

# ON PAN-CELTICISM.

By Arthur Griffith.

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There is, we understand, a Pan-Celtic Congress to be held next year in Dublin, at which the five Celtic nations of Mann, Wales, Brittany, Scotland and Ireland are to be represented. We have a certain amount of sympathy with the idea of bringing into communion the scattered remnants of a noble race, but we are inclined to ask the promoters what they hope to achieve. If it be a Pan-Celtic Confederation, what will be the basis of the federation?

We see much to admire in the character of Scot and Welshman, but we know that each is, before all things, a Briton. There are no more enthusiastic upholders and stouter defenders of the British flag than the Scotch and Welsh, nor is it strange that it should be so. The two peoples are partakers in the fortunes of England and their interests are intertwined with hers. The point we wish made clear to our minds by the promoters of the Congress is, how far they mean, or desire, to identify Ireland with Scotland and Wales. If it be purely an academic identification, we assume there will be no opposition, if there be no enthusiastic approval, from the Nationalists of Ireland. That long-suffering body, it is true, has been plagued for years past by pseudo-National movements, but its patient good nature will extend, at least, toleration to the fraternisation of a group of Irishmen with the Jingoistic harpers of Wales and the Imperialistic pipe-skirlers of Scotland. Any attempt, however, to use Pan-Celticism as an agency for the propagation of a bastard Nationality will be met and fought. There is a design, in some quarters, to foist on Ireland something of the kind. When the designers pluck up sufficient moral courage to come out into the open, they will be quickly convinced that there is no room in Ireland for an emasculated Nationality.

We shall watch the progress of the Pan-Celtic movement with interest, and not, unless its leaders meddle or palter with Irish Nationalism, an unsympathetic interest; but knowing as we do that the proudest boast of Cambrian and Caledonian is their British

citizenship, and that other nations regard them – and justly – as one with the English, we shall take care that our countrymen are not misled in the slightest by any bombast or nonsense about the ‘sea-divided Gael.’

We have written so much to define our position – not with any intention of alienating the favour of our readers from Pan-Celticism. It is right that a sympathy should exist between peoples whose origin has been common and whose ideals bear a resemblance. But our country stands in a different relation to her rulers from that occupied by the other Celtic nations. Scotland, Wales, and Mann are content with the flag of England – or, perhaps, we should say Great Britain; Brittany has no desire to separate her destinies from those of France; but Ireland is not content with her enforced connection to her powerful neighbour, and Irishmen are aware that in endeavouring to regain the political independence of their country they must reckon on the hostility of Scotland and Wales in addition to the hostility of England.