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## CHAPTER XXXV

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### THE SCOTTISH IMMIGRANT IN WESTERN CANADA

THE Scottish people are noted colonisers, and North America has been their favourite place in choosing a home. The Scottish woman is willing to face the greatest dangers and hardships, if she may, with her husband, have her "ain biggin'," her "ain hearth," and what she regards as a new-world picture of her "ain countree." She is a helpmeet to her husband rather than an object calling for pity, or a goddess set up for adoration to be served or waited upon. She is her husband's equal, her house is her kingdom, and with thrift and sedulous care she watches for the return of her "guid man at e'en." Tam o' Shanter's wife, Kate, was a travesty of a housewife as she waited for Tam,

Gatherin' her brows like gatherin' storm,  
Nursin' her wrath to keep it warm.

The most famous household scene of humble life is that in the "Cotter's Saturday Night." It is reserved to Scotland to have a peasantry industrious, intelligent, and independent. In

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Canada especially has it come about that the type of Scottish home has taken root. It is among Scottish writers especially that such topics have been dealt with as "Annals of a Country Parish," "Essays by a Country Parson," the idealisation of a "Drumtochty," the domestic sketch of a "Window in Thrums," or the rural picture of the "Man from Glengarry." The Scottish immigrant is equally adaptable for the industry of the manufactory of the New World town, where he may make a new "Paisley" or a colonial "Glasgow"; or be the stock-breeder with his Clydesdales, the shepherd or drover with his collie dog, or the husbandman with his "pleugh" or hayfork. In Western Canada, as we have seen, in every province he has been the successful agriculturist, and in the pursuit of agriculture is there scope found for the sobriety, the independence, and the stability of character which make a nation great. The Canadian West welcomes the Scotsman, coming either from Bonnie Scotland or from the Scottish localities of Old Canada. To those acquainted with the filling up of the West during the last forty years, it brings a smile to the face to hear the man with a decidedly Highland accent tell you that he comes "from the tenth concension of Huron." A lady of Manitoba told the writer of an old Scottish woman visiting in Minnedosa from the county of Oxford in Ontario. She was from the township, settled up largely by the Mackays and other descendants of Highland soldiers, where the High-

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lander in the time of the Fenian Raid in 1866 said of the Fenians, "They'll mebbe take Canada, but they'll no take Zorra." This old lady from that township said, in speaking of the wintry weather of Manitoba, "I don't know what they mean here by saying that it's forty degrees below Zorra." Glengarry, in Upper Canada, sent many stalwart and excellent settlers to the West. A Manitoba story is told of the early times where a settlement chiefly Scottish sent to the Theological Professor of Manitoba College, Winnipeg, asking that Sabbath service might be given them in their new home in the approaching winter. The professor sent back word that the Church authorities were not able during that winter to grant their request, but advised them to meet every Sabbath and take turns in reading a sermon and holding such service as they could. This was done, and each Sunday a different head of a family took the service. In course of time it came to the turn of "Lachlan McGillivray," a stalwart Glengarryman, who in early life had been a lumberman and log driver up the Ottawa River, and whose Scottish blood had boiled in many a fight. McGillivray took as his topic the story of David and Goliath. He described the Hebrew boy, David, his device of the stones from the brook, his sling, and the preparations for the fight, and then pictured the huge giant, whom in stature he somewhat resembled. Warming up with his subject he rose in excitement to the climax. The stone from wee David's sling was guided to the head

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of the giant, and the stone pierced his brain, and he fell; David rushed up—and—and—tore his sword from its scabbard, and he wheeled the sword round his head, and he cut off his—his—d—d head, thus using the graphic language of the river driver. This was "big Lachlan's" last invitation to conduct the service.

Many of the early settlers of the West came from about the town of Perth, in the county of Lanark, Ontario. Lanark, for some reason, in the early days was called "Lummocks," arising, some said, from the ineffective effort of a Lanark man in his cups to tell the county from which he came. But the Lanark people were among the most thrifty and successful of the settlers. The town of Perth, in this county, was begun by a colony from Paisley, Scotland, in 1817. From it forty years afterwards a colony had gone to the county of Bruce in Upper Canada and formed the new town of Paisley. Twenty years after that time, on the opening up of the West, a colony of them had emigrated to Manitoba and had begun what was known as the Paisley Settlement, though the name was afterward changed to Pilot Mound. The persistence and intelligence of the "Paisley buddies" are proverbial.

