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The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick in Albany

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF SOME CELEBRATIONS
OF ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN ALBANY, N. Y., IN THE
EARLY PART OF THE XIXTH CENTURY.

A PAPER READ BY

HON. FRANKLIN M. DANAHER

AT THE FIFTH ANNUAL BANQUET OF THE FRIENDLY
SONS OF ST. PATRICK IN ALBANY AT THE
HOTEL TEN EYCK, MARCH 17, 1905.

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THE FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK IN ALBANY

Hon. Franklin M. Danaher, whose interest in the local history of our good old Dutch city is a deep and abiding one, read a paper of more than ordinary interest at the St. Patrick's day banquet of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick at the Hotel Ten Eyck on March 17, 1905. Judge Danaher's paper, which gave great pleasure and satisfaction to all who were so fortunate as to be present on this occasion, was an account of some celebrations of St. Patrick's day in the early days of the nineteenth century. The paper shows careful, painstaking research and a thorough knowledge of Irish history and the influence of Irish character in America.

Judge Danaher's Paper.

The reading of a paper at a St. Patrick's day dinner about Ireland in America, with a request that the topic be treated seriously, even at the expense of the guest who comes to the banquet to be amused and not instructed, is not unusual in these days. It is an evidence of an advance in the significance of the celebrations and makes more apparent that there is a new Ireland in the twentieth century America, composed of those who are three or four generations removed from the "Erin Mavourneen" of their fathers and grand sires, who have assimilated to everything that is good and progressive and patriotic in American life, to whom the Ireland across the water and the story of its wrongs becomes more of a tradition as the years roll on, to which, however, they cling with a tenacity of affection that is characteristic and a soul-inspiring example of fatherland worship. This new Ireland, replete with the history of the old, asks with increasing pertinacity to know the story of what has been done by the Irish in America towards the upbuilding of this great republic and in aid of liberty and constitutional government and of the equality of all before the law; for freedom of speech and of worship; for the right of each to work out his own salvation without let or hindrance; for a country where there are no classes or masses, and where the son of toil born in the hut has equal opportunity with the child of wealth to acquire all the emoluments and honor that can be bestowed upon good citizenship, and to reap the benefits of well-directed and persistent labor.

Sons of Erin Interested.

This growing inquiry by the American Irishman of to-day into the history of the past achievements of the Irish in America

has physiological value as denoting the more complete blending of the Sons of St. Patrick in the composite mass which goes toward making up the true type of the American citizen. It is indicative of the lengthening of the chain which binds the old and the new; an unconscious recognition of the process of amalgamation and an approval of its results, with no desire to retard the consummation, but with a determination that the true value of the pure Celtic metal that enters into the finished product of American citizenship shall be ascertained and the share Ireland's sons have had in laying the foundations of our great fabric of constitutional liberty shall be known and appreciated by the world, including among the latter the detractors of Ireland and all things Irish.

For Historical Research.

This trend to make patent that the Irish have given value in blood, treasure, labor good citizenship and patriotic devotion to the cause of liberty and progress for the glorious heritage which they enjoy in the United States, and have been no insignificant factors in their achievement, has been given impetus by the organization of a national society, known as the American Irish Historical society.

That society is devoted to the exploitation of the causes for which it was organized—to destroy the Scotch-Irish myth as a harmful and unjustifiable creation, and to make known the achievements of all Irish-Americans, without regard to the religious, social or territorial differences which may have separated them in Ireland, and to write on the bright pages of American history the deeds of valor and the sacrifices and the toils of Ireland's sons for its benefit, even to the great but unappreciated work of the humble men of pick and shovel, who, in years past, delved that their adopted country might grow great. It has among its members the President of the United States, who has given to the society proof of his pride in his undoubted heritage of Irish blood and of his interest in its mission. It has Catholic and Protestant men of mark in every walk of life, true and patriotic citizens, who glory in their Irish descent, and who are determined to spread upon the national record, so that all may read, indubitable proof that the Irish are not the least among the many peoples who have made our country great and wise and beneficent among the nations of the earth.

Irishmen of Early Albany.

