leper's miraculous voyage; of the fantastic snow; of the tombstone that sailed the seas; of the two trout that Patrick left to live forever in a well,—

*"The two inseparable trout,
Which would advance against perpetual streams,
Without obligation, without transgression—
Angels will be along with them in it."*

And being very fond of pure water himself, the Doctor is touched by Patrick's lament when far away from the well Uaran-gar:—

*"Uaran-gar, Uaran-gar!
O well, which I have loved, which loved me!
Alas! my cry, O my dear God,
That my drink is not from the pure well of Uaran-gar!"*

But finally he has settled down, as most casual students will, to the sincere and charming little sketch by William Bullen Morris,—*"Saint Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland."* He is reading it now by the east window, holding the book at arm's-length, as is his wont.

The theme is new to him. There opens up a fresh and interesting field. The dedication of the little book strikes his imagination: *"To the Members of the Confraternity of Saint Patrick, established at the London Oratory, who, with the children of the saint in many lands, are the enduring witnesses of the faith which seeth Him who is invisible."*

He is interested in the motto on the title-page,—*"En un mot, on y voit beaucoup le caractère de S. Paul,"* and in the authorization,—*"Nihil obstat. E. S. Keagh, Cong. Orat."* *"Imprimatur, + Henricus Eduardus, Card."*

The Doctor looks through the book in order. First, the introduction; and here he considers the questions—First, was there in fact such a man as Saint Patrick? Second, what was his nationality? Third, when was he born: and, herein, does the date of his escape from captivity conflict with the date of his visit to his kinsman, Saint Martin of Tours? Fourth, to what age

did he live? Fifth, where and by whom was he converted? Sixth, are his miracles authentic? and so forth.

After this introductory study the book takes up the saint's life in connected order. Patrick was the son of a Roman decurio. From his earliest days wonders attended him. When he was an infant, and was about to be baptized, it happened that no water was to be had for the sacrament; whereupon, at the sign of the cross, made by the priest with the infant's hand upon the earth, a fountain gushed forth from the ground, and the priest, who was blind, anointing his own eyes with the water, received his sight.

As Patrick grew older, wonders multiplied. He came as an apostle of the faith to Strangford Lough. Dichu, the prince of that province, forewarned by the Druids, raised his sword at Patrick; but instantly his hand was fixed in the air, as if carved of stone; then light came to Dichu's soul, and from a foe he became a loving disciple.

Then comes the story of the fast upon the mountain. It was on the height ever since called Cruachan Patrick, which looks to the north upon Clew Bay, and to the west on the waters of the Atlantic. It was Shrove Saturday, a year and a little more from the apostle's first landing in Ireland. Already he had carried the gospel from the eastern to the western sea. But his spirit longed for the souls of the whole Irish nation. Upon the mountain he knelt in prayer, and as he prayed, his faith and his demands assumed gigantic proportions. An angel came down and addressed him. God could not grant his requests, the message ran, they were too great. "Is that his decision?" asked Patrick. "It is," said the angel. "It may be his," said Patrick, "it is not mine; for my decision is not to leave this cruachan until my demands are granted."

The angel departed. For forty days and forty nights Patrick fasted and prayed amid sore temptations. The blessing must fall upon all his poor people of Erin. As he prayed, he wept, and his cowl was drenched with his tears.

At last the angel returned and proposed a compromise. The vast Atlantic lay before them. Patrick might have as many souls as would cover its expanse as far as his eyes could reach. But he was not satisfied with that; his eyes, he said, could not reach very far over those heaving waters; he must have, in addition, a multitude vast enough to cover the land that lay between him and the sea. The angel yielded, and now bade him leave the mountain. But Patrick would not. "I have been tormented," he said, "and I must be gratified; and unless my prayers are granted I will not leave this cruachan while I live; and after my death there shall be here a care-taker for me."

The angel departed. Patrick went to his offering.