So also Nottawasaga, and Mariposa, and Dunwich, and Inverness, the last in Quebec, and many other Scottish localities in Canada, sent out their Highland Macs to found new settlements in Western Canada, destined through their intelligence and thrift to win success. From the northern

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country in the seventies came out a number of Scottish crofters. These were chiefly from the Hebrides—Benbecula, North and South Uist, and elsewhere. They were assisted by the British Government. Two of their settlements were in the Hilton and Killarney districts of Manitoba and two in the neighbourhood of Saltcoats and Wapella in Saskatchewan. These colonies had for a time many difficulties. For one of them in the Saltcoats Settlement the writer received for several years \$300 a year from an official of the Dominion Government, whose father had been a crofter, to maintain a school for them. This was for several years a successful school. Though the original crofter settlers, being fishermen rather than farmers, found life hard and uncomfortable in some cases, yet their sons and daughters have become intelligent and successful farmers.

A marked peculiarity has been seen in many of these Scottish settlements in Canada as to the use of intoxicating liquors. The old pioneer looked upon the man who did not take a taste of whiskey as refusing one of God's good gifts. The sturdy old Scottish Highlander or Lowlander rather considered the "teetotaler" as a weakling. The old picture was perhaps attributed to the township of Oro, which has been made celebrated by the young Canadian novelist, Marian Keith. Three Highlanders, each with a glass of "Mountain Dew," stood up after the friendly manner of "Burns" and his "Souter Johnny," and they are represented as saying—

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No. 1: "This is the best usquebae I tasted forever more whateffer."

No. 2 responded: "So did I neither," while

No. 3 concluded: "Neffier did I too."

But the notable fact is that through the earnest efforts of godly ministers, and in a New World environment, the Highland townships from Pictou in Nova Scotia, to Woodville and Elgin and Huron, through Manitoba and on the Rocky Mountains, have become noted for their general abstinence from strong drink, where before both minister and people, at wake or wedding, indulged to the great disadvantage of both. The great Scottish settlements of Lowlanders in Dumfries, Galt, Fergus, Mount Forest, and elsewhere have been the most noted settlements for intelligent and advanced agriculture, where not only thrift but scientific farming prevailed, but now these features have also been carried on to the Portage Plains, Hamiota District, Souris, Moose Mountain, and Lumsden communities in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Thus the management and skilled farming of the Lothians and Dumfriesshire in the Old Land have followed the race in advanced farming in Ontario and elsewhere in Older Canada, and have been transferred to and reproduced on the fertile plains of Western Canada. The Scottish emigration to Canada that began in Pictou in Nova Scotia in the decade from 1790 to 1800 was followed to Glengarry from about 1800 to 1810, in the Perth Military settlement in 1810 to 1820, and for three decades after that very largely, especially from 1830 to

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1850. But never has it been so great or so attended with success and satisfaction as to the Canadian West in the first decade of the twentieth century. The great agricultural counties of Aberdeen, Fife, and Berwickshire, with others well represented, are sending out their tens of thousands to build up institutions in harmony with British ideals, and yet with the full flavour of our Canadian life.

In the great farmers' societies, where there is the power of organisation to control the country, to protect against railway and elevator aggressiveness and tyranny, the spirit of these Scottish farmers has been roused and their power of combination manifested. The Mackenzies and McCuaigs, the Malcolms and Grants, the Shanks and Martins, the Bryces and Mutches have stood out for equal rights for the farming communities. The agricultural colleges in the several Western provinces are all engaged or are laying out plans to engage in making the highest and most useful knowledge available, so that agriculture may not be a mere matter of chance or of unreasoning custom, but a scientific occupation, worthy of being called a profession. To this end the Scottish agricultural immigrant, with his quick power of adaptation, his intelligence and discrimination, will do much to advance the interests of Western Canada. The Church of the fathers, ever the friend of liberty and high education, is present to encourage the farmers in improved farming, in conserving the resources of their country, and in giving oppor-

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tunities to their sons and daughters for the most ample education adapted to the farmer's life.

The fact pointed out or alluded to in the chapter on Scottish Canadian authorship, that Scottish scenes and Scottish life in Canada as pictured in fiction by Dr. Gordon (Ralph Connor), Mrs. McGregor (Marian Keith), Mrs. McClung, Robert E. Knowles, and Robert Service are acceptable to the people of Canada, shows how congenial to Canadians is a Scottish life atmosphere. The active agency of Scottish benevolent societies, as also shown in a previous chapter, and the observance annually of Burns's birthday and St. Andrew's Day, as no other national festivals are kept among us, points distinctly to the fact that Scottish literature, customs, and ideals will make Canada a most acceptable home for the Scottish immigrant, whether agriculturist, merchant, or commercial man. While there is no reason why the great opportunities afforded by Nova Scotia to Scottish tenant-farmers should not be taken advantage of ; and while Ontario has even its tone of speech in many localities suggestive of a Scottish flavour ; yet it is to the broad and hospitable West, with its Scottish-like climate, its hearty warmth for the industrious stranger, its liberal expenditure for educational advantages, its predominant religious atmosphere suited to his taste, that the Scottish immigrant will be especially attracted, and where he will find a favourable, remunerative, and socially suitable sphere of action for himself and his children.