

Ireland=Poland; a comparison.

(CLASS DEBATE.—Negative.)

THE occurrence of such a phenomenon in European history as the disappearance from the commonwealth of nations of a country which had existed for eight hundred years, calls for some attempt at explanation. For over a century Poland has been razed from the list of European nations.

Poland first comes under our notice during the eighth century, when she emerged from the barbarous hinterland and came into existence as an organized state. Being composed of a brave and stout-hearted people, she advanced with rapid strides until she had attained the rank of the foremost nation of Eastern Europe. She it was who bore the brunt of the Tartar invasions, and withstood the repeated onslaughts of the Mussulmen, those vast hordes of barbarians who overran the populated areas from the Great Wall of China to the gates of Imperial Rome. When Vienna was besieged by an innumerable army of Turks, the Hungarians sent word to that renowned Pole, the Great Sabieski, to come to their aid. And he, with a comparatively small army, marched to their rescue, and inflicted a crushing blow on the Turkish power. For this brave action he was justly hailed the saviour of Europe. The civilized world owes an eternal debt of gratitude to Poland for successfully preserving the Christianity and civilization of Europe against the fanatical nations of the Orient. But the world has ill repaid her debt. For Poland, once the defender of Europe, now forms but a province in the vast Empire of her ancient enemy. During the reign of Stephen Batory, 1578-1586, Poland reached her greatest size. The greatest length of the country from north to south was 713 miles, and from east to west 693 miles, comprising an area of 282,000 sq. miles. This same area in 1880 had a population of 24,000,000.

The cause of Poland's present downcast state is only too evident. Countless Russian invasions laying waste the country have placed the people in a sort of moral stupor. If Polish nationality is ever again triumphant, the triumph will come not through the efforts of the Poles, but out of the necessity and peril of their oppressors. The downfall of Poland first started in 1772, when Russia, Prussia and Austria, moved by a common desire for more territory, divided among themselves some of the choicest portions of Poland. Poland alone was too weak to successfully