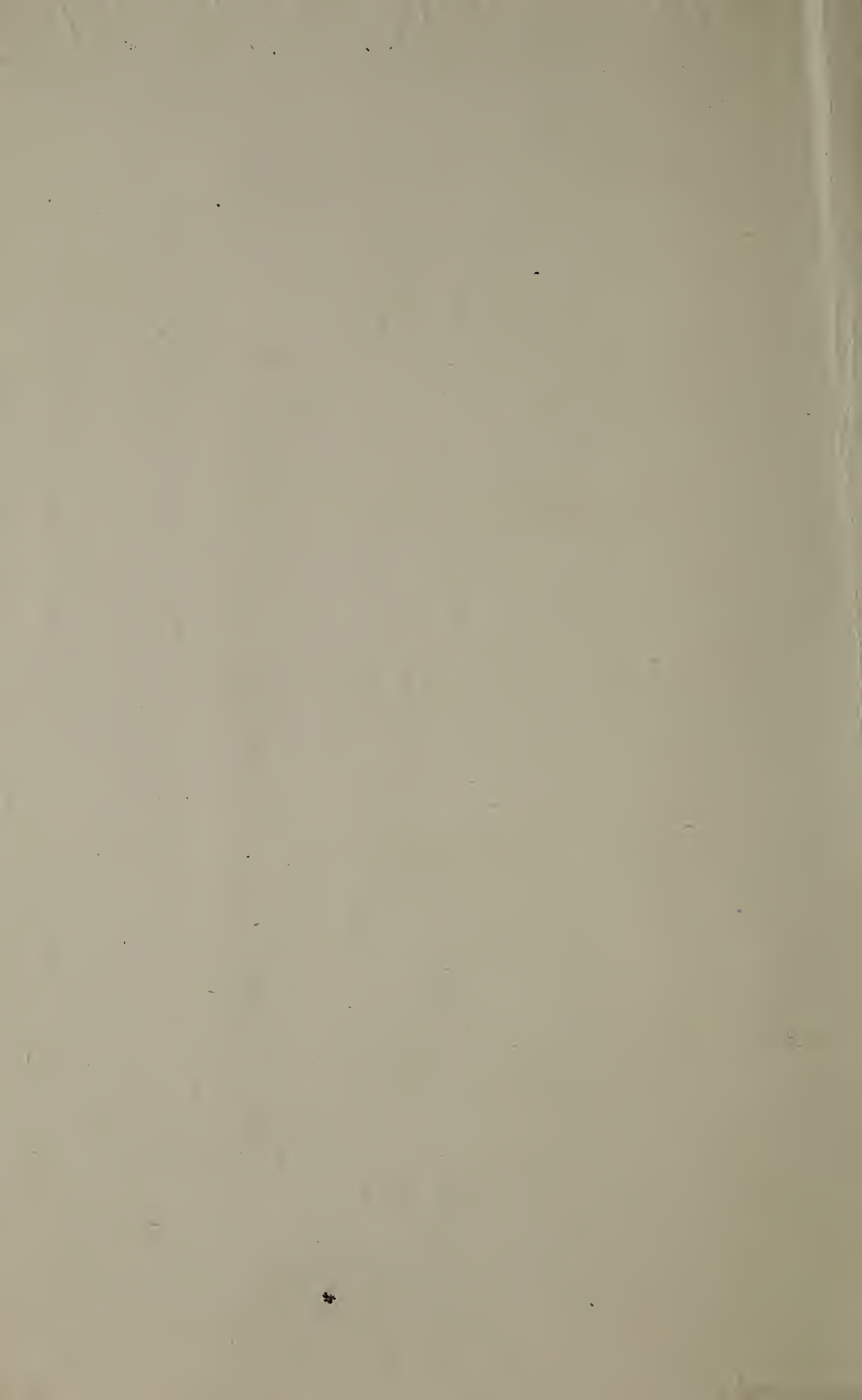


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Presentation of a Bronze
Bust of John Boyle
O'Reilly...
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The O'Reilly Bust.



Geo. N. Gleason

PRESENTATION

OF

A BRONZE BUST

OF

John Boyle O'Reilly

TO THE

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

A. D. 1892.

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Presentation of the O'Keilly Bust to the Catholic University.