We were moved by considerations of our membership in it to write, some time ago, of the Irish in old Albany; the

Dutch Albany of the Van Rensselaers and Schuylers, where they were aliens in blood, language and religion, and of the humble but not inconspicuous part they had in its affairs for 200 years and more particularly of the undue proportion of brave and patriotic Irishmen of Albany who, in the times that tried men's souls, bore arms on many a battlefield which they hallowed with their blood, and who died that the republic might live. To-night we will treat of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick and of St. Patrick's day celebrations in Albany in the early part of the nineteenth century, when Irishmen were neither as powerful nor as numerous as they are in these later days, as fully as the meagre records of the times will permit us to do, as an additional chapter in the history of the Irish in Albany which we hope, eventually, will be written.

In estimating Irish achievement in colonial America it must always be held in memory that the emigration of Catholic Irishmen to this country was never encouraged, and that when it was allowed, it was only as Redemptioners or through hostile English channels where by parliamentary enactment they were denationalized even to a compulsory change of their Celtic names to those of English terminology.

For Freedom of Conscience.

The drastic penal laws of England directed against the free exercise of liberty of conscience in Ireland, drove the Irish Catholic gentlemen across the seas as "wild geese" to fight the battles of continental Europe, but they were also inimicable to the Irish industries, so much so that trade and manufactures there were almost totally annihilated. The subject is too comprehensive for consideration here, except to make the relevant statement that the trade laws operated upon all Irishmen alike regardless of religion and produced a poverty and discontent which drove many of both religions to America. Irish emigration during the early part of the eighteenth century, it is stated was in the proportion of nine Irish emigrants to one of all other nations of Europe. While the bulk of this immigration was Protestant no negligible proportion of it was Catholic, but the latter by forced "Conformation" and the lack of church facilities, soon lost their identity and became merged in the mass of citizens.

It is now a conceded fact, however, that much of the character and brawn of the American colonist was Irish and that their influence and labor in the upbuilding of our country was great. This grows more apparent and better appreciated when through historical research the names of Erin's sons and of their children are recognized inscribed in letters

of living light high upon the roll of honor of America's pioneers and patriots and among the greatest of its benefactors.

St. Patrick's Lodges.

In colonial days the Scotch-Irish, a non-existent breed which claims every Irishman of character or note, was not created, as the records of the time will show, and as is evidenced among many cognate examples by the existence to-day in Johnstown in this State of a Masonic lodge named after St. Patrick, which was organized in 1766 by Sir William Johnson, a native of the county Meath, who was its master, and by the now non-existent St. Patrick's Lodge No. 14, of Portsmouth, N. H., which was granted a charter by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts on March 17, 1780. The New England troops of Irish descent in garrison at Fort William Henry celebrated St. Patrick's day, 1767, and all through those years, and especially among the patriot forces during the Revolutionary war, St. Patrick's day was celebrated by banquets and toasts and distinguished by special counter-signs, parades and liberties for the Irish soldiers in camp.

All early Irish societies in America appear to have been organized on a non-sectarian basis, Catholics and Protestants alike were eligible to membership, except in the case of the Charitable Irish Society which was organized in Boston on March 17, 1737, which was limited to Protestants. That society is still in existence, with the religious disqualification of membership abrogated. It had the first recorded celebration of the day in America on March 17, 1737, and to-day on the one hundredth and sixty-eighth anniversary of its foundation it is again honoring the day and the apostle of Ireland.

Friendly Sons' History.

The Society of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of Philadelphia was instituted March 17, 1771.

The Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick of Charleston, S. C., celebrated March 17, 1773.

The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick in New York was founded on March 17, 1784.

These early societies were composed exclusively of Irishmen or men of Irish descent who glorified in their American citizenship and were proud of their Irish blood. Their celebrations of the day were attended by the best and most distinguished in the social, civil and military life of the nation, who paid tribute to the bravery and loyalty of the Irish in America to the cause of liberty.

Washington wrote to the Philadelphia society when he received its insignia and accepted an adoption therein, in 1781, as follows: "I accept with singular pleasure the ensign of so worthy a fraternity as the Sons of St. Patrick in this city—a so-

ciety distinguished for the firm adherence of its members to the glorious cause in which we are embarked."

