

flourishing condition. At this time Ireland was dotted with monasteries and colleges; and the people were living happily under wise laws. Such was not the case with the rest of Europe. The northern barbarians were overrunning the continent, and destroying all vestiges of civilization. Irish monks eagerly set forth to enlighten Europe and bring all the nations within the pale of the Church. Foremost amongst these missionaries were Saints Columkille and Columbanus. The former turned his attention towards Scotland. He established his headquarters on the island of Iona near the coast of that country. Through the efforts and self-sacrifice of the saint and his companions, almost the entire Scottish nation was kept in the true religion. Saint Columbanus carried the torch of faith into France. Saint Gall raised the standard of the cross in Switzerland, Saint Killian in Germany, and Saint Cataldus in Italy. There was scarcely a country in Europe in which Irish priests were not struggling against the powers of darkness. The Irish apostles followed the example of Saint Patrick by establishing monasteries in all the countries in which they were preaching. They founded 13 in Scotland, 12 in England, 36 in France, 16 in Bavaria, 15 in Switzerland, and 6 in Italy. The sanctity of Ireland's sons and daughters is evidenced by the large number of Irish saints found on the Calendars of the different countries of Europe. There are 150 on the German Calendar, 45 on the French; Belgium honors 30, Italy 13; while even Norway and Iceland claim 8. With such children abroad, it is little wonder that Ireland's name was loved and respected by men of all nations. Well might they call her "Land of Saints and Scholars."

One of the chief characteristics of the Irish people is their love for learning. Even before Ireland became Christian, Hibernia, by which name it was previously known, was famed for its bards and poets. King Cormac, who ruled the Island in the early part of the fourth century, established schools for military discipline, history and jurisprudence. With the introduction of Christianity, education received a new impetus, and schools sprang up in all parts of the land. The progress in learning and religion was most marked during the seventh and eighth centuries. The colleges were counted by hundreds and the students in some of them numbered thousands. The great schools of Clonfert, Bangor, Glasnevin, Clonard and many