IRISH NATIONALISM IN SACRAMENTO

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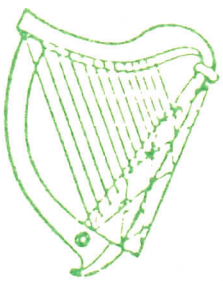

GOLDEN NOTES
Volume 36, Number 2
Summer 1990
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Sacramento County Historical Society
P.O. Box 1175
Sacramento, CA 95806

Golden Notes is a quarterly which has been published since 1954 by the Sacramento County Historical Society. Its purpose is to preserve the historical heritage of Sacramento and to promote public awareness of local history.

We invite manuscripts about the people, institutions and events of the Sacramento region throughout its history.

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This issue of *Golden Notes* was made possible by a grant from the County of Sacramento.

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IRISH NATIONALISM IN SACRAMENTO 1850-1890

By John Francis Delury

Sacramento County Historical Society

IRISH NATIONALISM IN SACRAMENTO, 1850-1890

by John Francis Delury

In this State [California] and Oregon alone there are hundreds of places where branches of the [Fenian] Society maintain a flourishing existence. All over the Coast, Fenian festivals are among the common occurrences of the day.

The Daily Bee, June 8, 1866

In the 1960s a group of Sacramento business leaders revived a long-dormant local tradition, the Saint Patrick's Day parade. After a silence of many decades March 17, or the Friday closest thereto, was given civic homage as the feast day of Ireland's patron saint. This revival has continued, the work of local merchants and professional people grouped together as the "Mummers," an organization devoted solely to this annual parade. As the modern parade moves along J Street, usually on a chilly evening, the participants are varied and colorful: high-school bands and drill teams, "mountain men" in fringed buckskin firing blanks from antique rifles, unicyclists, sheriff's posses, and members of the Ben Ali Temple of the Shrine adding a purposefully comic note as they dart about on tiny motor cars.

There is little that is distinctively Irish in this late 20th-century Saint Patrick's Day parade—a small cluster of wolfhounds, a parade marshal of Irish descent, a scattering of green derbies and banners along the line of march.... The parade has taken on a civic character. A "great day for the Irish" has become one other parade, with Saint Patrick as much an excuse as a motive force.

There was a time in Sacramento, however, when these downtown streets resounded to quite a different Saint Patrick's Day parade. It was a parade by and for Irish immigrants, an annual event which served a larger purpose than merely holiday enjoyment. It was a time to display

strength in numbers, to be among one's own, to affirm the importance of being Irish and the importance of maintaining solidarity with those struggling in the cause of Irish freedom at home and abroad. Saint Patrick's Day's central meaning for the Irish was understood by their neighbors. It became a focus for interaction with other ethnic groups also, as we shall see.

Saint Patrick's Day parades and the attendant events in 19th-century Sacramento were more than quaint spectacles, now of merely antiquarian interest. These events reflected specific developments in Irish history and served not only to affirm a sense of community and well-being among Irish-Americans, but also to give occasion for public expression of Irish nationalism. They informed Sacramento and reminded the local Irish themselves that the struggle against English tyranny over Ireland continued unabated. They showed the degree to which Irish nationalist activity was present within the Sacramento Irish community, a significant group in a largely friendly social environment. Even after the decline and disappearance of the original parade, the Irish nationalist tradition in Sacramento continued unbroken in some form.

Highlights of Irish nationalist expression which were vivid in the minds of paraders in 19th-century Sacramento are now "ancient history" for most Americans. The paraders had known, or were close to persons who had known participants in the bloody mass uprising of 1798 against British rule of Ireland. The Act of Union in 1801 ended the brief semi-autonomy represented by the Irish Parliament in Dublin. The Act of Union was intended to perpetuate British control by allowing Irish members to serve in a common United Kingdom Parliament at Westminster. A British-run administration was based at Dublin Castle. All semblance of a separate Irish political identity was lost.

The 1801 settlement was to have included Catholic emancipation, whereby the Catholic majority would have representatives of their own community sitting in Parliament. This was not achieved until 1829, under the charismatic leadership of Daniel O'Connell. His next and definitive goal was repeal of the Act of Union and re-establishment of a legislature in Dublin, even if subject to Britain in essentials. This campaign failed, and the failure in large part spawned the "Young Ireland" movement. The movement drew inspiration from revolutionary nationalism on the continent and derived cultural impetus from the patriotic Irish poet, Thomas Davis.

Young Ireland took up arms in the European revolutionary frenzy of 1848. Its meager forces were scattered after little more than a skirmish, its leaders then imprisoned and exiled. But the Young Irelanders had fought and so kept alive the physical-force tradition which moves in Irish history in uneasy parallel to the tradition of constitutional nationalism.

Sacramento's most famous Irish visitor in 1854, Thomas Francis Meagher, was the incarnation of the Young Ireland movement and its abortive 1848 rebellion. He and his companions were not victorious in battle but they showed that there were still people ready to die for Irish freedom. That message had an immense psy-

chological impact, keeping alive the tradition of blood sacrifice that reached a zenith for a later generation in the 1916 Rising. The Meagher visit set the theme of physical force as one option for the Irish. "Physical force" and "constitutional nationalism" are standard terms for the two main avenues by which the Irish have long driven for independence. They are relevant even in the 1990s in the conflict in Northern Ireland.

The Gold-Rush Milieu: Sacramento and San Francisco

It was in the wake of the failed Young Ireland rebellion that the Irish arrived among other gold-rush immigrants. They came to the distant Pacific shore amid a polyglot, ethnically diverse, great human tide. There was not an entrenched American society here, against which these emigrants had to struggle to advance, but only the numerically thin California presence. In that sense the Irish, along with many other groups, were among the founding peoples of present California.

The Irish were the largest foreign-born element in Sacramento in the period under consideration, 1850-1890. In the former year there were 250 Irish-born in the City and County of Sacramento. By 1860 the number had increased to 2,433. In 1870 a slight decrease to 2,429 was noted, and ten years later there was a further slight decrease to 2,232. The Irish-born were only a part of the whole, of course; throughout the period, the Irish-American group as a whole continued to grow.

Many of Sacramento's Irish were transient and most were working-class. Only eight percent of those in the 1850 census can be identified in the 1860 census, and only one percent in that of 1880. The later arrivals seemed more likely to remain. Most of the first arrivals were unaccompanied men but by 1860 women formed a third of the Irish-born population. Most Sacramento Irish had lived elsewhere in the United States before arriving in Sacramento and therefore had some familiarity with American mores and, very likely, with anti-Irish attitudes.[1]

Irish nationalism came first and quite dramatically to the fore in gold-rush Sacramento with the appearance in 1854 of one of the most famous Irish patriots of the period, "Meagher of the Sword," mentioned above. He had been received in the United States with immense acclaim when he escaped in 1852 from "Restricted Residence" in Tasmania. His lectures on Irish patriotic topics drew large east-coast crowds and he spoke on three occasions in Sacramento during February 1854.

As a speaker he was more scholarly than flamboyant, reading from prepared text. In Sacramento he denounced the opposition of Daniel O'Connell to the Young Ireland movement and praised the influence of the *Nation* newspaper, organ of Thomas Davis, for its positive influence in converting many to love of country. Meagher was critical of those Catholic bishops and clerics who failed to support the 1848 rising. He dwelt on the horrors of the Potato Famine, asserting in vivid language "that it was better to die and pass away from earth, than thus to live and suffer."

Meagher set a tone for much of the future expression of Irish nationalism in Sacramento by stressing two recurring themes: Ireland as the land of rebellion and as the land of suffering. The physical-force tradition of 1848 fostered by him was to be revived by the Fenians (see below).[2] In the Sierra foothills and in the great Central Valley of California a scattered population of Irish, far from their native soil, responded to this inspiration. One wonders how many bore a vivid recollection of when, during those early gold-rush years, preoccupied by their new life in a new land, they were reminded by "Meagher of the Sword" of the heroic cause of their youth.

Meagher lectured on Irish Republicanism in the Reverend Joseph A. Benton's Congregational Church on Sixth Street. Benton was the outstanding religious figure in 1850s Sacramento. The setting was symbolic in that even later, when Saint Patrick's Day in Sacramento became closely associated with the Saint Rose of Lima Catholic Church, there were appeals for participation by persons of Irish descent regardless of creed.

