

Ireland, to Pius, who, in our own day, beheld Patrick's children by their children guarding his venerable throne, and prepared to die in his and his glorious cause. In every Catholic land union with Rome is a principle. In Ireland it was a devotion. And so, when the evil genius of Protestantism stalked through the land, and with a loud voice demanded of the Irish people separation from Rome, or their lives—the faithful people of God consented to die, rather than to renounce the faith of their fathers, transmitted to them through the saints.

Devotion to the Mother of God was the next great feature of Patrick's preaching and of Ireland's Catholicity. The image of all that was fairest in nature and grace, which arose before the eyes of the people, as depicted by the great apostles, captivated their imaginations and their hearts. They called her in their prayers 'Míden dheelish,' their darling Virgin. In every family in the land the eldest daughter was a Mary; every Irish maid or mother emulated the purity of her virginal innocence, or the strength and tenderness of her maternal love. With the keenness of love they associated their daily sorrows and joys with hers: and the ineffable grace of a maiden modesty which clung to the very mothers of Ireland seemed to be the brightest reflection of Mary which had lingered upon the earth. Oh, how harshly upon the ears of such a people grated the detestable voice that would rob Mary of her graces and rob the world of the light of her purity and the glory of her example! Never was the Mother of God so dear to Ireland as in the days of the nation's persecution and sorrow. Not even in that bright day when the Virgin Mother seemed to walk the earth, and to have made Ireland her home, in the person of their own St. Bridget, was her name so dear, and the love of her so strong, as in the dark and terrible time when the church and altar being destroyed, every cabin in the land resounded with Mary's name, invoked in the Holy Rosary, the great devotion that saved Ireland's faith.

The third great leading feature of our holy religion assailed