

IRISH MISSIONARIES.

The nations have their parts assigned :
 The deaf one watches for the blind :
 The blind for him that hears not hears :
 Harmonious as the heavenly spheres,
 Despite their outward fret and jar,
 Their mutual ministrations are.

--AUBREY DE VERE.



HIS world is a stage on which each man plays a part assigned to him by an all-wise Providence. This part is called the man's vocation. Its proper fulfilment is destined to advance, however feebly, some cause. This is called the man's mission. A person becomes identified with the cause that he espouses ; so that, the nobler the cause that it is his mission to further, the nobler he becomes. The noblest of causes is the cause of religion, the cause of the one true religion, of Catholicity. He, therefore, who is called upon to do a work for the Catholic Church, has a mission that raises him above his fellow-beings.

What is true of individuals, is true of nations. And this ennobling religious mission is Ireland's mission. The philosophy of the history of Ireland that proceeds from any other hypothesis, than that the Irish people are destined, by Providence, to be the apostles, witnesses and defenders of God's Truth, will inevitably become entangled in a maze of inexplicable mysteries. Once admitted that the Irish nation has received the task, not of developing commerce, nor of perfecting agriculture, nor of conferring any such temporal benefit on mankind, but of bestowing on others that faith which they themselves so cherish, the finger of God becomes visible in every phase of the nation's existence. The Irish race is a race of missionaries.

When God calls an individual to a high mission, He fits him for the accomplishment of the duties inherent in his mission. This principle, applied to nations, explains the high state of civilization that Ireland had attained before the arrival of her apostle St. Patrick. It is well known to antiquarians that when the inhabitants of the neighboring countries were painted savages, the