At evening the angel returned. "How am I answered?" asked Patrick. "Thus," said the angel: "all creatures, visible and invisible, including the Twelve Apostles, have entreated for thee,—and they have obtained. Strike thy bell and fall upon thy knees: for the blessing shall be on all Erin, both living and dead." "A blessing on the bountiful King that hath given," said Patrick; "now will I leave the cruachan."

It was on Holy Thursday that he came down from the mountain and returned to his people.

III.

One afternoon at about this time you might have seen Mr. Cole, the missionary of the Day-Star,—a small, lithe man, with a red beard,—making his way up town. He walked rapidly, as he always did, for he was a busy man.

He was an exceedingly busy man. During the past year, as was shown by his printed report, he had made 2,014 calls, or five and one-half calls a day; he had read the Scriptures in families 792 times; he had distributed 931,456 pages of religious literature; he had conversed on religious topics with 3,918 persons, or ten and seven-tenths persons per day, Sabbaths included. It was perhaps because he was so busy that there was complaint sometimes that he mixed matters and took things upon his shoulders which belonged to others.

Mr. Cole's rapid pace soon brought him to a broad and pleasant cross-street; he went up the high steps of one of the houses, rang the bell, and was admitted.

Rev. Mr. Martin was in his study, and the missionary was shown up. Precisely what the conversation was has not been reported; but certain it is that the next day after Mr. Cole's call, Mr. Martin began to prepare himself for an address upon the life of Saint Patrick. It was an entirely new topic to him; but he soon found himself in the full current of the stream, considering—First, did such a man really exist, or is Saint Patrick a mere myth, floating in the imagination of the Irish people? Second, what was his nationality? Third, where was he born, and, herein, how are we to reconcile his escape from captivity in 493, with his visit to his kinsman, Saint Martin of Tours, after his escape from captivity, in 490? Fourth, to what age did he live? Fifth,—and so forth.

Mr. Martin had begun his labours by taking down his encyclopaedia and such books of reference as he had thought could help him, and had succeeded so far as to get an outline of the saint's life, and to find mention of several works which treated of this topic. There were Montalembert's "Monks of the West," and Dr. O'Donovan's "Annals of the Four Masters," the works of Monseigneur Moran and Father Colgan, the Tripartite Life, and a certain "magnificent quarto" by Miss Cusack. All these and many more he had hoped to find in the different libraries of the city. But great had been his surprise, on visiting the libraries, to find that the books he wanted were invariably out. It was a little startling, at first, to come upon this footprint in the sand; but a little reflection set the feeling at rest. The subject was an odd one to him, to be sure, but there were thousands of people in the city who might very naturally be concerned in it, particularly at this time, when Saint Patrick's Day was approaching. None the less the fact remained that the books he wanted—scattered through two or three libraries—were always out.

As he stepped out from the Free Library into the street, it occurred to him to go to a Catholic bookstore near at hand to look for what he wanted.

It was a large, showy shop, with Virgins and crucifixes and altar candelabra's in the windows, and pictures of bleeding hearts. He went in and stood at the counter. A rosy-faced servant-girl, with a shy, pleased expression, was making choice of a rosary. A young priest, a few steps away, was looking at an image of Saint Joseph.

The salesman left the servant-girl to her hesitating choice, and turned to Mr. Martin.

"What have you," asked Mr. Martin, with a slightly conscious tone, "upon the life of Saint Patrick?"

The priest turned and looked; but the salesman, with an unmoved countenance, went to the shelves and selected two volumes and laid them in silence on the counter. One was the "Life and Legends of Saint Patrick" with a picture in gilt of Brian Boru on the cover. The other was "Saint Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland," by William Bullen Morris, Priest of the Oratory. They were both green-covered.

Early in the evening Mr. Martin settled down by his study fire to his new purchases. First he took up the "Life and Legends." He read the saint's own Confession, and the Letter to Coroticus, and looked through the translation of the Tripartite Life, with its queer mixture of Latin and English: "Prima feria venit Patricius ad Talleriam, where the regal assembly was, to

Cairpre, the son of Niall." "Interrogat autem Patricius qua causa venit Conall, and Conall related the reason to Patrick."

