

THOUSANDS DO HOMAGE TO OUR LADY OF CARMEL

Gorgeous Festival in Honor of Italian Patron Saint.

"LITTLE ITALY'S" GALA DAY

Masses and Monster Parade—Rich Gifts at Shrine—Bills Pinned on Silken Banner.

Fifty-thousand Italians from all parts of the city and State celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel yesterday in "Little Italy," as East Harlem, between One Hundred and Tenth and One Hundred and Fifteenth Streets, is known. The feast occurs yearly, but yesterday's celebration was by far the most elaborate ever planned. From early until late the festivities were carried on in a quiet and orderly manner, very few arrests being made by the police, who were stationed on every block and corner.

The influx of visitors began Friday when the sons and daughters of Italy in holiday attire straggled in afoot, in wagons, in street cars, and railroad trains, carrying huge bundles of clothing and food. Tenement houses were filled to overflowing, and those who could not find shelter indoors camped out in Jefferson Park and the adjoining streets. It was a happy, good-natured crowd, however, and although the early morning shower spoiled some of the women's finery, it was soon forgotten when all arose at daylight and prepared to attend early mass.

The shrine at which the homage of this vast throng was paid was the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, on One Hundred and Fifteenth Street, near Pleasant Avenue, which was named for the patron saint when it was established, more than twenty years ago. Only a small fraction of the crowd was able to attend the 5 o'clock mass, but masses were held every hour, and between times there was a constant stream of men, women, and children passing through the big church. It took the combined efforts of a couple of dozen policemen to keep them in line.

As they passed the figure of Our Lady of Mount Carmel they laid at its feet offerings of various kinds—money, jewelry, and other valuables not always in keeping with the apparent financial ability of the giver. Many of the worshippers who appeared to be poor laid high-priced tributes at the shrine as they crossed themselves, and with bowed heads offered a prayer for their health and welfare. Others carried costly candles, five and six feet long and beautifully decorated in colors. All were left at the altar until the pile rose so high that it was necessary to remove them in order to keep them from hiding the patron saint completely.

After attending mass the residents of the district began to decorate their streets and dwellings, and inside of an hour there was a profusion of bright colors such as the Neapolitans love. Flags and bunting hung from every window, and no family was so poor that it could not fling at least one flag of their own country and the Stars and Stripes of their adopted country to the breeze. On the window ledges and fire-escapes stood figures of the patron saint and there were improvised shrines along the street, where old and young alike paused to offer their prayers.

The principal feature of the daylight celebration was the parade of the various Italian societies through the district. This was led by Fire Commissioner Nicholas J. Hayes, who lives in the district, and John Cangro, the Grand Marshal, wearing gorgeous regalia. Following the functionaries were nine Italian societies, and then the entire population. There were many banners, but the one that caught the eye of every Italian was that on which was painted a picture of the patron saint. As it was carried through the various streets men, women, and children rushed out and pinned money to the silken fabric. Frequent stops were made to permit the offerings, and when the banner was finally set down at the church it was completely covered with money and jewelry that glistened brightly in the sunshine. A few twenty-dollar gold certificates were pinned upon the banner, while fives and tens were plentiful.

Fire Commissioner Hayes came in for a good share of enthusiastic applause, as he is very popular with the Italians, who call him the "big boss." Last evening the district was ablaze with colored lanterns and calcium lights, while \$20,000 worth of fireworks were fired off in Jefferson Park and the adjoining streets.

An immense crowd witnessed the fireworks. The streets around Thomas Jefferson Park were crowded so that one was forced to drift along with the throng. In the park whole families took supper on the grass, while boys did a rushing business selling lemonade at a penny a glass. When the exhibition got fully under way it was estimated that upward of 30,000 persons were in the park. Police reserves were there from every precinct in the city to keep order, but it was a good-natured crowd, and there was little need of their services.