Mr. John D. Crimmins, president of the Irish-American Historical Society, in his valuable work, "Early Celebrations of St. Patrick's Day," states that the St. Patrick's day banquets of the Philadelphia society were attended by George Washington, General Steuben, General Howe, General Moultrie, General Knox, General Hand, General McIntosh, Mr. Luzerne, Major Washington, Count Dillon, Count De La Touche, General Lincoln, General Dickinson, the president of Congress, Hon. Elias Boudinot, Chief Justice Thomas McKean, General Cadwalader, General McDougall—we cannot give the names of all, for while they are an inspiration and instructive, they are not germane to my task of Albany, to which I must now proceed.

Albany's Irish Emigrants.

After the war of the Revolution ceased and the Indians made less hostile, there came a period of national expansion which evidenced itself in the wild desire among those east to emigrate to the distant west, to start life anew amid its dense forests and to till its virgin soil. Albany was then the frontier city of America, "the gateway," in the direction of this migratory trend, and one early Albany chronicler notes the many hundreds of emigrant wagons passing through the city daily from New England seeking the great wilderness of the west, which was then a little beyond Utica in this State. This condition brought to Albany trade and wealth and consequent increase in population, among whom, of course, was the ubiquitous Irishman. As early as 1796 they became strong enough to incorporate the present St. Mary's church. While there is no record extant of a celebration of St. Patrick's day as early as 1796, in view of the fact that the leading hotel in Albany, which was the meeting place of the Albany patriots during the Revolution, and where Washington was a guest in 1782 and 1783, was owned and kept by Hugh Denniston, a patriotic as well as a loyal Irish American, it is not too remote to speculate that the few Irishmen in Albany met at dinner on that day at Denniston's hotel, on the corner of Beaver and Green streets, and drowned the shamrock in libations and toasts which were redolent of sentiment for the dear old sod and not unmindful of the land of their adoption.

"St. Patrick Crossing the Ice."

In the Albany Register of March 17, 1802, we find a reference to St. Patrick's crossing the ice on March 17. That localism, upwards of a century old, which measured the length and severity of our winter by the ability of the river ice to

bear a person crossing the same as late as March 17, was in much more frequent use a few years ago than now.

It is quite evident that in the early days many gibes and insults were offered to Irishmen on St. Patrick's Day. It was an almost universal custom, not limited to Albany, early on the morning of March 17, to find on the streets or suspended in mid-air stuffed effigies of Irishmen and placards with scurrilous epithets which the Sons of Erin with much characteristic heat would proceed to remove. This at times was attended with some disorder. The practice did not die out in Albany until the early fifties, for at a dinner in celebration of the day held at the Mansion house in this city on March 17, 1853, the fact that no effigies had been displayed was noted and taken as an evidence of a better appreciation of the Irish people and of an era of good feeling.

For Relief of the Emigrants.

In 1807, the Irishmen of Albany were numerous enough to warrant the passing of an act of the legislature incorporating Daniel Campbell and his associates as a society to afford relief to indigent and distressed emigrants from the Kingdom of Ireland, which is indicative of the arrival in Albany of Irishmen beyond the ability of the then trade and labor conditions to care for. This society was known as the St. Patrick's Society in the city of Albany. Neither the legislative act nor the journals of the Senate or Assembly state who the associates were, and thus far we have been unable to find an account of the proceedings and attendance at the time the society was organized. It was composed of all the Irishmen in the city and evidently without regard to religious convictions. It always celebrated the day by observances which were formal, dignified and noteworthy, and which bear testimony that the status of the Irishman in Albany in those days was of the best, for the most distinguished of the citizens of the State in social as well as political life attended these anniversary banquets and gave expression to their sentiments of deep respect for the memory of St. Patrick, hope for Ireland's ultimate freedom from English misrule, praise for the good qualities of their Irish-American fellow citizens and for the love of their adopted country. This was the more remarkable and the more to be appreciated, when we consider the times and the fact that there was then among us an aristocracy which was a recognized factor in public life, and that there was then a distinct cleavage along those lines among the people of this State.

First Celebration.

The first celebration of the day in Albany, of record, was held by the St. Patrick's Society, at its first annual meeting held on March 17, 1807, a few weeks

after its incorporation. The accounts of the meeting are meagre and no names are given of those in attendance. The officers of the society were elected and a special dinner prepared for the occasion was partaken of, at which twenty formal, patriotic toasts were drunk in honor of the day and the occasion. They were replete in their expression of unbounded devotion to the principles and practices of our government and to its men in authority and of hostility to England and all things English.

