

was baptized by St. Augustine, all his subjects did not follow his example. Among those that remained pagans was his own son, Eadbald, who succeeded him on the throne, and brought nearly the whole people back to idolatry. In Essex, the Christian king, Sebert, was succeeded by his three pagan sons; and the people hastened to conform their religious persuasions to those of their sovereigns. Mellitus, the bishop of London, was expelled from Essex and took refuge in France. So that, in 645, forty-eight years after the landing of St. Augustine on the shore of Kent, all that remained of Christianity in England was a small community of Christians in Kent, grouped around the church and the monastery of Canterbury. In this year a Saxon prince, Oswald, who had been baptized whilst an exile among the Celts of Caledonia, whither the invasion of his country by the Britons had driven him, became king of Northumbria, after having expelled the invader. Oswald was a fervent Christian, and his first care was to call missionaries from the land of his exile to convert his countrymen. St. Aidan was sent over from Iona, with several of his brethren. He established a monastery on a small and almost barren island in the North Sea, near the coast of Northumbria. Lindisfarne, as it was called, became "the Iona of the Anglo-Saxons." From Northumbria Christianity gradually spread over the seven kingdoms. Sussex offered the longest resistance to the Gospel, but it was finally converted in 681 by St. Wilfrid, a Saxon monk, educated at Lindisfarne. So, thirty-six years after Oswald's appeal to the Irish monks of Iona, all England was Christian. She remained true to the Faith which she had received from Ireland until she was robbed of it by Henry VIII.

Though the countries already mentioned occupy no small part of Europe, Irish missionary enterprise was not limited to them. There is hardly a spot in Europe that has not witnessed the arder of the divine charity which prompted Irishmen to communicate to other lands the blessings of religion and of learning, in which their own dear isle of the ocean was so rich. Contemporary writers speak of them as "swarms of learned men," an "inundation" that swept over all Europe.

And whilst Irish missionaries were working prodigies of zeal in foreign countries, a not less apostolic work was being carried