THE unveiling of the bronze bust of John Boyle O'Reilly, presented to the Catholic University of America, by some of the clergy and laity of Boston, took place Feb. 4, 1892.

The delegation that made the presentation consisted of Very Rev. W. Byrne, V. G., Rev. A. J. Teeling, Thos. B. Fitz, President of the Catholic Union of Boston, James Jeffrey Roche, Editor of *The Boston Pilot*, Hon. John R. Murphy, A. Shuman, and E. A. Moseley. Accompanying the delegation were Congressmen O'Neil and Hoar; Philip Jackson, James F. Mullen, J. L. Kelley, and other friends of John Boyle O'Reilly.

The ceremony was held in the chief lecture hall of the University before a large audience.

The bust was afterwards placed in an alcove in the library.

The platform was occupied by the Rt. Rev. Rector, Bishop Keane, Vice Rector Rev. P. J. Garrigan, and the members of the delegation who made addresses.

Among the audience were Very Rev. J. B. Hogan, SS., D. D., President of the Divinity College, and many of the professors of the University.

After Samuel Kitson, the sculptor, had withdrawn the veil from his work, Very Rev. W. Byrne presented it to the University in the following address:

Rt. Rev. Rector:—

In the name of the representatives of the friends of John Boyle O'Reilly here present, and in behalf of his friends everywhere, I present through you to the Catholic University this bust of him whom we all esteemed as a man, and loved as a brother.

Assured that you will accept it and give it a suitable place in this institution, we thank you in advance for this most

distinguished honor conferred on John Boyle O'Reilly, the poet, patriot and orator.

The bust is the gift of a few of those, who having been admitted to the inner sanctum of his friendship, had most reason to admire him in life and who gladly avail themselves of all occasions of honoring him in death. And truly he was deserving of high honor as a man, apart from his poetic genius and literary ability.

His was that sterling manhood that always acted nobly and did nothing merely for praise, and never needlessly wounded the feelings of others.

His soul was too high to stoop to aught ignoble. His spirit was such that while he gave to every man his due, he would not brook insult to self or country, religion or humanity.

His presence in America was a mutual benefit; it helped him and it helped us. The bracing air of American freedom toned up his mental fibre and gave him clearer and juster views of the duties as well as the rights of man. The way in

which liberty and law go hand in hand in this country confirmed his belief in republican forms of government. His exile, a seeming calamity, proved a triple blessing, a blessing to himself, to Ireland, and to America. I am persuaded that he did greater service to Ireland and to Irishmen everywhere by his life and action in America than he could have done at home.

It is eminently fitting that this University, devoted to the uplifting of the race to the highest ideal of humanity by the influences of religion, the cultivation of the intellect and the pursuit of knowledge, should give a cordial welcome and an honored place to the sculptured likeness of one who devoted his whole life to the same ends. John Boyle O'Reilly, the poet of the inauguration of this institution, is happily and fittingly among the first to be rewarded by this high recognition.

This placing of his portrait here, in enduring bronze, is the greatest service that could be done to his memory. If his fame were not otherwise destined to be perpetual, this memorial of him in an

institution that will live as long as civilization endures on this continent, would infallibly secure its permanency.

While we, who are admirers of his genius, character and deeds, are confident that John Boyle O'Reilly, in his poems and his patriotic services in two hemispheres, has built unto himself a monument more enduring than bronze, we wisely, I think, seek to make assurance doubly sure by linking his name with this ever-abiding fountain of knowledge and promoter of the fine arts. This is surely the place to keep green the memory of illustrious men who have, or shall have, distinguished themselves in the cause of religion, patriotism, and education, or who achieve greatness in the walks of science, art, literature and progress.

Let us now turn to the bust itself. It is the work of Samuel Kitson, sculptor, of Boston, who has added to his previous reputation by the success he has achieved in this. We predicted that this bust of John Boyle O'Reilly would be followed by a long line of effigies of men who have rendered

conspicuous service to religion and country by advancing the cause of higher education among us. We understand that our anticipations are in part about to be immediately realized, inasmuch as his Eminence Cardinal Gibbons, the most illustrious patron of the University, has been induced to give Mr. Kitson opportunities of modeling a bust of himself which, if successful, we hope will soon grace these halls of learning.