Meagher was long in public prominence, commanding the "Irish Brigade" gallantly at Fredericksburg during the Civil War. He died in 1867 as Acting Territorial Governor of Montana.

Within a few years after Meagher's visit, Saint Patrick's Day events took place throughout the gold-rush counties. In 1857 a Saint Patrick's season ball was scheduled for Oroville with supper planned for three hundred couples. Sacramento overtook this early Oroville leadership when, next year, a grand ball and fine supper were held at Armory Hall. In 1858 a "Calico Ball" was scheduled for Saint Patrick's Day in El Dorado County and, a year later, comparable events were reported also in San Francisco, Stockton, Marysville, Placerville, Nevada City, Downieville and Yankee Jim's.[3]

First developed in Sacramento as somewhat informal processions following mass, probably by 1857, the Saint Patrick's Day parade was evidently a well established event during Civil War years, and the high point of the 19th-century parade as an ethnic event occurred in 1875. The parade continued to be significant until 1879, when it acquired a broad civic character, though it retained its essential Irish-ness. But in 1880 the parade went out of existence until its revival by the Mummers in quite a different guise, as noted above, in the 1960s.

One reason for the parade's eclipse may have been the continuing assimilation and acculturation of the Sacramento Irish. In contrast San Francisco, with a very significant Irish-American population, has sustained its Saint Patrick's Day parade throughout the years. First held in 1851, it has continued without interruption to the present. San Francisco was the hub of Irish-American life in northern California, indeed, throughout the far west. There was constant interaction between the Irish of Sacramento and those of the far more populous San Francisco only a hundred miles away. Irish militia units and individuals from Sacramento and elsewhere in the gold country marched on occasion in the San Francisco parade. On the other hand, speakers often came from San Francisco to address

the Sacramento Irish on Saint Patrick's Day.

Comparisons with Irish events in the San Francisco Bay area shed light on Sacramento Irish nationalism. Events in Ireland drew responses in both communities. The same speakers appeared in both San Francisco and Sacramento. But the Sacramento Irish maintained their own organizations and activities, and were in no sense a mere appendage of the San Francisco Irish.

Irish and Irish-American Background

The organizational aspect of Irish nationalism in Sacramento was manifested in numerous organizations including the Fenian Circles, the Sacramento Irish Sufferers Relief Committee, the Dillon Branch of the Land League, the Emmet Guards and Sarsfield Grenadier Guards, the Robert Emmet Club, and in ad hoc efforts to gain freedom for Fenians in British prisons. These activities were prominent in the forty-year period under discussion. They overlapped, of course, and to a considerable degree these groups reflected the course of Irish and Irish-American history.

The Fenian movement appeared near the end of the 1850s and grew rapidly in the early 1860s. In Ireland it formed as a secret, oath-bound society prepared to attempt an armed rebellion at the first opportune moment. It took the name IRB—Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood. Its American counterpart was public, not oath-bound, and known as the Fenian movement. The term Fenian, derived from an ancient body of Gaelic warriors, is often used loosely for both the Irish and American groups. In San Francisco the first Fenian grand ball was held in 1859, showing that the organization was on the west coast in its very early formative period.

Early Fenian activities in Ireland led to imprisonment for many members, including some who were US citizens by birth or naturalization. American Fenian leaders dwelt on this in educating Americans regarding Irish grievances. They pressed the US government to seek amnesty for prisoners, especially US citizens. The British government did, in fact, begin releasing Fenian prisoners who were US citizens, even in cases when that status was disputed.

The American Civil War provided thousands of Irish with military training which they then hoped to use to Ireland's benefit. Many did return to Ireland in the period 1866-1867 to join in the struggle. However the Fenian movement underwent an internal split in the United States, reflected in a series of abortive invasions of Canada. To some, Canada was the most accessible English target, but to IRB leaders in Ireland it was a diversion of effort from the main goal, a rising in Ireland.

Following the last serious Canadian invasion attempt, in 1871, the American Fenians steadily declined in numbers and influence. The physical-force tradition they represented reemerged as the Clan na Gael. Also in 1871, a shadowy, sixty-member Irish Brotherhood dedicated to Irish independence appeared in Sacramento.[4] For many decades, however—indeed from 1880 to the Easter Rising of 1916—the Clan na Gael was less in evidence on the American Irish scene

than were support organizations for the Irish Parliamentary Party led by Parnell and his successors.

The Emmet Guards and Sarsfield Guards were Sacramento militia units named after prominent Irish patriots: Robert Emmet, a youthful Protestant who represented a patriotic idealism that transcended religious difference in leading an unsuccessful rising in Dublin in 1803; and Patrick Sarsfield, leader of the Catholic Irish resistance to the forces of William and Mary. Following the Treaty of Limerick (1691), Sarsfield had fought on the Continent as the most prominent of "The Wild Geese," Irish Catholics forced to seek careers abroad. His dying words, "Would to God that this were for Ireland!" as he fell mortally wounded in battle in the Low Countries, were an inspiration to Irish exiles, including those in Sacramento.

Similar Irish-American militia units were formed in San Francisco and throughout the United States. Many members hoped that such military training could one day be placed at the service of Ireland. For some on the east coast and in the midwest, this hope was realized in the Fenian invasions of Canada; however frustrating were the failed outcome of those actions in 1866, 1867 and 1871. West-coast Fenians were highly organized, but distance prevented their active participation in the invasions.

The Robert Emmet Club sponsored public events commemorating the birth of its namesake. Because Emmet stood precisely for independence through military means, there could be no mistaking the philosophy of this club. In contrast, the Sacramento Irish Sufferers Relief Committee was philanthropic in purpose, seeking to raise funds at a time of threatened recurrence of widespread famine. This reflected the deep trauma among the Irish caused by the Great Famine in the late 1840s. British misrule was blamed for worsening the effects of the famine, and rage over that memory intensified bitterness toward England. This was made explicit in an 1872 Saint Patrick's Day oration in San Francisco by a prominent religious leader, Brother Justin of the Christian Brothers:

> But why go back to '98? Have we not in our own day examples enough of England's cruelty to Ireland? Have not some among you witnessed the effects of the famine of '47? ... Will we, in a word, forget our faith and fatherland? Never![5]

The Irish Sufferers Relief Committee clearly had political overtones.

More explicitly political was the Dillon Branch of the Land League. The Land League was an American nationwide support group for the movement in Ireland under the same name, which struggled to end feudal land tenure there. The battle for land reform brought together both the constitutional and physical-force elements in Irish nationalism in an alliance of sorts, known as the New Departure.[6] The Dillon Branch sponsored a prominent Irish Parliamentary leader, Thomas Power (Tay Pay) O'Connor, in a public appearance in Sacramento in 1882, for instance. His visit was in the tradition of fund-raising speaking tours by Irish political figures in the United States such as Charles Stewart Parnell, Michael Davitt, John Edward Redmond, Eamon De Valera and others. These were occasions of

Charles Stewart Parnell, Irish nationalist and Home Rule leader in the British Parliament, was a hero to Irish Americans, especially those who supported the Fenian movement for an independent Ireland. Parnell visited the United States and spoke at fund-raising events. He did not come to Sacramento, however, but kept in touch with followers in the local Robert Emmet Club to sustain interest in the cause.

heightened patriotic awareness among the Irish and a source of essential funds for Irish nationalist activity in the homeland.

The Catholic Church and the Physical-Force Tradition

The beginning stages of public Saint Patrick's Day observances produced a protest by some Irish in 1859 to Archbishop Joseph Alemany of San Francisco, whose jurisdiction included Sacramento until 1886. The Archbishop, a Catalan by birth, was asked to prevent such observances because those protesting did not think it wise to present the Irish publicly "as a distinct class." Nothing seems to have come of the protest but it suggests that, to at least some Irish, their full acceptance in the larger community was uncertain.[7]

Not long after the anxious appeal to Alemany, the San Francisco Irish were central to an event with a major impact on Irish history. A famous exiled "48er," Terence Bellew McManus, died in San Francisco. The Fenians there devised a plan to return the body to Ireland. The great outpouring of feeling in Cork and Dublin as the body reached its final resting place showed how powerful and durable the physical-force tradition continued to be.

