

FATHER BURKE AS AN ORATOR.

In the *Irish Times* of the 24th January, we find the following tribute to the eloquence of the great Dominican:—The ground on which stands the Church of St. Augustine and St. John—one of the stateliest and most beautiful sacred edifices in the country—is hallowed by many and most interesting historical associations and memories; for on it, centuries ago, was built, and for centuries stood, the venerable hospital of the Knights of Saint John, whose achievements are celebrated in many a history, fiction, and song. The spire, or tower, is one of the finest and tallest in the city, and the church is built of the best Wicklow granite, the facades and ornamental carving interspersed throughout being of red Whitehaven stone. So beautifully proportioned is the building, so fine the lines, so nicely harmonised and contrasted the colours, that it is not a building only, but a poem—a poem in stone; and, having seen it, we do not wonder that Mr. Ruskin, acutest of art critics, pronounced it to be the finest specimen of modern Gothic edifices of its kind extant. Indeed, if we do not mistake, he even went the length of saying that it would compare not unfavorably with the masterpieces of the past.

At 12.40 p.m. Father Burke quietly entered the pulpit and began his discourse. In appearance he is over the middle height; his features are massive, with large nose and mouth, high cheek bones, sallow and somewhat florid complexion, sunken cheeks, and a sort of haggard, wearied look, forcibly suggestive of midnight vigils, and nights and days spent in laborious work and study. The not very high forehead is surmounted with a crop of dark hair, sleekly brushed down, and squarely cut, and from under the black eyebrows flash out dark and somewhat sunken eyes, which, in moments of excitement, flash and gleam with startling brilliancy and force. His voice is strong, sonorous, and rich, full of melody, power and instincts, with a sort of weird pathos and langour which it is impossible to describe. His elocution and action, his language and style of speech, are purely and distinctly oratorical, betraying in every gesture and inflection of the voice the born orator—the man who, if a great occasion should arise to call forth his energies, could stir the pulse of multitudes, and rouse Christendom to engage in a second crusade. Beginning very slowly and deliberately, he gives out his text standing erect in the pulpit with both hands on its ledge. For a time there is little or no action beyond an occasional raising of the right hand, but as he gradually warms to his work, the action becomes more vigorous and frequent, the utterance more vehement and rapid, until by nicely balanced and artistically conceived gradations he rises into the rare attitudes of fervid eloquence, and electrifies his audience by one of those passionate and thrilling outbursts which send a delightful and indescribable tremor through the entire congregation as if it was one man. Yesterday this was particularly the case when he went on to describe the sufferings of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. At first the preacher lent over the pulpit, and talked familiarly to his hearers, as one might do at his own fireside. Then, step by step, he led them on from one phase of feeling to another, until having prepared them for what was to follow, he suddenly threw himself erect, and raising his right arm aloft, hurled forth—for there is no other word to describe it—such a torrent of descriptive eloquence that one felt compelled to hold his breath until all was over.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS.

We take the following extract from a speech lately delivered in Dublin by Mr. Butt, and reported in the *Ulster Examiner*:—"Then there is the land question and the education question. (Cheers.) We may have different opinions on the means by which the condition of the Irish occupier of the soil is to be rooted to that soil; but no man who honestly looks at the state of land tenure in Ireland can avoid the conviction that something must be done to give security to the cultivator of the soil. (Cheers.) I have framed a measure, and our members are perfectly at liberty to canvass its merits or dissent from its details; I may not have framed a perfect measure; but I do believe that it is essential to the peace and prosperity of Ireland that further security should be given to the occupier of the soil. (Cheers.) And times are coming when, perhaps, it may become of more importance still. There are indications of an importation of foreign provisions from America, and that a revolution is close at hand that may transfer the pasture lands of the country again into tillage. (Hear.) I am not sure that it will not be a most happy change for the country, but in the change, believe me, the social question between landlord and tenant must arise—(cheers)—and if the Legislature does not in time prepare for that great change in the relation between landlords and tenants you may see again the heartless evictions of 1847 repeated to adjust that change in the interests of the landlords—(hear, hear)—unless the Legislature interfere meanwhile to protect the tenant; and I only hope you will not see again the terrible retribution which the crimes of the landlords, I do not hesitate to say, have provoked in other times. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) This question is assuming, for the peace of the country, an enormous importance. (Cheers.) That question we will press upon the attention of the Legislature; we will, at all events, do our duty. (Cheers.) For the education question, every day and hour deepens my conviction of the importance of that question—I was going to say to the Catholic community, but I will say to the whole Irish community, because the Catholic community cannot suffer without suffering to the nation. (Cheers.) I don't think the importance of this question is realised. (Hear.) A monopoly of educational institutions for Protestants (for it is practically this) is Protestant ascendancy in its worst and most destructive shape. (Cheers.) Every day the Catholic young man is placed at a disadvantage, because he has not the educational institutions in which he can compete on perfectly equal terms with his Protestant countryman. I don't go into any question of what control the clergy should have over education. That is for the Catholic

