

of every man devotion to what was then the highest attainable ideal, that of the mother-country. But how can it be a virtue in our day when it demands what is contrary to the ideal both of our religion and morality, —the denial of the equality and the fraternity of man, and the acknowledgment of the supremacy of one State, of one people above all others? Furthermore, this sentiment not only is not a virtue now, but it is undeniably a vice. Patriotism in its true sense has neither material nor grounds for existence.

Patriotism could have meaning in the ancient world where every people, more or less homogeneous in its composition, and possessing the same state creed, formed, as it were, an island in the midst of a threatening sea of barbarians.

It is clear that, under such circumstances, patriotism, which was the impulse to repel invasions of barbarians who were ready to overthrow public institutions, to rob and to capture men and women, was then a very natural sentiment, and the man of that time, in order to save himself and his countrymen, was naturally justified in preferring his own people to others, and in cherishing animosity towards the surrounding barbarians, and even in killing them in defence of his people.

But what meaning can that sentiment have in our Christian era? What justifies a man now-a-days, a Russian, for instance, in killing the French, or the Germans; or what justifies the French in killing the Germans, when they know very well, however ignorant they may be, that the people of the fellow-nation, against whom their patriotic enmity is excited, are no barbarians, but men like themselves, Christians, often of the same creed and denomination as they, wishing nothing but peace and a peaceful exchange of the products of labor, and, furthermore, having the same common interests, industrial, or commercial, or intellectual, or all three together. It happens very frequently that a certain portion of people of one nation are more intimately connected with the people of another nation than with their own countrymen, as is the case with men in the employment of a foreigner, or with merchants generally, and particularly with men of science and artists.

Besides, the very conditions of life have changed in our times, where the so-called mother-country, as distinguished from everything around it, has ceased to be so well-defined as it was in the ancient world, where the individuals composing it belonged to the same race and the same creed. An Egyptian's, a Jew's, a Greek's patriotism is clear to us. In defending their country they defended their race, their creed, their institutions and their birthplace.

But in what does the patriotism of an Irishman in the United States consist, who by creed belongs to Rome, by race to Ireland, and by residence to the United States? In the same predicament are the Bohemian in Austria, the Pole in Russia, Prussia, and Austria, the Hindu in the British Empire, the Tartar and the Armenian in Russia and Turkey. And leaving aside individuals of subjugated races, the citizens even of