Saint Patrick's Day celebrations tapped deep religious emotions and produced occasional tensions within the Catholic Church. A sharp crisis occurred in San Francisco in 1871, revealing a laity not subservient to ecclesiastical pressure. Bishop Keane of the Diocese of Cloyne in County Cork sent one Father Foley abroad to collect money for the diocesan cathedral. Archbishop Alemany did not wish fund-raising competition within the Catholic community and limited Foley to only one sermon. The visiting priest persisted in giving a public lecture to a large audience, and then appeared as Orator of the Day in the Saint Patrick's Day commemoration. All local priests boycotted the proceedings, but the event was nevertheless called a complete success.

The prestige of Bishop Keane among Irish nationalists may have been a factor in popular support for Father Foley. Keane had done a study showing the inadequacy of English land law reform in Ireland and was prominent among Irish bishops on the issue of education. He declined to circulate the papal condemnation of the Fenians in his diocese and so Catholics from neighboring areas would travel there for confession, knowing they would not be asked if they had taken the Fenian oath. Elsewhere the question was put directly to Catholics at confession, and absolution was denied if they had taken the oath and did not repudiate it.[8]

The presence of a large body of Fenians in the Sacramento Saint Patrick's Day procession illustrates different reactions to Fenianism by the American Catholic and the Irish Catholic Church. The Irish hierarchy, led by Cardinal Paul Cullen of Dublin, largely denounced the IRB as a violent, secret society whose members were to be denied the sacraments. Cullen had lived in Rome for many years and held revolution to be a threat to the church. He viewed Fenians as a counterpart to the anti-clerical Risorgimento. The American Fenian oath,

however, less rigorous than that in Ireland, evoked little or no controversy. As was the case in Sacramento, American Fenians usually experienced no interference from church authorities in such activities. American bishops were generally unhappy over a papal rescript denouncing Fenians, and made no effort to extend the ban to this country. They knew it would strain the loyalties of their Irish parishioners.

On the other hand, there were vigorous denunciations in 1874 from both Archbishop Alemany of San Francisco and Bishop Eugene O'Connell of Grass Valley in regard to the typical Saint Patrick's Day ball as being unsuitable for the ideally austere Lenten season. O'Connell insisted that Saint Patrick commemorations be limited to procession, musical and oratorical events. To the Irish Catholic, the hierarchy's strictures threatened a painful dilemma. Emphasis on attending a Saint Patrick's Day mass and the practice of calling the parade a procession evidently reflected sensitivity to the desired austerity of the Lenten season.[9]

The Parades

Other than mention of the "usual" mass being celebrated, the first evidence of Saint Patrick's Day festivities in Sacramento dates from 1857, leading to the 1858 grand ball. St. Rose's in downtown Sacramento, the only Catholic church in Sacramento until 1870, was site of the mass, of course, which remained a permanent feature of Saint Patrick's Day festivities. By 1863, when the Sacramento *Bee* noted that there were events in "all populous places in the State," a new newspaper had become available for sale in Sacramento and elsewhere, *The Irish Nationalist*, published in San Francisco. Next year, Sacramento delegates went to a broadly attended west coast Fenian convention in San Francisco. John Foley of Sacramento was on the credentials committee—an active Fenian, known to have served on the Sacramento Fenian Circle Committee of Safety as late as 1871.[10]

Against this background of increasing visibility for the local Irish community, Sacramento's first really spectacular Saint Patrick's Day commemoration was held in 1865. The Emmet Guard led by Captain John Foley then made its first appearance in the festive parade. About 350 persons marched under Grand Marshal James McGuire, a prominent Fenian supporter.[11] The "Irish Ladies" of Sacramento presented Foley, for the Emmet Guard, a six-by-six-foot flag replete with Irish patriotic symbols including harp, shamrock, wolfhound, and a sunburst like that on the Fenian flag. The flagstaff was topped with a pike, potent symbol of the bloody Rising of 1798. The presenters admonished the Emmet Guard:

> ...Whenever the time for which we all pray shall come—that time when the flag of Saint Patrick's shall again flaunt the standard of the "Sassenagh" let neither this banner nor the men in whose trust we now deposit it, be absent from the fray.

Captain Foley promptly assured the ladies that "not a member of the Emmet Guard will fall with his back to the foe." He made it clear that the foe was the "Sassenagh," i.e. the English, from the Gaelic term.[12]

James McGuire, a Forty-niner, was a prominent Fenian advocate in Sacramento and an organizer of Saint Patrick's Day parades.

Our information on early Saint Patrick's Day parades in Sacramento comes largely from newspapers, though much detail is best understood by consulting primary and secondary sources dealing with Irish nationalist activity in Ireland and the United States. The parades themselves provide valuable insights into the Irish immigrants' sense of themselves and their community. Significant symbolic and folk-ritual aspects of the parades may be woven into discussion of the flow of Irish-American organizational life in Sacramento. In this regard one of the later Sacramento parades (1875) was the most unusual and ambitious in stage effect. There were 400 persons in the parade including two divisions of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Sarsfield Grenadier Guards, the Hibernian Benevolent Association, the Father Mathew Total Abstinence Benevolent Association, and "a beautifully decorated triumphal car containing young ladies dressed in white, representing the 32 counties of Ireland, the Goddess of Liberty, Maid of Erin and Maid of Honor." The triumphal car was adorned with intensely patriotic quotations from Daniel O'Connell, Robert Emmet and Patrick Henry. The handsome decorations for the coach were credited to George W. Whitlock and it was described as "one of the handsomest features in the procession." Two knights in armor bore flags inscribed Munster and Leinster (but not representing the other two historic Irish provinces, Ulster and Connaught). A very American touch to this Irish parade was inclusion of the Eagle and Modoc baseball clubs, in uniform, carrying bats and balls. The City Superintendent of Schools, Add. C. Hinkson, permitted Catholic boys in public schools to be excused for the day to participate.[13]

The procession was followed by a celebration at the Agricultural Hall, corner of 6th and M streets, where the participants sang a song popular among the Fenians:

THE GREEN
ABOVE THE RED

And tis for this we think and toil and knowledge strive to glean
That we may pull the English Red below the Irish Green.
And leave her sons sweet liberty, and smiling plenty spread
Above the land once dark with blood—The Green above the Red.[14]

The singing of patriotic songs was common and must have heightened the emotional impact of such gatherings. The use of elaborate historic symbolism was also true of the San Francisco parades. In 1872, in that city's parade, one banner depicted Daniel O'Connell delivering a speech on the Irish Church Bill in Parliament. Patrick Sarsfield at the siege of Limerick appeared on the reverse. A twelve-foot-high Round Tower was borne along and, as a crowning touch from the remote past, men filed along in the guise of galloglasses, "the heavy infantry of the Milesians." They were "dressed in a shirt of mail and flesh-colored tights. Long hair floated over their shoulders and they wore mantles of yellow cloth."[15]

This symbolism was not simply picturesque or antiquarian. To an Irish person thousands of miles from home, the parade provided emotionally powerful reminders of central elements in the Irish sense of identity: a distinct people (all 32 counties were honored); an ancient people possessing a rich civilization (the galloglasses); a land of learning (the Round Tower as a place of refuge in monasteries); and a fount of heroism (Sarsfield in military combat, O'Connell in Parliament).

To many in the parade and looking on, *this* evocation of the Irish past must have stirred new resolve to give a few dollars to the Fenians and to famine relief, and to plan whatever further role was possible in advancing the cause about which they had heard as children perhaps from a grandfather who went forth with pike in hand in 1798.

The virulent anti-Irish sentiment on the Atlantic coast did have an echo

James McClatchy, Irish-born founder of the Sacramento ***Bee****, arrived in 1849. He and his son Valentine were vigorous supporters of the Irish nationalist movement.*

in California. Vigilantism in San Francisco was often directed at the Irish, the Know-Nothing Party in California was anti-Irish, and a sharp struggle occurred at the turn of the century when Father Peter Yorke led Irish Catholics against the bigoted A.P.A. (American Protective Association). Even within the fluid frontier society of California there were frequent reminders to the Irish that prejudice against them did exist. That produced a sense of solidarity that found one outlet in continuing concern for the freedom of Ireland. A free Ireland was important in itself but it could also enhance the standing of the emigrant Irish among their neighbors.