We can learn nothing concerning the celebration of March 17, 1808. We assume from what was done in 1807 and in the years thereafter that the society honored the day according to its custom by banquet, song and toast. In those days public dinners, given on special occasions or to commemorate some important event, were formal and ceremonious to a degree, and one much like unto another. As we cannot go into the details of all the celebrations, we have selected the one of March 17, 1809, as typical of the times and of the men of Ireland in Albany in those days, and will relate the proceedings of the event to show its distinguished character, the dignified procedure of the old time banquet, the patriotic toasts formally presented with their appropriate music, as well as the character and the quality of the non-Irish guests who participated and did honor to the glorious memory of Ireland's patron saint.

The anniversary meeting of the Sons of St. Patrick was held on March 17, 1809, at Mr. George Hewson's, in Court street, now South Broadway. The society elected the following officers: James Maher, president; Josiah Kerr, vice-president; Andrew Fagan, secretary; Samuel Edgar, treasurer, and John Kearney and Cornelius Dunn, stewards.

After the election the society partook of an elegant entertainment prepared by Mr. Hewson, at which toasts were drunk, excellent and appropriate songs sung, and in the language of the chronicler "the evening passed away with harmony, propriety and social glee and good humor, for which the Sons of St. Patrick have even been distinguished."

Distinguished Guests.

The banquet was honored by the presence of a most distinguished company of guests; the best in the State then were none too good to do honor to St. Patrick, as a hurried consideration of some of the men present thereat will make evident.

Among them were His Excellency Hon. Daniel D. Tompkins, jurist, statesman, Governor of the State and subsequently vice-president of the United States; Hon. DeWitt Clinton, the grandson of a County Longford Irishman, statesman, Governor, senator and builder of the Erie canal; Thomas Addis Emmet, of New York, a distinguished Irish patriot, a refugee of

'98, brother of the immortal Robert Emmet, a great lawyer and subsequently attorney-general; Judge Tayler, one of Albany's leading citizens; Mr. Cooper, Albany's representative in the Legislature; Mr. Denniston, the foremost Irish-American in the city and man of property; William James, a business man of Albany, after whom James street is named, one of the dozen millionaires then in America, and ancestor of Henry James, the novelist; Mr. Solomon Southwick, editor, political writer, state politician, friend of Aaron Burr, and ancestor of our present congressman; Major Vernor, of the army of the Revolution, and others of local fame, whom the following toast list of the occasion will disclose.

Toasts.

1. The Day—May the next return of it witness our oppressed and insulted countrymen on the other side of the Atlantic celebrating it under their own vines and fig trees, unawed by hirelings or persecutors. "Patrick's Day."

2. The Land We Left—Too long have its green fields been clotted with the blood of its best children; as the most noxious weeds produce the best manure—may the destruction of its oppressors enrich the soil which they have despoiled and desolated. "Poor Ireland's Cup of Misery Fills."

3. The Land We Live In—The only brilliant gem in the zone of liberty—may the internal traitors and hypocrites who would deface its lustre, be stripped of their masks and exposed to the indignation and scorn of a free and insulted people. "Yankee Doodle."

4. Irish Martyrs from the Robbery of Henry the II, to the Present Hour—Peace to your manes, ye departed heroes, may your memory warm the breast of every honest Irishman and be his incentive to rescue his country from the iron grip of the barbarian who oppresses it. "How Sleep the Brave."

5. The American Heroes and Sages of 1776—May their glorious example be imitated by their successors, that they may transmit to their posterity the rich inheritance, purchased with the blood of their fathers, pure and unsullied. "Gen. Warren's Death."

6. Thomas Jefferson, the Enlightened Statesman and Firm Patriot—May his retirement from the busy scenes of public life be solaced by the reflections that his virtuous conduct has ensured him the approbation of his own conscience and the esteem and affection of his fellow citizens. "Jefferson's March."