He glanced over the miracles and wonders of which this book was full. But before very long he laid it aside and took up the *Life* by William Bullen Morris, Priest of the Oratory, and decided that he must depend upon that for his preparation.

It was late at night. It was full time to stop reading; but it laid strong hold of his imagination,—this strange, intense, and humorous figure, looming up all new to him from the mists of the past. He read the book to the end; he read how the good Saint Bridget foretold the apostle's death; how two provinces contended for his remains, and how a light shone over his burial-place after he was laid to rest.

It was very late when Mr. Martin finished the book and laid it down.

Thus it happens that the Rev. Dr. Parsons and the Rev. Mr. Martin are both preparing themselves at the same time on the life of Saint Patrick, from this one brief book by William Bullen Morris, Priest of the Oratory.

IV.

Saint Patrick's Day has come and is now fast waning. The sun has sunk behind the chimney-stack of the New Albion dance-hall; the street lamps are lighted and are faintly contending against the dull glow of the late afternoon.

There is a lull between day and evening. All day there has been a stir in the city. There has been a procession in green sashes, with harps on the banners,—a long procession, in barouches, on horseback, and afoot. There have been impassioned addresses before the Hibernian Society and the Saint Peter's Young Men's Irish Catholic Benevolent Association. There has been more or less celebration in Ship Street.

The evening advances. It is seven o'clock. Strains of invitation issue from all the dance-halls. Already the people have begun to file in to the Day-Star Mission. The audience-room is on the street floor. The missionary stands at the open door, with anxious smiles, urging decorum. A knot of idlers on each side of the doorway, on the sidewalk, comment freely on him and on those who enter. Every moment or two a policeman forces them back.

At a quarter of seven a preliminary praise-meeting begins. Singing from within jars against the fiddling from over the way. You hear at once "Come to Jesus just now!" and "Old Dan Tucker."

Already the seats are filled,—eight in a settee; those who come now will have to stand. Still, people continue to file in: labourers, Portuguese sewing-women, two or three firemen in long-tailed coats and silver buttons, from Hook and Ladder Six, in the next block; gross-looking women, *habitués* of the Mission, with children; women who are *habitués* of no mission; prosperous saloon-keepers; one of the councilmen of the ward,—he is a saloon-keeper too.

Dr. Parsons's train brought him to town in good season. He passed in with other invited guests at the private door, and he has been upon the platform for ten minutes. His daughter is beside him; ten or a dozen of his parishioners, who have come too, occupy seats directly in front.

The platform seats are nearly all taken; it is time to begin. The street-door opens and a passage is made for a new-comer. It is Mr. Martin. A contingent from his church come with him and fill the few chairs that are still reserved about the desk.

Now all would appear to be ready; but there is still a few moments' pause. The missionary is probably completing some preliminary arrangements. The audience sit in stolid expectation.

Dr. Parsons, from beneath his eyebrows, is studying the faces before him. In this short time his address has entirely changed form in his mind. It was simple as he had planned it; it must be simpler yet. But he has felt the pulse of the people before him. He feels that he can hold them, that he can stir them.

Meanwhile a whispered colloquy is going on, at the rear of the platform, between the missionary and the chairman of the committee for the evening. The missionary appears to be explanatory and apologetic, the chairman flushed. In a moment a hand is placed on Dr. Parsons's shoulder. He starts, half rises, and turns abruptly.

There has been, it seems, an unfortunate misunderstanding. Through some mistake Mr. Martin has been asked to make the address upon the life of Saint Patrick, and has prepared himself with care. He is one of the Mission's most influential friends; his church is among its chief benefactors. It is an exceedingly painful affair; but will Dr. Parsons give way to Mr. Martin?