Sheer geographic distance was another condition that affected the scale

of Irish nationalist activity in California. The hub of American Irish nationalist activity was in the population centers of the east coast and midwest. No major Irish nationalist gatherings took place farther west than Chicago.16 But geographic distance did not hasten assimilation. There were sufficient Irish in distant California to survive as distinct communities well beyond the gold-rush era.

The Sacramento Irish and the American Civil War

Referring to three famous Irish-American officers of the Union Army, Michael Corcoran, Philip Henry Sheridan, and of course Meagher, Sacramento Irish expressed a belief that the Union and Irish causes were linked at least by having a common enemy in England. Captain B. F. Ryan, 1865 Saint Patrick's Day Orator of the Day, spoke starkly of English support for the Confederate States: "have we not witnessed her bastard Lordings in plots and counsels with arch traitors in arms to assist in the work of demolition and dismemberment of this Republic?" [17]

East-coast tensions between Irish laborers and free Negroes, culminating in draft riots in New York and reflecting an Irish ambivalence over emancipation, were less noticeable in California. Job tensions existed primarily in regard to Chinese immigration, though there was some opposition to free black immigration into California.

Irish leaders in Sacramento, including James McClatchy of the *Bee* and the ubiquitous John Foley, were movers behind the Hibernian Lincoln and Johnson Club, which directed its appeal to all local Irishmen. A ritual high point in this identification of the Irish with Union causes came on the fourth anniversary of the attack on Fort Sumter, when a great gathering in Sacramento hailed recent decisive northern victories. The Emmet Guards were prominent in the parade, and festivities culminated with the burning of Jeff Davis in effigy.[18] The theme of England as enemy of both Ireland and the United States continued to be used with effect in the postwar era, when sympathy for Fenians was supported by denunciation of England's delay in settling the Alabama claims.

Climactic Fenian Years

The notable Irish patriotic content of Saint Patrick's Day festivities in Sacramento in 1865 reflected mounting excitement over the Fenian movement and the prospect of an early insurrection in Ireland. In 1866 the Fenian Brotherhood participated in the parade for the first time, and a year later they numbered 250 in the procession, the largest contingent of all. Fenian muster rolls were submitted to Fenian headquarters in New York where California Fenians were grouped with those of other western states into the 21st Fenian Regiment. These were the climactic Fenian years: the invasions of Canada (1866, 1870, 1871) and, overseas, a brave but fruitless assault by Irish Fenians on various Irish Constabulary barracks in the Dublin area in 1867. Fenians were in the 1870 Sacramento Saint Patrick's Day parade but then they vanish from the reports, clearly in decline.

As Saint Patrick's Day events in Sacramento built steadily toward what was to be the most spectacular

and ambitious parade ever, that of 1875, the local Irish gathered in meetings for specific patriotic purposes, either formally as Fenians or on an *ad hoc* basis.

The Fenian convention of 1864, mentioned above, called upon Irishmen to form a Circle (their basic element of organization) wherever ten of their number were found. This was not the usual lodge-ritual-regalia sort of organization. Fenian national structure called for Centers to head the Circles. Under Center A would be nine subcenters known as B's or Captains, and below the B's were nine C's or Sergeants, who in turn directed nine D's or privates. The object was a military table of organization, but one in which those at each level of command would know only a few immediately associated Fenians. If the organization were penetrated by an informer, a constant danger, he would have only limited knowledge of other Fenian members, under the Circle structure. Fenians placed great emphasis on secrecy. American Fenians undertook membership using a form of pledge not considered to be binding against conscience, however, by contrast with the oath used in Ireland to which conservative churchmen took strong exception.

Lack of stringent secrecy here was evident in the public identification of Fenian officers. For several years the Sacramento *Daily Union* in January listed the Fenian Brotherhood among the city's clubs and organizations, specifying officers and meeting times. Still, the full extent of Fenian organization in the Sacramento area is difficult to determine precisely. There are indications that it was widespread.

The use of their style of military organization suggested that California Fenians were prepared, however distant the likelihood, to do battle in Ireland. On June 8, 1866, at the height of tension over the first Fenian attack on Canada, the *Daily Bee* warned readers not to "laugh off" the Fenians:

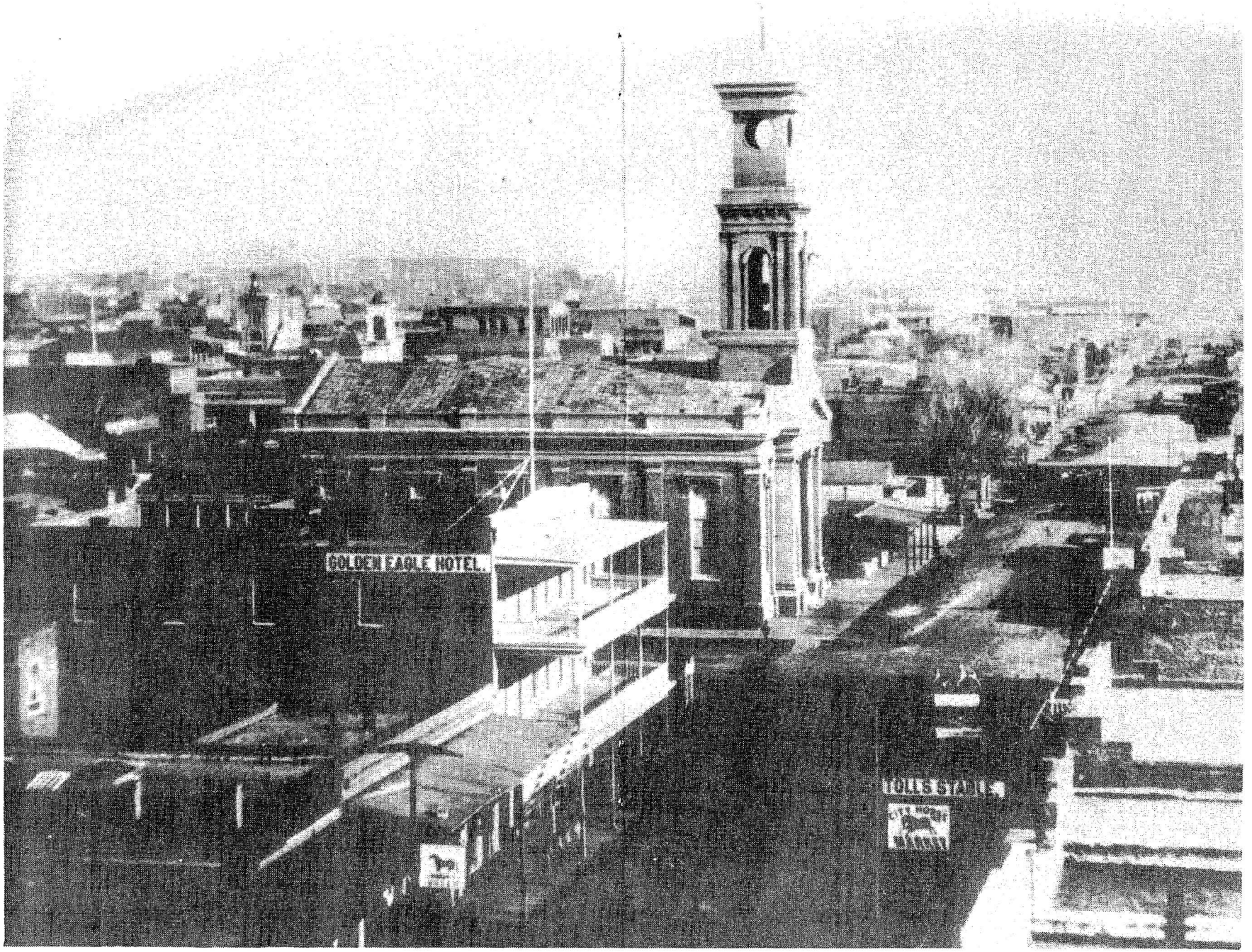
> In this State and Oregon alone there are hundreds of places where branches of the Society maintain a flourishing existence. All over the Coast, Fenian festivals are among the common occurrences of the day.

