

adapted the machinery of the secular government to the use of the Church. Gradation in authority, division of fields of labor, strictness of internal discipline, a definite policy for aggressive work against the outlying paganism, soon attracted the attention of men to the fact that there was a real commonwealth of Christians which was commensurate with the imperial domain. And when the empire fell to pieces there remained the marvel of a compact, unimpaired, spiritual kingdom, maintaining its secular form, with but a single rent—that made by the Latin and Greek schism. Did the early Church absorb into itself the best political genius of that age? or were the devotees of the new religion especially endowed with such genius for their work, as, at the beginning, a few fishermen were gifted with such transcendent ability? This is one of the questions which secular historians have not answered.

Mediaeval missions may be dated from the career of Ulphilas, the “Moses of the Goths.” To reach those vast and widespread nations so as to permanently affect them with the gospel, it was necessary to create a written language for them. The capacious intellect which grasped the problem was joined with as remarkable energy of purpose in solving it. Prof. Max Müller gives this deserved tribute to the great missionary: “Ulphilas must have been a man of extraordinary power to conceive, for the first time, the idea of translating the Bible into the vulgar language of his people. At this time there existed in Europe but two languages which a Christian bishop would have thought himself justified in employing, Greek and Latin. All other languages were still considered as barbarous. It required a prophetic sight, and a faith in the destinies of these half-savage tribes, and a conviction also of the utter effeteness of the Roman and Byzantine empires, before a bishop could have brought himself to translate the Bible into the vulgar dialect of his barbarous countrymen.” Gibbon cannot withhold his admiration of this virtual framer of Gothic civilization. “The rude, imperfect idiom of soldiers and shepherds, so ill-qualified to communicate any spiritual ideas, was improved and modulated by his genius; and Ulphilas, before he could frame his version, was obliged to compose a new alphabet of twenty-four letters, four of which he invented to express the peculiar sounds that were unknown to the Greek and Latin pronunciation. The character of Ulphilas recommended him to the esteem of the Eastern court, where he twice appeared as the minister of peace; and the name of *Moses* was applied to this spiritual guide, who conducted his people through the deep waters of the Danube to the land of promise.”

The dramatic scene in which Odoacer, the conqueror of Italy, bows his huge form in order to enter the humble cell of Severinus, the evangelist to the tribes of Pannonia and Noricum, there to take counsel regarding the policy of his rule, may be taken as one illustration from hundreds in which the statecraft of those dark ages learned at the feet of the greater wisdom imparted to the builders of Christ's kingdom.

The mission of St. Patrick in Ireland reveals the same super-eminent ability. With profound knowledge of human nature, he studied the peculiar character of the Irish people, established schools for the training of competent teachers and preachers, shrewdly brought Christian truth into debate with reigning Druidism, antagonized piracy and slave-dealing, destroyed superstitions. The town and the See of Armagh are to-day the monument of his far-sighted policy. Kildare is still the memorial of Brigid's “Cell of the Oak,” or training-school of women, as Derry is that of Columba's monastery, whence issued an army of devoted men who broke the power of