So it is all over. The Doctor takes his seat and looks out again upon those hard, dreary faces,—his no longer. He has not

realized until now how he has been looking forward to this evening. But the vision has fled. No ripples of uncouth laughter, no ready tears. No reaching these dull, violated hearts through the Saint whom they adore: that privilege is another's.

But the chairman again draws near. Will Dr. Parsons make the opening prayer?

The Doctor bows assent. He folds his arms and closes his eyes. You can see that he is trying to concentrate his thoughts in preparation for prayer. It is doubtless hard to divert them from the swift channel in which they have been bounding along.

Now all is ready. The missionary touches a bell, the signal for silence.

The Doctor rises. For a moment he stands looking over the rows on rows of hardened faces,—looking on those whom he has so longed to reach. He raises his hand; there is a dead silence, and he begins.

It was inevitable, at the outset, that he should refer to the occasion which had brought us together. It was natural to recall that we were come to celebrate the birth of an uncommon man. It was natural to suggest that he was no creature of story or ancient legend, floating about in the imagination of an ignorant people, but a real man like us, of flesh and blood. It was natural to add that he was a man born centuries ago; that the scene of his labours was the green island across the sea, where many of us now present had first seen the light. It was natural to give thanks for that godly life which had led three nations to claim the good man's birthplace. It was natural to suggest that if about the sweet memories of this man's life fancy had fondly woven countless legends, we might, with a discerning eye, read in them all the saintly power of the man of God. What though his infant hand may not have caused earthly waters to gush from the ground and heal the blindness of the ministering priest, nevertheless doth childhood ever call forth a well-spring of life, giving fresh sight to the blind,—to teacher and taught.

But why go on? Who has not heard, again and again, the old-fashioned prayer wherein all is laid forth, in outline, but with distinctness! We give thanks for this. May this be impressed upon our hearts. May this lead us solemnly to reflect.

The heart that is full must overflow,—if not in one way, then in another.

Mr. Martin has not been told about Dr. Parsons. He sits and listens as the Doctor goes on in the innocence of his heart, pouring forth with warmth and fervour the life of the saint

according to William Bullen Morris, Priest of the Oratory,—pouring forth in unmistakable detail Mr. Martin's projected discourse.

The prayer is ended; a hymn is sung, and then the missionary presents to the audience the Rev. Mr. Martin, whom they are always delighted to hear; he will now address them upon the life of Saint Patrick.

Mr. Martin rises. He takes a sip of water. He coughs slightly. He passes his handkerchief across his lips. So far all is well. But the prayer is in his mind. Moreover, he unfortunately catches his wife's eye, with a suggestion of suppressed merriment in it.

What does he say? What can he say? There are certain vague lessons from the saint's virtues; some applications of what the Doctor has set forth; that is all. Saint Patrick was sober; we should be sober. Saint Patrick was kind; we should be kind.

Even his own parishioners admitted that he had not been "happy" on this particular occasion.

But at the close of the meeting Dr. Parsons received a compliment. As he descended from the platform, Mr. John Keenan, who kept the best-appointed bar-room on the street, advanced to meet him. Mr. Keenan was in an exceedingly happy frame of mind. He grasped the Doctor's hand. "I wish, sir," he said, with a fine brogue, "to congratulate you upon your very eloquent prayer. It remind me, sir,—and I take pleasure to say it,—it remind me, sir, of the Honourable John Kelly's noble oration on Daniel O'Connell."

Late that evening the Doctor stood at his study-window, looking out for a moment before retiring to rest. There was no light in the room, and the maps and the charts and the tall book-shelves were only outlines. There was a glimmer from a farm-house two miles away, where they were watching with the dead.

The Doctor's daughter came in with a light in her hand to bid her father good-night.

"What did you think, Pauline," he said to her, "of Mr. Martin's talk?" It had not been mentioned till now.

Pauline hardly knew what to think. She knew that it was not what the Rev. Dr. Parsons would have given them! But, honestly, what did her father think of it?

The Doctor mused for a moment; then he gave his judgment. "I think," he said, "that it showed a certain lack of preparation."

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