An imposing fifteen thousand persons were reported as participating in a Fenian celebration or picnic at San Mateo a few weeks earlier, a throng drawn chiefly from the large Irish population of San Francisco.[19]

American sympathy for the Fenian cause seems to have been broad, but it was not unanimous. Some immigrants from Great Britain in a Grass Valley saloon in June 1866, for instance, were not sympathetic with Fenians in discussing the latter's Canadian invasion, as a newspaper account shows:

> **A Fenian Rumpus in California.** The Nevada Gazette gives the particulars of a row which occurred in a saloon at Grass Valley, on Sunday afternoon, between a party of Fenians and some Cornishmen. It appears that several Irishmen were sitting at a table drinking beer, when one of them proposed to drink to the success of the Fenian invasion of

On following page: St. Rose of Lima, at 7th and K streets, was the only Roman Catholic church in Sacramento until 1870. Members of the congregation were the source of Fenian fervor for several decades.


GOLDEN EAGLE HOTEL

> Canada. This annoyed the Cornishmen and after some words, one of them named John Kissel, struck one of the Fenians, when a general fight ensued in which tumblers, rocks and other missiles were used. None of the belligerents were seriously injured. Kissel, who commenced the row was arrested, convicted and fined thirty dollars.[20]

That the British authorities did not consider Fenian activity on the west coast an empty threat is shown by military dispositions made in British Columbia at the height of the invasion tensions in June 1866. Dispatches from Victoria reported measures taken to safeguard against a possible Fenian raid. The men-of-war *Scout* and *Alert* and the gunboats *Forward* and *Sparrowhawk* were ordered to cruise off Victoria Harbor. It was also noted that *HMS Sutlej* had arrived at Esquimault Naval Station on Vancouver Island, with Admiral Denman aboard.[21]

Either formally or in *ad hoc* committees, Sacramento Irish maintained their support of the Fenian cause even after defeat of the Fenian rising in Ireland in 1867. Situated to advantage in the state capital, they supported efforts to have the state legislature memorialize Congress to urge Great Britain to give fair treatment to Fenian prisoners. On March 12, 1868, a large meeting of "Irishmen and the friends of Ireland" in Sacramento adopted a resolution to this effect. Present as a speaker was John Hamill, California State Center of the Fenian Brotherhood. Vice president of the meeting was James McGuire, mentioned above, a local Irishman whose interests ranged from the fraternal and the civic to the Irish nationalist. He had been grand marshal of the 1865 Saint Patrick's Day parade and was first treasurer of the Hibernian Benevolent Association.[22]

This may have marked a high point in state legislative attention to matters Irish. In 1858 the legislature had considered adjourning in honor of Saint Patrick's Day but the idea was ridiculed. A member from Yuba County had been trying unsuccessfully for two years to have the day so honored. The Sacramento *Daily Union* waxed indignant:

> ...of all the silly attempts to palm off political chicanery for honest sympathy with the religious sentiments of a community, at the expense of the State, this Irish resolution transcends anything yet offered in a California Legislature.[23]

Two years later, however, when emotions had subsided, an adjournment to honor Saint Patrick's Day was adopted with the assistance of State Senator (later U.S. Senator) John Conness.

In 1871 the last attempted Fenian-style invasion of Canada took place, a small-scale foray into Manitoba. It was not under official Fenian auspices. However, the old Irish principle that England's misfortune was Ireland's opportunity was not forgotten. A sense of Anglo-American crisis was abroad as the *Alabama* claims remained unresolved. Yankee anger at Great Britain over its support of the Confederacy during the Civil War provided a favorable public climate for the Fenians. "Twisting the lion's tail" was a popular patriotic pastime, and so American reaction to the Fenian incursions into Canada was tempered. Aware of this

public mood, members of the Sacramento Irish community met on the evening of February 8, 1872, at Dolan's grocery store, 6th and L streets, "for the purpose of considering the questions of moving for Ireland's freedom, in case of armed difficulty between England and America." It was later reported that the meeting was:

> ...well filled with young Irishmen eager to evince their willingness to assist their adopted and native countries in the war which current telegrams have shown to be quite possible between this country and England.

Plans to start military drilling were announced. Those at the meeting were not identified publicly as Fenians, suggesting that the brotherhood had already gone into eclipse.[24]

The Irish and Their Neighbors: Ethnic Interaction

As the Saint Patrick's Day festivities continued through the years, they occasionally cast light on relations between the Irish and the Chinese, black, French and German communities. In 1870 for instance, the *Bee* noted alarm sweeping through Sacramento's Chinatown on the day of the parade:

> ...The closest observers of Saint Patrick's Day were the Chinese.... Doors were closed.... There can be no doubt that a general fear of some impending danger had spread among the Chinese previous to yesterday, and all without the slightest cause. It was not only unjust on the part of those who originated the report of intended violence on the part of the Irish element on that day, but simply absurd and ridiculous. Because some whiskey-inspired and worthless fellows occasionally maltreat a Chinaman, that is no reason why all those of one nationality should be presumed to have turned cutthroats and murderers; however, it is past now, and I Street is again tranquil.[25]

This episode reflects the insecurity in which Chinese immigrants lived, and also the close interaction between Irish community events in Sacramento and San Francisco. The alarm among Sacramento Chinese may have originated from a similar fear in San Francisco's Chinatown, prompted by a San Francisco newspaper report that there would be a systematic attack against Chinese on Saint Patrick's Day. Tension between these ethnic groups was based largely on job competition. It was just a few years later in San Francisco that the Irish anti-Chinese demagogue Dennis Kearney rallied his "Sandlotters" around the slogan, "The Chinese must go!"

Saint Patrick's Day in 1870, in the event, was handled on a positive note in San Francisco as well as in Sacramento. The San Francisco arrangements committee at a public meeting denounced "the base attack made upon a noble nationality." The San Francisco *Chronicle* later noted editorially, "Not a single Celestial was attacked, insulted or maltreated." For the Irish to describe the Chinese as a "noble nationality" was an exceptionally positive expression in this troubled era which was marked frequently by demonstrations of *uninhibited* racial prejudices. Sacramento's Irish-Chinese tensions seem to have been

Archbishop Joseph Alemany of San Francisco, whose jurisdiction included Sacramento until 1886, was asked by some Irish-Americans to prevent nationalist exploitation of Saint Patrick's Day observances. He did not interfere, but often had to deal with tensions within the church caused by nationalist activities when immigrant families were seeking acceptance in the larger community.

moderate, but there is a reminder of the scantiness of our records, and hence full understanding of these tensions, in the *Bee's* observation in 1872: "The day has been peculiarly quiet, there being no drunkenness whatever."[26]

If the Irish created somewhat amorphous alarm among the Chinese, they faced more directly the issue of discrimination against black Sacramentans. On March 3, 1871, the general committee handling arrangements for the Saint Patrick's Day celebration considered a request by the Colored Zouave Company that they participate in the parade. The subject was debated "with force and spirit." A motion to reject the request carried with only one opposing vote.[27]

Interestingly, in the same year in San Francisco, "Colored Companies" asked to participate in the parade there. The request was viewed as a Republican trick to bring about a rejection of the petition, to anger the black community and thus to weaken Democratic candidates in the next elections. The Irish decided to "treat them with all consideration and respect," but neither black unit showed up to march. One lacked the necessary equipment, the other lacked sufficient members.[28] Thus, the San Francisco response was *acquiescent if* not enthusiastic, while Sacramento blocked such participation. Here there was no reference to Republican political scheming, but it seems clear that Republicans were very active in promoting civil rights for blacks while Democrats opposed them.