As to the bust of John Boyle O'Reilly, to-day unveiled, we, who knew him, pronounce it a true likeness of the man and the poet. To those who did not know him personally, it may seem that it is an ideal head of a poet, the conception of a sculptor thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Greek and Roman art. Many things about it, no doubt, contribute to this idea. The uplifted pose of the noble head, the far-off gaze of the seer, the heavenward glance of one who awaits his inspiration from on high, the pensive air of the original thinker, the gentle mein of a bard of Erin in his calmer moods, the faint sugges-

tion of a smile that seems to welcome the coming thought, the glow of rapt meditation that suffuses the countenance, "the poet's eye in fine frenzy rolling," all plainly visible in this portrait bust, are the features that in fancy we associate with the personality of the poet.

In this seemingly ideal head we have the real likeness of John Boyle O'Reilly: nor is this resemblance one whit obscured by the ideal grace that every true artist infuses into his work. It is, therefore, what it ought to be, at once a faithful portrait and work of art, and I take this public occasion to congratulate the artist on the happy blending of these two essentials which he has achieved in this instance as in many others, notably in that of the poet Longfellow. Nevertheless, even in this perfect work many things will seem to be missing to those, who, knowing O'Reilly intimately, had ample opportunities of taking the full measure of the man, and observing his many-sided genius and noble qualities. They compare it with the image of their friend as he lives in their memory,

and find that it falls short of the original. That is because their image includes the soul of the man as well as its earthly tenement. And as that soul never fully showed itself in any single expression of the features of the living man, so it is impossible that it should be bodied forth in full through the inert material at the disposal of the artist. None but God can infuse a soul into dead matter. Hence there is only faintly, if at all, set forth in this bronze effigy some of the most sterling qualities of the man, and those for which he was most beloved.

Not moulded bronze, sculptured marble, or painted canvas, and hardly even the more plastic medium of human speech, can adequately render the high spirit of the patriot, the chivalrous purpose of humanity's friend, or the heroic temper of this knight of liberty. Only personal and intimate acquaintance could reveal the noble aspirations of the poet, the sympathetic heart of him who embraced in his love all grades of human kind, the devoted self-surrender of the Christian, the tender and

true love of husband and father for wife and children.

On this occasion, in this place and presence, it is with O'Reilly as a poet and man of letters that I have chiefly to deal. And under this head what can I say of him that has not already been better said by others? It would be vain for me to attempt to improve on the words of our illustrious Cardinal in his introduction to the "Life of John Boyle O'Reilly," by James Jeffrey Roche.

"Few men," says his Eminence, "have felt more powerfully the divine afflatus of poesy; few natures have been so gifted to give it worthy expression. As strong as it was delicate and tender, as sympathetic and tearful as it was bold, his soul was a harp of truest tone, which felt the touch of the ideal everywhere, and spontaneously breathed responsive music, joyous or mournful, vehement or soft."

Mayor Hart, at the memorial meeting in Boston, said of him: "People who do not confide easily, confided in him, because he truly believed in what he sang in the most

splendid of all his poems, that read at Plymouth,—‘The People May be Trusted with Their Own.’”

Said Benjamin F. Butler, on the same occasion: “Of his genius as a poet, drawing from the very heart of inspiration, all who have read his poems know. That he was a natural orator in a very high degree, is easily expressed by saying that he was an educated Irishman. It came to him by inheritance. As an historian, no more eloquent words glowing with true fervor, can be found on any page.”

“I remember hearing him once,” said T. Wentworth Higginson, “when in the Papyrus Club he read a poem entitled, ‘Love’s Secret,’ verses so exquisite in tone, touching with such pathetic poetry the very heart and core of the deepest tie that binds man to woman, that there is many a poet of America and England, who might well give all his fame if the authorship of these verses could be transferred to him.”

President Capen, of Tufts College, thus spoke of him at that same meeting: “As

I stood looking upon this scene," (one of moonlight on the sea) "I thought of our lamented friend. His faculties always flashed out light that glistened like rubies, revealing and defending the truth at once. His brilliancy of mind illuminated every subject, and reminded one of strength as fathomless and restless as the sea, and there was in him so much of true humanity that we could not come into his presence without being affected as by a tonic."

Col. Chas. H. Taylor said: "It seems to me, however, that in a large and broad sense, of all that group, John Boyle O'Reilly made the most conspicuous and gratifying success, especially from a journalistic and literary point of view."