7. The Triumph of Principle; the Election of the 4th of March—America on this day presents a proud spectacle to an admiring world, a citizen chosen by the united suffrage of a free people—to fill the highest post in their power to bestow—may James Madison continue to enjoy as he has hitherto deserved, the confidence

of his fellow citizens. "Madison's March."

8. George Clinton—The veteran defender of his country's liberties—the gratitude and affection of his fellow citizens, his rich reward. "President's March."

9. The Memory of Washington—May his name be no longer prostituted to base purposes by the domestic enemies of the country, of which it may be truly said he was the political father.

10. National Prejudice—The bane of national liberty.

11. War—When our common country is assailed may we forget the bickerings of party, and be all Americans. "Hail Columbia."

12. The Patriotic Charitable Societies of the United States—May their funds never fail, their judgment in dispensing charity never be erroneous and their emulation which shall best promote the interests of humanity.

13. The Memories of the Benevolent Howard—The man who devoted his life to ameliorate the condition of the incarcerated unfortunate.

14. Agriculture and Manufactures. The Butments of Our Prosperity—May the tyrant of faction never sap their foundation nor the storms of foreign influence destroy their beneficial effects. "Speed the Plow."

15. The Volunteer Defenders of Our Country's Rights—May they never desert their posts, and may they prove to the surrounding vultures who seem waiting to devour us, that the front of a band of freemen is impenetrable to the Myrmidons of a despot.

16. The Native and Adopted Citizens of America—May the former cherish the latter, and justly appreciate their value; and may the latter cultivate and deserve the esteem of their hospitable patrons. "True Hospitality."

17. The Fair Sex—May their frowns punish the enemies of Liberty and their smiles reward its advocates and defenders.

Volunteers.

By His Excellency the Governor: The Sacred Principles of Liberty and Patriotism; may those who have suffered in their support ever enjoy the esteem of freemen.

By Hon. DeWitt Clinton: The Persecuted Patriots of Ireland Who Have Emigrated to the United States; may they enjoy that liberty and happiness in their adopted, which was unjustly denied them in their native, country.

By Mr. Taylor: May the Sons of Erin in every part of the globe receive that friendship and hospitality that the Republicans of America would cheerfully offer them.

By Mr. Cooper: Humanity and Patriotism, permanent attributes of the Society of the Sons of St. Patrick.

By Mr. Thomas Addis Emmet: The Land of Saints purged from sinners.

By Mr. Denniston: May the oppressed

patriots of Ireland never be deprived of an asylum in America.

By Mr. James: Hibernian Americans; to the virtues of their native country, generosity, benevolence and hospitality, may they unite the peculiar characteristics of their adopted country, temperance knowledge and enterprise.

Mr. Southwick: To the memory of Mr. Edward Fitzgerald and his fellow martyrs in the cause of Irish justice, independence and liberty.

By Mr. Thomas: The true sons of Erin, whose errors, if they commit any, spring from an excess of the noblest of human virtues, bravery and generosity.

By Captain Noon: The American eagle, with a sprig of "shillalagh" in his talons to punish foreign aggression or domestic treason.

By Mr. Ennis: The green fields of Ireland; may their verdure soon cease to be tinted with the orange hue.

By Mr. Kerr: The republicans of the world, and God our only King.

By Mr. James Maher: The shamrock; may the frost of aristocracy, which has so long retarded its growth, be speedily dispelled by the cheering and enlivening sunbeams of freedom.

By Mr. Duffey: His Britannic majesty's disease to the enemies of humanity all over the globe.

By Mr. McKiernan: An eternal oblivion to all past animosities in the breasts of freemen.

By Mr. John Maher: Our political horizon, gilded by the rising sun; may his beams occasion republicanism to flourish with renewed vigor.

By Mr. McCabe: Union among republicans.

By Mr. Dawson: May the enemies of St. Patrick be, in reality, what they represented him in the morning—a bundle of rags.

By Mr. Glen: The Englishmen of the city of Albany; may they imitate their republican countrymen.

By Mr. Patterson: May the people of the United States preserve their liberties unmarred to the end of time.

By Major Vernor: May the sons of Erin never permit the grasping hand of a tyrant to oppress them, without spirit to resist it.

After the Governor had retired: His Excellency Daniel D. Tompkins, the farmer's son; may his public and social virtues long continue to adorn the chair of this State.

