

Hence they had, to a very high degree, all the essentials of a great nation. There was but one drawback—their political slavery. But this was as much by the will of God, as by the power and duplicity of the Saxon. For not man, but God, defeated the Irish under the Red Hughs, under Owen Roe, under Sarsfield.

What was the type of man this civilization produced? Take the peasant. He was endowed with all the traditional traits of a people cultured for fifteen hundred years, with a vocabulary in every day use of five thousand words (English or Anglified Irish peasants use or misuse about five hundred), with a love for classical Irish music, for classical Irish poetry, tales, and history, with the art of using the pointed sayings and astute aphorisms in which his language abound; and finally to complete this picture—it's a perfectly true one—his morals were purer and his faith greater than any other class in the world. To compare this eighteenth century Gaelic peasant with one of his ignorant bigoted rulers or with the brutal yeomanry that in 1798 goaded him to rebel is impossible: there can be no comparison. He was a far nobler man, in a higher state of civilization than many a type of even a cultured English man of to day.

And now to sum up all that we have said so far: there has been such a thing as a Gaelic civilization; and this Gaelic civilization, except politically, is superior to the Anglo-Saxon.

We have now to see how Ireland drifted in the nineteenth century into a very inferior sort of Anglo Saxonism. A writer thus states the fact. "The history of Ireland in the nineteenth century has been one in which, while wave followed wave of political agitation, and Nationality has had its preachers and martyrs in the senate and the dock, on the platform and on the scaffold, the Irish people at large have drifted away from the ways and ideals of their forefathers, from their methods of thought, from their sports and pastimes, from their learning, language and literature, and taken to their hearts, those of the detested Saxon (of the cockney type). The proofs are palpable and might easily fill volumes,"