"You mourn the journalist," said Hon. P. A. Collins; "you mourn the orator and the poet, the patriot of two peoples, the strong, tender, true and knightly character. I mourn with you, and I also mourn — alone."

Edwin J. Walker, the colored orator, said: "With his pen John Boyle O'Reilly sent through the columns of the Pilot,

words in our behalf that were truly Christian. He did more; he mounted the public platform and boldly denounced the persecutors of our race."

On another occasion, at a memorial service in Worcester, Rev. Thomas J. Conaty said of O'Reilly: "He was passionately fond of liberty, because he believed it to be a gift of God to men, and his voice and pen made earth ring with his denunciations of wrong wherever found."

Said Bishop Healy, preaching at his month's mind in the Cathedral of Boston: "The straightforward, the manly, the long-suffering but unconquered spirit; such was our friend, John Boyle O'Reilly."

Edward C. Whipple calls his occasional poems, "very tender, fanciful, earnest and individual, winning us by their inherent force of grace and melody." Jas. Jeffrey Roche, in his biography, says of his narrative poems, such as "The Amber Whale," "The Dukite Snake," and "The Monster Diamond:" "They were picturesque, dramatic, virile, and achieved their only pur-

pose, that of telling a strong story in direct, forcible fashion."

Justin McCarthy's words are also well worth quoting, though not specially relating to his literary merits: "He is one of the brightest ornaments of the Irish race in America. He lives in exile for the service of his country. He has enriched its national literature with exquisite prose and yet more exquisite verse. He renders daily service to the national cause."

Governor Long, introducing O'Reilly at Plymouth, said of him: "He is a genuine New England Pilgrim, and to the pilgrim's love of truth he adds a certain ecstasy of the imagination and a musical note like that of a bird singing in the woods."

Miss Conway, in her "Watchwords from John Boyle O'Reilly," well says: "He is greatest, not in his poems for his native land, though his 'Exile of the Gael' is the noblest tribute the English language has ever paid her; not in his poems for America, in the best of which only Whittier and Lowell surpassed him; but in the poems which overleap nation and race

barriers like 'Crispus Attucks,' or commemorate a hero of humanity like 'Wendell Phillips.'” Of this latter poem George W. Cable said to him: “This poem will always shoot above your usual work like the great spire in the cathedral town.”

R. H. Stoddard has no hesitation in saying: “That his 'Songs of the Southern Seas,' not to speak of his later poems, indicate true genius.”

Such is the consensus of opinion which I fain would substitute for any estimate of my own of O'Reilly as a poet. You perceive that these are the opinions of men whose judgment is worthy of the highest respect.

This chaplet of roses, gathered from divers fields, I twine for thy brow, O poet of patriotism and humanity. With it I crown thee, immortal bard, as with a rosary of love. Let it ever encircle thy brow as the halo of thy fame. The teardrops that glisten on its leaves like the fresh dew of the morning, are the tribute of a heart that grieves for thy untimely death, which was to all of us an irreparable

loss. His name and fame we will ever cherish, and hand down his example as an inheritance to our successors.

In his ode entitled, "From the Heights," and read at the opening of this University, he teaches the noteworthy lesson that it is only the profound study of the highest themes that clarifies the intellect so that it can see truth in its integrity; and that this vision of truth in all its relations, broad and clear as that gained from mountain heights, is the handmaid of wisdom. 'Tis thus that "spirit-pilots leap from mountain top to star; aye, higher still, from star to God!"

James Jeffrey Roche then read a poem of Manuel M. Flores.

THE POET.

Behold the poet! give him light and liberty and
room to range at large.

Let the horizon's bounds expand for him —

Freedom and grandeur are his birthright:

His genius is his only inspiration.

He dreams of laurel crowns of victory,

Fame, and the beautiful; sole objects of his love.