After Mr. Clinton had retired: The Hon. DeWitt Clinton, the distinguished and undaunted patriot; may the envenomed shafts of envy and malevolence which are directed against him, serve no other purpose than to endear him the more to a grateful people.

After Judge Tayler had retired: Judge Tayler, the friend of freedom, grown gray in his country's service; may his lamp burn bright until it expires, and the approbation of his fellow citizens cheer him to the close of an honorable career.

After Mr. Emmet had retired: Thomas

A. Emmet, Esq., the persecuted patriot, may he long continue to enjoy the patronage and esteem of an enlightened community, to which his transcendent talents and virtues eminently entitle him.

After Mr. Cooper had retired: Francis Cooper, Esq., and the advocates of our country's liberties in our State Legislature.

After the Sheriff had retired: The Republican editors of the United States; may the support and approbation of their fellow citizens be their recompense.

Other St. Patrick's Days.

In 1810, Gawin Patterson was elected president of the society; Josiah Kerr, first vice-president; Patrick Matthews, second vice-president; and Andrew Fagan, secretary.

They had an elegant entertainment prepared by Mr. George Hewson on Court street. Seventeen toasts were drank, similar to those of the 1809 celebration, full of patriotism and so interesting in character, it is to be regretted that our limited time will not permit us to set them forth in full, after which volunteer toasts were responded to by DeWitt Clinton, Judge Tayler, Thomas Addis Emmet, of New York; Elisha Dorr, Mr. Bryan, Elijah Thomas, Captain Mills, a distinguished soldier, whose remains were recently given State burial; Thomas Trenor, Major Vernor, Philip S. Van Rensselaer, the mayor of the city of Albany, and General Jonas Platt, a brilliant and distinguished company reflecting credit and honor upon the day and the Irish in Albany. In 1811, the celebration was held at Mr. Skinner's on Beaver street, which was attended not only by the Governor but by the mayor of the city of New York, and Thomas Addis Emmet, Judge Tayler and many other distinguished citizens.

Mayor of New York Came.

In those days the mayor of the city of New York, next to the President, was the most important and influential public officer in the United States, so much so, that DeWitt Clinton in 1804, resigned as United States senator to accept office as mayor of the city of New York, and in view of the discomforts of a three hundred mile stage coach journey from New York to Albany and return, in March, 1810, which his attendance required, the Irishmen of the then Albany, must have been worthy as well as forceful enough to warrant him coming to their Patrick day celebration at so great a sacrifice of time and comfort. In 1812, the celebration was had at Mr. Ladd's in Beaver street. It was attended by the Governor, Mr. Hugh Denniston, Mr. Townsend, Mr. Dox, James H. F. Yates, Hugh Flynn, Cornelius Dunn, John Maher, Judge Tayler, Mr. William James, John D. Byrne and Major Noon, all of whom responded to toasts.

In 1813, the celebration was had at Mr. Ladd's Albany Coffee House. At this meeting Mr. John Cassidy, the ancestor of the oldest Irish family in Albany and who came here in 1780, was elected vice-president of the society. In 1814, the celebration was had at Ladd's Coffee House again. We cannot give, for want of time and space, the names of those who after this time attended the celebrations, except in special instances, nor the toasts nor responses.

During War of 1812.

The war of 1812 was then on and Irish devotion to the cause for which their adopted country was fighting and their hatred of England was plainly indicated in the sentiments of the toasts, both formal and volunteer, offered upon the occasion. One toast proposed by Mr. L. Keenan, "The Officers and Soldiers of the Albany Republican Greens—They Did Their Duty, No Holiday Soldiers," was to the first distinctive Irish military company in Albany which was organized for active military service in the war of 1812. It had a distinguished record and was the forerunner of many similar companies.

In 1815, the day was celebrated at Ladd's tavern, John Cassidy being elected president of the society. In 1816, the anniversary dinner was had at Mr. Bement's Albany Coffee House. In 1817, the banquet was held at Benjamin's Hotel, on Washington street. The chroniclers of the time state that the repast was elegant, the attendance large, the guests numerous and distinguished and from all parts of the State.

Another Notable Celebration.