Eight years later justice was better served in Sacramento. A description of the 1879 parade observed: "Sacramento Zouaves (Colored) Captain Sims Emory Commanding, each member wearing a sprig of shamrock and the marching and drill being noticeable for accuracy." That some guilt and embarrassment lingered from the previous exclusion is suggested by the further report:

> ...At the termination of the procession the Sarsfield Guards entertained the Sacramento (Colored) Zouaves at their armory in a sumptuous manner, toasts were given and responded to and a hearty recognition was given to the colored people who, on this occasion, wore shamrocks on the lappels [*sic*] of their coats.[29]

French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War stirred a wave of Sacramento Irish sympathy for the losers. Exceptional efforts were made to include them in 1871 Saint Patrick's Day events. A joint French and Irish Committee of Arrangements was formed which organized an Irish delegation to welcome and escort the French flag and its sympathizers to the Agricultural Pavilion, five carriages in all. The French Vice Consul, M. Berton, presented the committee with a French flag which was hung on the wall of St. Rose's Church during mass. Sympathy for France reflected the historic view that France was the perennial enemy of England. There was an added emotional bond with France as a Catholic nation at war with a Germany dominated by Lutheran Prussia.[30]

A few years later, in 1875, the Saint Patrick's evening concert at the Pavilion included a quartet from the Turn Verein and selections by many

artists with German names. The German-Irish rapprochement thus embodied followed some years of conflict in Sacramento over the establishment of a separate parish for German-speaking Catholics. In 1875 Archbishop Alemany refused definitely to use a piece of property acquired by local German Catholics for their hoped-for parish. Their large participation in 1875 Saint Patrick's Day events may have shown their acquiescence in the Archbishop's decision and, since the proceeds of the event were for the Christian Brothers' School, a coming-together of Germans and Irish in support of a school to serve both. In 1894 German-speaking Franciscans arrived at the invitation of Bishop Patrick Manogue and the following year Sacramento's second Catholic parish, St. Francis, was dedicated at 25th and K streets, especially (but not exclusively) for the German-American Catholic community.[31]

The involvement of the black, French and German communities underscored their awareness that Saint Patrick's Day was the most momentous day of the year for the Irish. To associate with the Irish on that day was to express a meaningful solidarity.

The Parade's End

The Sacramento 1879 celebration, though not as spectacular as that of 1875, was a high point in the evolution of Saint Patrick's Day from an ethnic to a more broadly based civic event. It was noted on this occasion:

> Saint Patrick's Day is becoming quite a cosmopolitan and national day. In this city on Sunday Night the Methodist minister delivered a sermon, highly eulogistic of Ireland's patron saint, the colored soldiers here joined heartily in the procession, together with scores of people who were neither of the Catholic religion, nor of the Irish race....[32]

The possible further evolution of the Saint Patrick's Day parade into a civic festival came to an abrupt end. Mounting distress in rural Ireland prompted formation of the Irish Sufferers Relief Committee in Sacramento and a decision that there be "no procession and public exercises" in Sacramento in 1880. There would be no unnecessary expenditure of money; only an entertainment would be given, for relief for the sufferers in Ireland. That this step was taken in earnest is shown by the announcement that, just prior to Saint Patrick's Day, the relief committee received acknowledgment from the Lord Mayor of Dublin for 360 English pounds sent for famine relief. After Saint Patrick's Day it was announced that $400 had been raised for the same purpose. Amounts ranging from $2 to $20 had been received not just from Sacramentans but also from residents of old mining camps such as Shasta and Michigan Bar. There is a poignance in reading of these contributions from Irish in distant communities, separated from their countrymen but responding to an appeal to relieve distress at home.[33]

The Sacramento Irish continued to follow the mainstream American Irish response to Irish events. Support for the direct physical-force goals of the Fenians gave way to the new combination of aggressive political action by Irish members of Parliament at Westminster with unremitting pressure against landlordism in Ireland. The

Sacramento Irish Suffers Relief Committee was succeeded by a Sacramento branch of the Land League, which was active in direct support of agitation against landlord oppression in Ireland. It was called the Dillon Branch in honor of either or both the prominent leader in the Irish Parliamentary Party, John Dillon, or his father John Blake Dillon, a hero of the Young Ireland movement. As noted above, the famous Irish Parliamentary leader, O'Connor, spoke in Sacramento under the auspices of the League in 1882. The occasion for his speech was a commemoration of the 104th anniversary of the patriot Robert Emmet's birth.[34]

Parnell's Lieutenant in Sacramento

This was one of many stops in O'Connor's first American tour. In his *Memoirs of an Old Parliamentarian* O'Connor describes his reception in New York, replete with flags, reporters, a band, etc. He was on a platform in Boston with Wendell Phillips and spoke to four or five thousand people in one Philadelphia audience. When he was in San Francisco O'Connor learned that his sister Mary had been given a six-month jail sentence for a speech critical of a local landlord. He borrowed money from a San Francisco Irishman and sent it home, paying back the loan by writing for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. O'Connor and the Irish Parliamentary Party were then pressing for a goal beyond reasonable rents, that of a peasant proprietary. In Sacramento he spoke to related issues: current matters before Parliament, operations of the Land Act and, significantly, the movement for self government in Ireland.[35]

Likely his Sacramento audience included many who had been active with the Fenians during their glory years. To those committed to physical force as the only sure means of freeing Ireland, O'Connor argued that constitutional nationalism was a viable alternative. He describes in his *Memoirs* working to overcome American suspicions of the constitutional approach which his leader, Parnell, developed with immense skill. Many militant Irish-Americans came to see in the Irish Parliamentary Party a legitimate vehicle of Irish aspirations.[36]

O'Connor's Sacramento speech was by no means wholly conciliatory. He deplored the fact that such Irish leaders as Henry Grattan and Daniel O'Connell had in the past spoken respectfully of British kings. He made it clear that at bottom there was no love lost between the English and Irish. O'Connor essentially was saying that, though English sentiment might be unchanged, the Irish Parliamentary party could bring about the deeply desired goal of a free Ireland. Later, responding to sensational charges in the London *Times* linking Parnell to violence, O'Connor was questioned whether he had said in America that English rule in Ireland was without legal or moral sanction. He responded that it did lack moral sanction because it was against the wishes of the Irish people, but might be considered *de facto* legal.

The Phoenix Park Slayings: Impact in Northern California

Within weeks of O'Connor's visit to Sacramento an event occurred in Ireland that created a profound crisis of

Bishop Patrick Manogue of Sacramento presided over the establishment of the city's second Catholic church, St. Francis. Although predominantly German-American, it served many Irish-American parishioners.

Irish nationalists in America: the May 6, 1882, Phoenix Park slayings of Lord Frederick Cavendish, newly appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Undersecretary Thomas Burke.

The San Francisco Irish had little time to weigh their response because the telegraphed first report arrived during a Land League meeting. The first audience reaction was that the deaths were somehow an Irish victory. In short order the mood changed to gloom, however, and the presiding officials expressed dismay and incomprehension. A small, violent, nationalist secret society in Ireland, "The Invincibles," was proved responsible and meanwhile the Land League was at great pains to disassociate itself from the killings.[37]

In Sacramento the Dillon Branch of the Land League adopted a resolution on May 8, 1882, that they did

> ...most positively and in unmeasured terms condemn the bloody deed, and denounce the men who were guilty of the murder[s], and put the seal of indignation on the act that would draw the Land League into disrepute after what it has done for the suffering people of Ireland.

The branch called for their position to be published in the local press, reflecting great concern at the negative impact of the killings on American public opinion.[38]

This did not mean that resort to physical force in all circumstances was condemned. The interaction of the physical-force and constitutional-nationalist traditions was a constant. On February 27, 1882, the Saint Patrick's Day Convention met in San Francisco to plan their next annual observance. Thomas Kenny, vice president of the convention, called for support in the development of "an invention for sinking British ships, with a view to destroying confidence in the British merchant service, and eventually breaking up British commerce." Here we have in distant California, amid discussion of a parade's line of march, interjection of an Irish venture in submarine warfare, John Holland's once celebrated "Fenian Ram"—still on view in a Passaic, New Jersey, park.[39]

The 1882 Saint Patrick's Day parade in San Francisco was viewed by Assemblyman John H. Gilmore, who spoke shortly thereafter at the Saint Patrick's Ball in Sacramento. Gilmore was struck, he said, by the sight of

"Catholic and Protestant arm in arm" at the San Francisco parade. This comment was not unique. At least one advertisement for a Sacramento Saint Patrick's Day procession called for participation of persons of all religious faiths. No matter how strong the Irish Catholic siege mentality, the point was never lost that Irish nationalism at least ideally and sometimes in practice transcended sectarian differences.[40]

Saint Patrick's Day in Sacramento now settled into a modest version of its former greatness. No more public processions: the mass at St. Rose's and the evening ball were all that remained. The ball was held variously under the auspices of the parish or of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. The Sisters of Mercy were frequent beneficiaries of the proceeds.

