

the doctrines of the true religion Christianity swept over the island with a rapidity hitherto unheard of in the field of Apostolic labors. Idolatry vanished before its irresistible power as the dew before the beams of the morning sun. Superstitious practices were driven from the island forever. Rich and poor, old and young, learned and illiterate, hastened to embrace the sweet and saving yoke of the Gospel, and the new faith became a living and practical inspiration, guiding and vivifying the pulsations of national life.

“Sir, what comfort and inward tranquility must have been afforded St. Patrick. Having once spoken the word of truth, he beheld Ireland accepting it at once—the only race which the Roman Empire did not attempt to conquer, but which, together with the ancient Picts, it endeavored to shut out from England by a wall of stone. A nation which had proven its surpassing prowess in battle, this nation now consecrated its wonderful qualities of mind and body to the service of the Cross. Ah! yes; this nation of warriors turned from temporal conquest to the conquest of souls, and displayed an admirable Apostolic Spirit in shedding the Divine Light of the Holy Religion throughout the countries of Europe.”

“Irish missionaries not only invaded England, Scotland, France and Germany, but even penetrated the wilderness of countries the people of which were little removed from barbarism. According to Irish chronicles, they ventured as far north as Iceland, and crossed the Atlantic to the shores of America. Whether this be true or not, we do know that many brave Irish soldiers of the Cross met death at the hands of uncivilized nations.

“Today Irishmen the world over, in spirit at least, gaze back over the history of their country and retrospectively peer through the vista of seven centuries, with its dark clouds, across which quivers the lightening of persecution, and before their vision passes the picture of most heroic fidelity to Faith under an oppression which stands unrivalled in the history of the human race. Has this fidelity waned? The number of Irish men and women that, in the religious garb, are today laboring for the spread of the Faith brought by St. Patrick to their forefathers is an answer in itself, and an answer emphasized by the millions of Irish faithful in every continent, who still possess a Faith, a Hope and a Charity unexcelled in all the history of Christianity. It is our fervent prayer tonight, sir, that our scattered race may preserve