The chaste fervor of a mother's kiss in childhood's days
Was sweet and soothing on his pale but ardent brow,
And filled his mind with images and dreams
Drawn from celestial realms —
The morning's dawn, the brilliant noonday sun,
The solemn hush of night's mysterious hour,
The stars of God, the zephyr sighing in the swaying palms,
The gloaming and the silence
Speak to his soul of happiness and love.
The woods majestic murmuring in the breeze
Are vocal all with thoughts for him.
On the distant shore of glittering sand the winds
and waves
Intone for him their solemn litany of prayer.
Bathed in the light of day he lifts his head aloft,
His eyes aglow with rapture, and his heart aflame,
Yearning to tell the world
His message and the feelings of his heart.
The Muse bestows upon his hand a harp of melody
Attuned to sing the high conceptions of his soul.
He loved as poets love, and sang the bliss of loving:
But love disturbed the placid tenor of his mind.
O love! art thou indeed the crucifixion of the heart?
Then came the hour of sorrow:
But even from grief and suffering the poet draws
Themes fraught with lessons to mankind.
From deepest gloom light flashes forth.
The poet's guerdon is the noble heart.

Humanity entire quick pulses in the depths of
his poetic soul —

He is humanity's articulate voice.

His faith, his hope is in mankind and liberty.

For them he suffers and for them he mourns,
To them he pays, in melancholy mood, the tribute
even of despair.

Martyred at length in their behalf, he mounts to
heaven.

Thus does the poet tread the path of life:

The peace of perfect happiness is not for him.

Yet when disowned by fortune and forgot by
men,

His pallid brow, beneath his laurel crown,

Anointed is with heaven's own kiss.

Naught recks he of the passing joys of earth;

Riches and fickle pleasures he contemns.

The tome of history will have, perchance, for him

One glorious page inscribed with characters of
bronze

That envious fate herself cannot efface.

Leave him his dreams, his hopes, his aspirations
high;

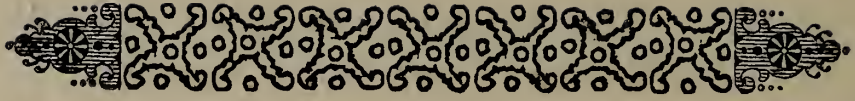
Toward the ideal ever be his flight.

The glory of his dreamland dieth not.

Spirit sublime, that for the infinite yearns,

Thou art far from this dull earth,

Being near to God:



Bishop Keane's Address.

In the name of the directors of the Catholic University of America, I gladly accept the bust of John Boyle O'Reilly, presented by the worthy representatives of the clergy and laity of New England. In the name of the directors, I welcome the bust to a lasting place in these halls.

John Boyle O'Reilly was with us on the day of the inauguration of this institution, and one of the most charming features of the day was his poem, "On the Heights." Sorry are we that his presence has left us forevermore; but gladly do we thank the genius which has been able to catch the spirit of the man and place his likeness in enduring bronze.

John Boyle O'Reilly comes here to join a goodly company. There are here memorials of great and good men with whom it is an honor to be associated.

He finds a portrait of Pope Leo XIII.,

and a statue of the Holy Father, but recently set up.

He finds a portrait of Pope Pius IX., who, in approving the decrees of the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore, which advocated the establishment of a University, might well be deemed the precursor of this institution.

He finds memorials of Orestes A. Brownson, the greatest philosophic genius America has produced, together with portraits of the first and present American Cardinal, and of Cardinals Manning, Newman, and Wiseman.

O'Reilly finds himself in good company, and ten thousand times welcome is he in such a goodly assemblage. The artist has succeeded in embodying in this face the shadowing forth of many of the qualities which the Very Reverend Vicar-General has just enumerated as belonging to him.

But I see in it the embodiment of one quality which more profoundly interests me than any of the others, because it more intimately concerns the purpose for which this University has been established.

This is the face of a true poet, of a true artist, because it is the face of a man who sees united the true, the beautiful, and the good, and loves them thus united. God has implanted in every human heart a love of the beautiful. It is an emanation from Himself; it is an interior impulse meant to point us up to Him who is beauty infinite. Because He is beauty infinite He is infinitely capable of satiating all the aspirations and capabilities of all human hearts. But He who is the infinitely beautiful is also the infinitely true and the infinitely good; and the love of the beautiful is a blessing to him who possesses it only in as far as it is united with the love of the true and the love of the good. He whose heart is filled with such a love as this, and who, rising into the regions of the true, the beautiful, and the good, is endowed with the power of telling others what there he sees and hears and feels, is a poet, is an artist. He is a man specially gifted by the Creator, endowed with a faculty which not only elevates himself, but is meant to be a means of elevation to

all who come under his influence, feel the touch of his genius, and be uplifted by his power.