The Robert Emmet Club

During these same years, 1882-1887, a new Irish organization in its own way carried forward the patriotic traditions of the Sacramento Fenians, Irish Sufferers Relief Committee, and Land League. This was the Robert Emmet Club which held an event to honor the birthday of its namesake each March. Their speakers included civic notables such as Senator Reddy and Judge Toohy of San Francisco, for instance, in 1885. Descriptions of the club's programs stress the patriotic and serious-minded, though it is to be noted that the 1886 club celebration included "ventriloquism by Major John Egan and other interesting features."[41]

Parnell sought to maintain continued contact with American supporters including those in Sacramento. In 1886 Major Egan reported to the club on the topic, "Telephoning between Parnell and the Robert Emmet Club on Irish Affairs."[42] [The press account reads "telephoning" but telegraphing was surely intended.] Parnell was clearly the outstanding Irish political leader of his generation. He shaped the Irish nationalist members into a disciplined force that held the balance of power in Parliament at times. With this leverage he helped win William Gladstone and the English Liberal Party to the support of home rule for Ireland. With great skill Parnell satisfied the British that he operated within the framework of law and at the same time satisfied the physical-force nationalists that home rule was a way station to a truly independent Ireland. The presence of his then lieutenant, O'Connor, and Parnell's own communication with the Robert Emmet Club kept Sacramento in the mainstream of an effort to rally Irish Americans behind the most formidable challenge to British hegemony over Ireland since Daniel O'Connell.

Press and Theater: the Irish Dimension

Irish nationalism in Sacramento was enhanced by the extent of newspaper attention to Irish events and by Irish theatrical activity. The precise influence of these elements is difficult to evaluate but they surely helped to keep Ireland's cause alive among the Irish and present in the consciousness of the community at large.

Irish theatrical themes were frequent. The Metropolitan Theater in Sacramento at various times presented "Arrah-na-Pogue" by the prominent Dion Boucicault, "The Irish

Mother, or the Wild Briar Patch," and "Kathleen Mavourneen, or Saint Patrick's Eve," which added to an awareness of things Irish, even if the plots were not nationalistic. In San Francisco there was an example of a specific Irish nationalist theatrical theme in January 1866, at the height of the Fenian enthusiasm. "Martyr of 1794 and Ireland in 1866" was presented, described as a "sensational drama." The final tableau depicted Ireland as a republic, and "the British lion appears at a decided disadvantage. Every patriotic Irishman's heart must be fired by a desire to see Ireland a Republic in 1866." These and other productions were staged in theaters attended by the general public.[43]

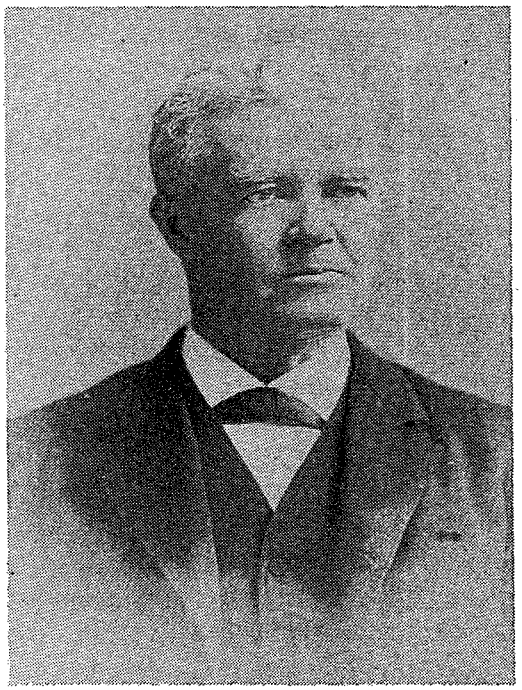
Both the leading Sacramento newspapers, the *Bee* and the *Daily Union*, gave continued and extensive coverage to events in Ireland. The execution of the Manchester Martyrs was fully described, and the Phoenix Park killings filled many columns for many days. The Dillon Branch of the Land League's concern for making public its repudiation of those killings makes good sense when one observes that Irish news was much to the fore in these general-circulation newspapers. There was frequent editorial comment on Irish matters, often involving denunciations of violence and advocacy of land reform.[44]

The *Bee* was founded by James McClatchy, an immigrant from County Antrim, Ireland. Its editorials consistently championed Irish reform. In May 1888, for example, the *Bee* ran three editorials that resulted in a remarkable exchange of letters among the then publisher and son of the founder, Valentine McClatchy, and David Lubin, a leading Sacramento merchant, and Patrick Ford, the influential New York publisher-editor of *The Irish World*. The correspondence reveals in McClatchy a deeply felt concern about Ireland, helping explain the frequency and intensity of *Bee* editorial attention to Ireland. It also shows a well developed view concerning the complex relationship between Irish nationalism and the conservative Vatican viewpoint on social change.[45]

Some Conclusions

From the 1850s through the 1880s Irish nationalist sentiment and activity in Sacramento were substantial and continuing. There was timely and vigorous local response to the main events in Irish history during these decades. "Meagher of the Sword" set forth the case for an Irish Republic. The Fenians were present in strength. There were a campaign for freedom for Fenian prisoners, a response to Anglo-American tension over the *Alabama* claims, and the formation of the Sacramento Irish Sufferers Relief Committee. Subsequently, a Sacramento Branch of the Land League was set up, and after a prominent member of the Irish Parliamentary Party spoke in Sacramento another strong organization, the Robert Emmet Club, kept a steady focus on the cause of Irish freedom, maintaining some level of contact with Parnell himself.

There was continuity among the individuals in the various Irish organizations through these decades. At a minimum it may be concluded that the characteristic concern of the Irish emigrant for purposeful and active involvement in the freedom of the distant homeland remained fully alive



John Conness, Irish-born Forty–niner, was elected to the U.S. Senate during the Civil War. He was a featured speaker at Saint Patrick's Day gatherings.

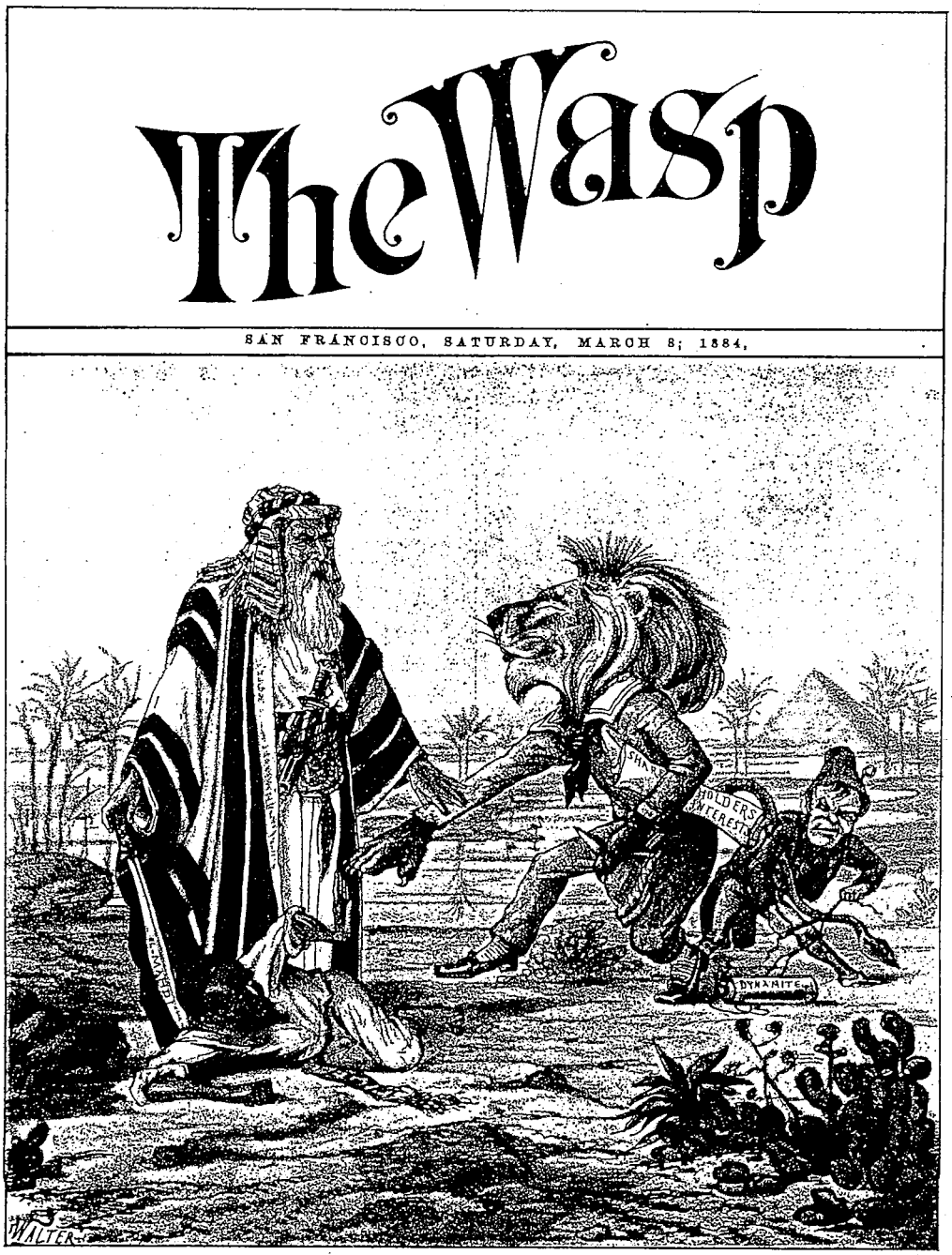
among those Irish who settled in the Sacramento region. The year-round activities of these organizations both contributed to and drew strength from the Saint Patrick's Day celebrations. These events and their speakers, parades, balls, etc., were not simply entertainment, a few hours of passing diversion. They were rich in Irish patriotic symbolism and did sustain the patriotic fervor of participants and observers.