Toasts were responded to by DeWitt Clinton, the Governor of the State, his Honor Elisha Jenkins, the mayor and Philip S. Parker, recorder of the city of Albany; Hon. Cornelius Heeney, of New York, who was John Jacob Astor's partner in the fur trade, and the then richest Catholic Irishman in America; Sheriff Hempsted, Dr. McNevin, the Irish patriot whose tomb erected as a public tribute is in St. Paul's churchyard in the city of New York; the Rev. Dr. Gorman. Isaac Denniston, Esq., William James, Esq., Solomon Southwick, Esq., Col. Vischer, a veteran of the Revolution; Jesse Buel, Esq., the founder and first editor of the Albany Argus; Justice Rudes, Justice Vernor, William Kearney, Major Noon, Captain Maher, a gallant Irish soldier in the war of 1812 and commandant of the "Republican Greens;" John I. Vanderpool, William Cahill, Lieutenant Cole, Thomas Donnelly, Mr. Moakler, J. Duffie, H. Cagger, Thomas Lyons, Mr. Skaats, Mr. Rosier, Simon Toole, Horatio

Merchant, Thomas Doyle, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Bernard O'Connor and R. Duncan.

National airs were sung by the guests accompanied with appropriate music by the Albany band under the direction of Mr. Moore, and at the announcement of each toast brilliant fireworks and rockets were set off by Mr. Buckminister in honor of the "national jubilee."

The names of those who were present at that celebration in honor of St. Patrick are impressive to a degree. To those who know of the men and the times it is proof conclusive that the Irish people then in Albany were worthy socially and morally; that they were influential and had a general standing much beyond that which their numbers and wealth would warrant if they were other than what they were.

The Erie Canal Opening Parade.

In this blaze of glory we will for the present leave these Sons of St. Patrick of the past century and the Society of St. Patrick in Albany except to state that the society in 1825 was in the parade in celebration of the completion of the Erie canal.

It is not within the purview of our paper to write further on the subject, except that to say that the Hibernian Provident Society organized in 1833, took up the pleasurable duty of honoring the day in 1834, as did a society known as the "Friends of Ireland in Albany"—the city witnessing that year a double celebration.

From that time on, March 17th, was celebrated in each year by the loyal Sons of St. Patrick in Albany with increasing enthusiasm, by parades, banquets, speech-making and religious observances, when the story of Ireland's wrongs was rehearsed, acknowledgment made of the gladsome light of liberty and freedom of conscience in America, and due tribute paid to the great saint in whose honor they met. The early celebrations of the day were more pronounced in their expression of hatred of England than those of our time. That arose out of national conditions. The American people, which then included many of the survivors of the Revolutionary war, were as intense

in their dislike of England as were the majority of the then Irish American citizens. The sufferings of the patriots of 1776, the incited Indian massacres, the destruction of property and the bloody record of those dark days, were intensified by the war of 1812, and the American soil pregnant with this feeling, welcomed the Irish refugees of 1798 and joined with them in denunciation of England and in their hope for the ultimate freedom of Erin from British misrule and tyranny.

Cause for Pride.

We have reason to be proud of our brethren of Albany in the early part of the nineteenth century, and our present society should endeavor to emulate their example and broaden our horizon as well as our influence, by welcoming all Irishmen who love Ireland and hope for its freedom, and all lovers of liberty regardless of race or creed, to our festive board to do honor to the patron saint of a land which has fought the good fight and kept ablaze the sacred fires of liberty for over seven centuries.

We must not underrate the powerful influence of St. Patrick's day celebrations in that result and in keeping alive sentiment in America for Ireland, for the redress of its wrongs and in bringing about changed and better conditions in that unfortunate country. Whether England will grant Ireland home rule or not, whether it will, in the near future, take its place among the nations of the earth, when the epitaph of the immortal Emmet can be written, whether under the beneficent folds of its green flag, inscribed with the golden words "Liberty and Independence," the people of a united Ireland as their own masters will grow stronger, better and richer, time alone can tell. But when these things do happen, as under God's providence they surely will, it will have been made possible only by the teachings and examples of Ireland's patron saint, and by the devotion of his sons, who, in whatsoever clime they may be, keep his memory green and the recollection of Ireland's wrongs in mind, by the universal celebration of March 17, St. Patrick's day, the day of days for all true Irishmen.





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