

the intercession of St. Patrick without its results. The centuries of sorrow have passed away with all their bitter memories.

The Storm and the Clouds Have Passed, the sun of prosperity has begun once again to shine on our country, and Ireland is to-day more devoted and more loyal to the preaching of St. Patrick than she was even before English kings set themselves the task of changing a nation's faith. The old pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick has been renewed in these happy circumstances with the blessing of the Pope and the successors of St. Jarlath, and the thousands of pilgrims who have come together to-day, not merely from the province of Connaught or from all the provinces of Ireland, but from the farthest ends of the earth, afford striking testimony that, however Irishmen may be divided in politics and in their social condition, at home and abroad they are at one in their veneration for the Apostle of their race and country.

It is without a shadow of doubt that when the Lent of 441 was approaching, St. Patrick, who then found himself at Aughagower, determined to wend his way to the very summit of Cruachan Aigli to spend the holy season in prayer and penance. His work in Ireland for so far had been attended with considerable success. At Tara, overlooking the plains of Royal Meath, he had preached in the very citadel of paganism and had won many chieftains to the faith. In his journey through the central districts of Ireland and across the plains of Roscommon and Mayo, he had found thousands of willing converts, but his courage almost failed him as he thought of his own weakness and the magnitude of the task that still lay before him in the rest of Ireland; and his heart was filled with sorrow as he pondered on the dangers that would assail his flock when he himself should have passed away. He understood, as only such a saint could understand, the weakness and frailty of human nature—its restlessness and its yearning after change. He ascended to the summit of Cruachan Aigli, and for more than forty days, exposed to the winds and rain, he gave himself up entirely to prayer. During this terrible vigil he thought not of himself or of his own salvation, but of the conversion and spiritual welfare of the Irish race. He prayed that God might bless his work and crown it with success; that He might take under His special protection the men of Erin, those who then lived and the generations yet to come, and that He might keep them on the narrow path that leads to Heaven. And who that is acquainted with the history of the world since then can doubt about the efficacy of his prayers. Other Churches then flourishing, and likely to flourish, have long since disappeared. The great Christian centres of the East, of Greece and Macedonia, of Roman Asia, of Syria and Arabia, even the Church of Palestine, have at times wavered in their allegiance to the Holy See; but down through the ages the little island set in the Western Ocean—The Home of the Race for Whom St. Patrick Wrestled in Prayer

on this mount—has remained devoted to the faith that was delivered to it by its National Apostle. Nor was it merely that Ireland itself remained firm in its allegiance. On more than one occasion, when, humanly speaking, Christianity seemed in danger, and when the cry went up for help, Ireland hastened to the rescue. Again in modern times, when the faith of many in the Old World had grown cold, and when religious indifference threatened to be a greater danger than war or persecution, the Irish people set an example to the rest of the world by their deep religious fervor and by their willingness to sacrifice all rather than sacrifice their religious principles. The persecutions that were meant to extinguish Catholicism here at home have proved under the providence of God to be the means of building up the Church in foreign lands, so that wherever you turn to-day, whether to the populous manufacturing cities of England or Scotland or across the Atlantic to those of the great Republic of the West, to Canada, South Africa, or Australia, you will find that the Irish exiles have not forgotten the lessons they learned at home, and the almost countless

cathedrals and churches dedicated to St. Patrick scattered across the globe from San Francisco to Melbourne, constitute a unique memorial to a national apostle unparalleled in the annals of the Church. Even to-day a splendid opportunity is given to Ireland to do a great service to religion, and everything seems to indicate that the opportunity will not be neglected. The danger at the present time is religious indifference, and in consequence the attempt to drive out religion from the public life of the nation, to banish religious teaching from the schools, to view everything from the merely worldly point of view, and to treat religion as if it were something that might and ought to be disregarded by those engaged in government. Such an attitude has never found favor in Ireland, and, please God, it never shall.

#### Under a Native Parliament

persecution for religion's sake and intolerance will be unknown, as they have ever been unknown, amongst Irish Catholics. Every man, it is to be hoped, will be rewarded according to his merits; but at the same time, considering the deeply religious character of the people, it will for those charged with the conduct of affairs to show that a thoroughly progressive and democratic policy is not out of harmony with the traditions of the Catholic Church, and that the dreams of Lacordaire and Montalembert of a union of democracy, liberty, and religion, can be realised in real life. On this bleak summit, when St. Patrick was harassed by fears for the future, and when all the powers of evil were leagued against him to induce him to despair, after God, Whose help he had invoked, his thoughts turned instinctively towards Rome as the natural guardian and protector of his work. While here on this mountain messengers arrived to inform him that a new Pope had been elected, and his first thought was to despatch one of his assistants to bear his congratulations to the Pontiff, and to invoke his blessing on the work that he had undertaken. The new Pope, Leo the Great, was as deeply interested in the conversion of Ireland as his predecessor had been, and immediately he confirmed St. Patrick in his mission, and sent him as a pledge of his affection a portion of the relics of the Apostles SS. Peter and Paul, which relics were for centuries

The Greatest Treasures of the Cathedral at Armagh. The attachment and submission to Rome practised and taught by St. Patrick have never been forgotten by the Irish race. In the old days, before Ireland was disturbed by the Danes and the Normans, bands of pilgrims, bishops and priests, princes and tribesmen, braved the dangers of sea and land in their anxiety to worship at the shrines of the sacred city and to do homage to him whom they regarded as head of the Christian world. Nor was it merely in the days of its prosperity that Ireland showed its devotion to Rome. In the stormy years of the sixteenth century, when so many countries raised the standard of revolt, and when almost every month that passed brought news of other defections, when the whole of Northern Europe, Germany, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, England and Scotland, seemed lost to the Faith, Ireland alone withstood the storm, and refused to accept a royal dictator as the head of the Catholic Church. Irishmen might have saved

#### Their Churches, Their Schools, Their Lands, and Their Lives,

had they been content to act against their consciences, and to accept the King, Council, and Parliament as their religious guides, but, mindful of the teaching of St. Patrick, and of the example of generations of their ancestors, they preferred to abandon all rather than to allow themselves to be wrenched from the centre of unity. Men of the world may scoff at such sacrifices. They may rail at the foolishness of the Irish people in risking their property and lives over what they regard as a side issue, but Irish Catholics know better than to pay attention to such scoffers. They realise, as their forefathers realised, that the Church of Christ should be one and undivided, and that such unity can be maintained only by dutiful submission to

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