But if the love of the beautiful goes astray from the love of the true and of the good, then it becomes a false and counterfeit love, and the beauty to which it clings is a false, a counterfeit, a meretricious, a deceitful, and a pernicious beauty. That heart is on fire, not with love but with passion, and if it is endowed with the power of expression, it sets other hearts on fire with unholy and pernicious flames.

Whoever knew O'Reilly well, knew that he loved the beautiful with all the tenderness and all the intensity of his nature; but all might equally know that his love of the beautiful was ever chastened, tempered, controlled, and elevated by his knowledge and love of the true and the good.

His love of the beautiful he inherited from the Celtic race to which he belonged; but that Celtic race is also blessed with the inheritance of the true faith, and with a love for it not matched in all the world

beside. Therefore was he the man that we knew him to be. Nature and grace coöperated to make him a true poet; to make his poetical genius a blessing to him and a benefit to his generation.

He once gave me his own impression of the character of beauty. "Beauty," he said, "must be not only as charming, but also as dignified and chaste as a Greek statue. The violent and the passionate are unworthy of her and would disfigure her." This he said concerning style; but it was his estimate of beauty in all its aspects. And how well it agrees with the consummate ideal of perfect beauty, accompanied with perfect truth and perfect goodness, it is not necessary for me to show.

The dissemination of a spirit like this is one of the chief objects of the Catholic University of America. Human genius has, to a great extent, gone astray. It is sad to see how they that are naturally the most nobly gifted are, in the great majority of cases, intent upon the pursuit of the useful or of the beautiful, but without

regard for the true and the good, nay, perhaps in despair of ever attaining unto them.

To yield to such a despair would be, indeed, desolation to mankind. To be thus led astray from the true and the good would, indeed, be the moral death of our humanity. To lead the world, not in paths of moral death and of despair, but in paths of light and peace, of harmony and beauty and prosperity, is the purpose of an institution like this. And this great purpose it will accomplish just in as far as it develops to the utmost the highest human capabilities, and draws them into the safe and blessed and beneficent paths in which the true, the beautiful, and the good are combined. This is blessedness in eternity, this is peace and joy and prosperity and true welfare here below.

Men may question whether O'Reilly can be placed in the front rank of poets; but no one can deny that, better perhaps than any man thus far known in American literature, he typifies that union of the true the beautiful and the good in human

genius, which alone can be the safe guide of our future. Therefore do we welcome him here; therefore are we glad to have this, his effigy, placed before the eyes of our students. Like his poem, "On the Heights," it will point them upwards from earth to the stars, and from the stars to God. Those up-turned eyes will ever be to them an inspiration and a lesson, pointing to Him in whom alone are fully embodied, the true, the beautiful, and the good.

Mr. T. B. Fitz then thanked the bishop for accepting the statue and said :

"YOUR GRACE—In response to your kind action and generous words in accepting this bust of our universally beloved and distinguished countryman, John Boyle O'Reilly, and honoring it with the signal privilege of being the first model representing the Catholic laity to occupy a place within the sacred precincts of this great university, permit our committee to offer you, in the name of our common

people, irrespective of race, creed or color, our heartfelt thanks, and the testimony of a lasting gratitude, which finds its truest inspiration in the inseparable link which so sacredly connects the memory of him who is honored with your official action in thus honoring it.

“Nor are we unmindful of the significance and consequent responsibility which you undoubtedly recognize in the acceptance.

“By it you permitted this great institution of learning and piety to pass its verdict of worthiness and imprint its seal of approbation upon the life and character of him who is represented in this unpretentious model of bronze.

“We may well say what form of compliment is like unto this!

“The jewel, however, is worthy of its setting, and while we duly appreciate the sacred environments which hallow this memorial, we know that your Grace was conscious of the appropriateness of placing it here.

“In this feature not only the present but

future generations will recognize the force and grace of the compliment you have seen fit to confer on Mr. O'Reilly's memory; and as he by daily intercourse with those who knew him but to love him, by his writings, his speech and his ever living example, was a constant inspiration, so may these qualities, as typified by this memorial, be a fruitful source of inspiration to the many, who, in future years, will seek guidance and training of this institution for holy and noble ends."

Dr. Byrne then announced that an intimate friend of O'Reilly would say a few words and called upon Mr. A. Shuman of Boston.

