

over Christendom eagerly flocked to Ireland; while Irish monks with an unexampled zeal tore themselves away from their native land to christianize and civilize the surrounding countries. Some of them reached, if we can believe circumstantial evidence, even Mexico. As St. Columbkille, the apostle and founder of the kingdom of Scotland, perhaps Ireland's greatest son, tells us in one of his noble poems, "All but thy Government, Erin, has pleased me." Ireland's political system, far from adapting itself to changing circumstances, became worse and worse. In this, the modern Anglo-Saxon ideal, as expressed by the great Anglo-Irishman, Edmund Burke, is the true ideal, and the ideal that Ireland wished to see realized; but in almost everything else, the Anglo-Saxon civilization is inferior to the Gaelic one.

Let us compare them, the Gaelic civilization of the sixth century, and the Anglo-Saxon—not of the sixth, for the Saxon barbarians had not yet received their civilization from the Irish—but of the twentieth century. We have the type of the highest Anglo-Saxon civilization when we add Anglican Christianity to Cardinal Newman's true gentleman. Compare this beau idéal of our day, with the Irish monk, the most representative type of sixth century Irish life. Which is the better man?

The Danish invasion first marred this glorious Gaelic national life. The Irish, too united to be conquered, too divided to conquer, were in a state of external or internal warfare till the accession of James I. of England. Half a dozen times at least, it seemed as if Ireland would unite herself and resume her proper place among the nations. But again and again some super-normal influence seemed to prevent. Finally in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, when Elizabeth put forth the whole strength of her empire to accomplish completely the conquest of the Irish, Erin awoke and found herself one nation again. The God of arms decided in favor of the English, but Ireland, conquered though it was, again was a great Gaelic nation.

A great nation, because it possessed in an eminent degree all a nation's essentials. What is a nation? "A common tradition, a common history, a common language, a common literature, common institutions,