Doubtless the leaders hoped this would have practical effect in the homeland and that indeed, as one orator put it, the English would "begin to believe that one Irishman in America is as much to be feared as a dozen in Ireland."[46]

The decline of the Saint Patrick's Day parade may reflect the assimilation and acculturation of the Sacramento Irish. The last parade, in 1879, was the most civic-minded to that date, the most open to the wider community. It is noteworthy that the first use of "Irish-Americans" in the local press is found in the *Bee* in commenting on the parade and events of that year. The use of this term clearly defines the Irish community at that stage as more than the foreign-born. The old inward-turning ethnic fervor was merging with a wider sense of being American.

The decline of the parade may also reflect the shift from the Fenian physical-force approach to gaining Irish freedom, with emphasis on military drills and shows of strength, to the constitutional path of the Parnell era with emphasis on aggressive political action for home rule and land reform.

The primary significance of Sacramento Irish nationalist activity during the period under consideration is that it demonstrates how a medium-sized Irish community responded to events in Ireland, even though outside the mainstream Irish-American experience which was in the very large cities. Distance to the Pacific coast and limited numbers did not diminish fervor for the cause. Indeed, the cause was not only alive and well, but there grew an emotional closeness to Ireland that continued strong into the twentieth century.



ANOTHER OBSTRUCTIONIST.

The Wasp, *irreverent San Francisco weekly, caricatured all sides in events of 1884, when Irish nationalists twisted (or worse) the tail of the British lion while that imperial figure tried to protect its interests in Egypt against Arab forces rallied by militant religious leader El Mahdi.*

NOTES

1. Patrick Joseph Blessing, "West Among Strangers: Irish Migrating to California, 1850-1880," Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1977, p. 281. Blessing's 1860 figure for Sacramento County is approximately 2500. Elizabeth McKee refined this figure to 2443 by counting by wards: "The Irish in Sacramento," Sacramento Ethnic Communities Survey, 1984, Sacramento History Center, pp. 10-13.

2. Sacramento *Union*, Feb. 21, 1854. On Fenians, etc., see William D. D'Arcy, O.F.M., *The Fenian Movement in the United States: 1858–1886* (NY, 1947). For a recent commentary on California Fenians, see Patrick J. Dowling, *California, The Irish Dream* (San Francisco: Golden Gate Publishers, 2nd ed., c 1989), pp. 343–353.

3. Sacramento *Daily Bee*, March 13, 1857, March 16, 1858, March 12, 1859; Sacramento *Daily Union*, March 17, 1858.

4. *Daily Union*, Jan. 1, 1872.

5. San Francisco *Chronicle*, March 19, 1872.

6. F.S.L. Lyons, *Ireland Since the Famine* (NY, 1971), pp. 151-195, *passim*.

7. *Daily Union*, March 17, 1859.

8. E.R. Norman, *The Catholic Church in the Age of Rebellion, 1859-1873* (Ithaca, NY, 1965), p. 387.

9. Sister Marie Vandenbergh, R.C., "Attitudes and Events Leading up to the Establishment of the Christian Brothers School in Sacramento, 1871-1876," M.A. thesis, Sacramento State College, pp. 123, 124.

10. *Daily Bee*, March 17, 1857, March 17, 1863; *Daily Union*, Jan. 2, 1871.

11. McGuire was first treasurer of the Hibernia Benevolent Association, one of the principal Irish organizations in Sacramento. "Its object was to aid the sick and needy among its members." *History of Sacramento County, with Illustrations* (Oakland, CA: Thompson and West, 1880; reprinted 1960), p. 176.

12. *Daily Bee*, March 17, 1865.

13. The Father Mathew Total Abstinence Benevolent Society, No. 1, was organized in Sacramento on June 14, 1875, with 75 members, honoring Father Theobald Mathew who had led a massive temperance campaign in Ireland in the 1840s. The society had a hall on K Street between 5th and 6th streets, and a maximum of 185 members before dwindling away in 1880 or soon after. *History of Sacramento County*, p. 173. The Ancient Order of Hibernians was the principal nationwide Irish Catholic fraternal organization. It had two divisions in Sacramento at this time. On Hinkson see Vandenbergh, "Christian Brothers School," p. 132. Apparently girls were not included in the special permission he granted for the parade.

14. *Bee*, March 17, 1875.

15. San Francisco *Chronicle*, March 19, 1872.

16. Thomas N. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism, 1870-1890* (Philadelphia & NY, 1966), pp. 17-41.

17. *Daily Union*, March 18, 1865.

18. *Daily Union*, Nov. 7, 1864, April 13, 1865.

19. *Daily Bee*, June 8, May 21, 1866.

20. *Daily Bee*, June 14, 1866.

21. *Daily Bee*, June 12, 1866.

22. *Daily Union*, March 18, 1868.

23. *Daily Union*, March 17, 1858.

24. *Bee*, Feb. 8, 9, 1872.

25. *Bee*, March 18, 1870.

26. San Francisco *Chronicle*, March 16, 17, 1870; *Bee*, March 17, 1873.

27. *Bee*, March 3, 1871.

28. *Daily Union*, March 18, 1871.

29. *Bee*, March 15, 17, 1879.

30. *Bee*, March 17, 1871; Vandenbergh, "Christian Brothers School," Chapter IV.

31. Vandenbergh, "Christian Brothers

School," Chapter IX.

32. *Bee*, March 18, 1879.

33. *Bee*, March 17, 18, 1880; Sacramento *Daily Record-Union*, March 25, 1880.

34. *Daily Bee*, March 3, 1882.

35. San Francisco *Chronicle*, March 11, 1882.

36. *Daily Record-Union*, March 4, 1882.

37. San Francisco *Chronicle*, May 8, 1882.

38. *Daily Record-Union*, May 8, 1882.

39. San Francisco *Chronicle*, Feb. 27, 1882.

40. *Daily Record-Union*, March 18, 1882.

41. *Daily Bee*, March 4, 1886.

42. *Bee*, March 5, 7, 1886.

43. *Daily Dramatic Chronicle*, San Francisco, Jan. 1866.

44. E.g., *Daily Union*, March 14, 1868.

45. *Daily Bee*, May 12, 14, 1888; Unpublished letters, June 10-August 24, 1888, in McClatchy Family Papers (Sacramento Archives Center).

46. Daily *Union*, March 18, 1866.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The late John Francis Delury was born and educated in San Francisco. After a brief career as a teacher, he served as an official of the new State Division of Fair Employment Practices and of a Catholic service agency before moving to Sacramento, where he worked for many years as a staff aide in the State Assembly and later the State Senate. Of Irish decent, he was active in church and Irish–American organizations. The text of this issue of Golden Notes is from his 1985 master's thesis in history at California State University, Sacramento.

SOURCES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Pages 7, 18, and 25, California State Library. Pages 10 and 11, Sacramento Pioneer Society Collection, Sacramento History and Science Division. Pages 14 and 15, Sacramento History and Science Division. Pages 22 and 26, Eleanor McClatchy Collection, Sacramento History and Science Division.

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