Mr. Shuman took the platform and said :

"John Boyle O'Reilly was very dear to me, not only for his simple and affectionate nature, that radiated sunshine over the every-day pathway, but for his noble and lasting qualities of head and heart, whose influences live to-day in the thoughts of the people.

"I am more than glad to be with you

all to do him honor. He was, indeed, a patriot in the fullest sense of the word, and his poetical nature gave him that sensitive insight into the woes and wants of the people that has made his name immortal and his memory ever green.

“Death, loving a shining mark, took him from our midst in the fulness of his vigor and usefulness. His death smote the hearts of the people with a sudden sense of loss, and resounded throughout the land and beyond the sea with the saddest and most mournful cadence.

“I enjoyed the close and familiar friendship of O'Reilly for twenty years, and never ceased to admire and esteem him for his cheerful disposition, the ardent warmth of his personality, and for his fealty to his friends.

“He was a rare bit of humanity, and was supremely human in his character. In his friendships and his love of justice all men were alike to him.

“He was an enthusiastic lover of his native land, and was essentially in touch with all mankind; and while true to his

faith and his religion, his broad views and great heart allowed no distinction of race and creed to warp his impulses.

“It was all these things indeed, so noble and so grand, that endeared him to me. I have passed many a delightful hour in his company, elevated and inspired by his eloquence and treasures of thought.

“He will rank upon glory’s page ‘as more than soldier and just less than sage,’ and this imperishable bronze that we dedicate to-day will continue to teach the lesson that ‘he who once lived is always alive, we hearken and always hear.’”

After the ceremonies the Boston guests were served with refreshments, and were then escorted over the building by the Vice-Rector, Rev. P. J. Garrigan.

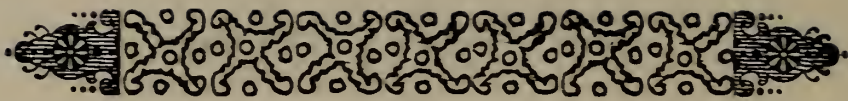
The friends of the poet are charmed with the work of Mr. Kitson. Mr. Moseley, who was one of the most intimate friends of the poet-editor, declared the likeness to be almost startling in its fidelity to nature.

The bust represents the hero poet in

conventional garb, with a low collar and flowing necktie, such as he generally wore. The head is turned somewhat to one side, and the eyes are looking up, the pose of the head bringing out to perfection the nervous, animated look, for which O'Reilly was famous.

The bust stands on a pedestal of Tennessee marble, which is also the work of Mr. Kitson, and on the base of the bust is a quill pen entwined with shamrock.

The members of the Boston committee stopped at Baltimore on their way home and called on Cardinal Gibbons. They sought to induce him to preside at a meeting of the Boyle O'Reilly memorial fund, to be held at such time as might best suit his convenience. They were graciously received by His Eminence, but failed to secure a definite promise.



Subscribers to the O'Reilly Bust.

Archbishop Williams, Bishops O'Reilly, Healy, McMahan, Harkins, Bradley, and Brady; Very Revs. William Byrne, D. D., James Hughes, V. G., Mgr. Strain, Mgr. Thos. Griffin, Revs. A. J. Teeling, C. J. Riordan, Luigi Paroli, W. J. McCombe, J. J. Frawley, C. S. S. R., M. O'Brien, R. Neagle, P. McCabe, M. Gilligan, John H. Duggan, M. Mahon, D. O'Callaghan, P. F. Boyle, R. T. Walsh, M. Flatley, H. P. Smith, James McGlew, J. W. Corcoran, M. Moran, D. J. O'Farrell, F. X. Nopper, S. J., H. R. O'Donnell, Jos. F. Mohan, C. T. McGrath, James Coyle, P. B. Murphy, M. Ronan, P. J. Daly, J. W. McMahan, Very Rev. J. B. Hogan and Professors of the University. Messrs. T. B. Fitz, John R. Murphy, James Jeffrey Roche, Dr. James A. McDonald, Bernard Foley, Dominic Toy, Edward Reardon, P. J. Flatley, A. Shuman, Harry McGlenen, James S. Murphy, Martin Fay, M. J. Weller, M. Kelly, M. D., W. Doogue, Thos. Ackland, and Miss Katherine Conway.