people themselves. (Applause.) But what I, as an Irishman, say is that every Irishman—whether he congregates with his own countrymen, with Englishmen, Scotchmen, Frenchmen, or Germans—ought to have an opportunity in his own land of acquiring the education that would fit him for that competition on equal terms without being called on to sacrifice one conscientious conviction of the heart. (Loud cheering.) And if I make this demand on behalf of the nation am I to be told that I am handing over the education of the country to the Roman Catholic clergy? These are two of the questions we will have to press upon Parliament this session. Mr. Butt then referred to the Grand Jury system, which he said was the most anomalous and absurd in the whole machinery of legislation. There are a great many other questions which I will not take up your time by enumerating, but which it will be our duty to press on the English Parliament—not, I repeat, as substitutes for Home Rule. Never in the English Parliament in pressing those measures did I utter, or will I utter, a word that would imply that we were waiving or abandoning or modifying the great demand of the Irish people for self-government. (Great cheering.) The first attribute of legislation that would be successful is to impress upon the people the idea that it springs from themselves—(hear, hear)—and not from any other source. (Applause.) Any other form of government might make wise laws—a tyrant might make wise laws—but as long as you crush down every feeling of independence, of national energy, every instinct of national self-respect, be your laws [ever so wise, they are but the gilded chains upon a people. (Cheers.) These are the principles upon which I intend to take my stand.

ARCTIC SAILORS.

The Arctic Expedition has returned, having proved, so far as its primary object was concerned, a complete failure. The exploring parties scarcely got within four hundred miles of the Pole—a rather inglorious ending, when we remember the flourish of trumpets which preceded the departure of the ships.

But, without concerning ourselves here with the scientific aspect of the question, it is well for Irishmen to note how the credit of our country was upheld by the little handful of Irish sailors who accompanied the expedition. It is true that whatever might have been the results of the enterprise, Ireland as a nation would reap no honor, and that these Irish seamen on board English vessels were but assisting to sustain the fabric of English prestige. That cannot be helped, and in our own provincial state we must but content ourselves, as on many another occasion with a little of the reflected radiance which comes to us at second hand from the glory shed upon the country of our rulers by the deeds of Irishmen. Most of the chiefs and leaders of previous Anglo-Arctic expeditions have been men of Irish birth. McClure, of Northwest Passage fame, McClintock, Maguire, Moore, Kellett, Crozier; and on reading over the account of the present attempt to reach the Pole, it is remarkable, when we remember what British prejudice is, to find among the common sailors our own countrymen (as in the case of O'Keegan and others) singled out for honourable mention. The usual course of English writers is only to make special mention of Irishmen when linked with some crime, misconduct, or ill-doing; but in connection with deeds of valour or daring they are merged into the great Anglo-Saxon race. This time, however, they have acted somewhat differently, and in the general distribution of compliments our countrymen have come in for a meed of praise. One of them, we are sorry to say, is now beyond the reach of human approbation, but what Irishman can read without a thrill the following extract from the record of his death:—

"The last man who was engaged at Portsmouth before starting was an Irishman named James Hind, a native of Dublin. He was physically one of the finest looking men on the expedition, a splendid seaman and a hard-working man in every respect. He was on the expedition under Lieutenant Beaumont, which explored a couple of hundred miles of the northern coast of Greenland, and while at work was suddenly taken. His body was buried in a higher latitude than any man had ever been buried."

Eternal rest to the soul of James Hind, of Dublin, whose body lies in its icy tomb, far, far to the northward, away from his native land.

A mournful distinction, truly, to sleep one's last sleep "at a higher latitude than man has ever been buried," where the north wind moans an eternal requiem. Dearer to him, perhaps, would have been a simple grave on Irish earth; but away from kith and kin he rests, his snowy catafalque hallowed by no sacred burial, to await the resurrection in the Arctic wastes. But, distant as he lies, we know that when wintry rigors here in this country bring more vividly to mind that awful region, some at least of his countrymen will not be unmindful of the touching fate of that humble Irish sailor, whose bones are laid in a lonely grave beneath the Northern Lights, within the Polar Zone.

One in name and in fame
Are the sea-divided Gael.

—*Liverpool United Irishman.*

A Wexford farmer, named Miles Lambert, has been prosecuted for keeping a greyhound under an Act a hundred years old, which declares it illegal for any one to keep a greyhound, or any other game dog, who had not a personal property of £1,000, or £100 a year freehold. It was argued that the Act, which was a very old one, could not be put in force against Lambert, as he held a license for the dog under the Registration of Dogs Act. The opinion of the law adviser was read, the purport of which was that the case was one that ought to be sent to Quarter Sessions, through a common law indictment, and that the defendant having a greyhound was a point in his favor. Informations were taken against Lambert, and the hearing of the case fixed to take place at the next Wexford assize.