

CHAPTER VII.

THE SCOTTISH BLOOD IN THE ULSTER MEN
OF TO-DAY.

IT is difficult to bring home to men who do not know Ireland and its history, the fact that there is a deep, strongly marked difference between the Ulster men and the Irish, and that that difference is not accidental, not the divergence arising out of different surroundings, not even that springing from antagonistic religious training, but is the deeper, stronger-marked cleavage of differing race. It is as distinct as that between any two varieties of any other animal—say between mastiff and stag-hound. Of course, intermarriage gradually shades off the difference of type; but take the Scots of the Ards of Down, who have probably scarcely intermarried with the Irish during the 300 years they have been in the island, and contrast them with the inhabitants of West Donegal, who have probably scarcely mixed their blood with the English, and you see the race difference. It is strange for any man who is accus-

tomed to walk through the southern districts of Scotland, and to meet the country people going about their daily work in their everyday clothes and everyday manner, to cross into Ireland and wander through the country roads of Down or Antrim. He is in a country which is supposed to be passionately anxious to set up a separate nationality, and yet he cannot feel as if he were away from his own kith and kin. The men who are driving the carts are like the men at home; the women at the cottage doors are in build and carriage like the mothers of our southern Highlands; the signs of the little shops in the villages bear well-known names—Paterson, perhaps, or Johnstone, or Sloan; the boy sitting on the “dyke” with nothing to do, is whistling “A man’s a man for a’ that.” He goes into a village inn, and is served by a six-foot, loosely-hung Scottish Borderer, worthy to have served “drams” to “the Shepherd and Christopher North”; and when he leaves the little inn he sees by the sign that his host bears the name of “James Hay,” and his wonder ceases. The want of strangeness in the men and women is what strikes him as so strange. Then he crosses the Bann, and gets into a different region. He leaves behind him the pleasant green hills which shut in Belfast Lough, the great sweep of rich plain which Lough Neagh may well ask to show cause why it should not be annexed to its inland sea; he gets within sight of the South Derry hills, and the actors in the scene partly change. Some are very familiar; the

smart maid at his inn is very like the housemaid at home, and the principal grocer of the little village is the "very image" of the elder who taught him at the Sunday-school; but he meets a donkey-cart, and neither the donkey nor its driver seem somehow or other to be kin to him; and the "Father" passes him, and looks at him as at a stranger who is visiting *his* town,—then the Scotsman knows that he is out of Scotland and into Ireland. It is not in Belfast that he feels the likeness to home so much, for everybody is walking fast just as they are in Glasgow, so he cannot notice them particularly, and, of course, the "loafers" at the public-house doors, who are certainly not moving smartly, do not count for anything in either town; but it is in the country districts—at Newtown-Ards, or Antrim, where life is leisurely, that he recognises that he is among his own people. While it is in a town which is in the border-land between Scottish and Irish, say at Coleraine, on a Saturday market-day, that he has the difference of the two types in face and figure brought strongly before him. Some seem foreign to him, others remind him of his "ain countrie," and make him feel that the district he is in, is in reality the land of the Scot. The manner in which the two races have lived side by side for three centuries and are yet separate still, is stated with fine courtesy and good feeling in the account of the parish of Dungiven in Derry, written by the rector, for an old Statistical Account of Ireland.—The book was never completed, like so

*I lived 40 years in Coleraine, studied
the people. What there are never, where
them being so segregated*

many noble attempts in Ireland.—“The inhabitants of the parish are divided into two races of men, as totally distinct as if they belonged to different countries and regions. These (in order that we may avoid the invidious names of Protestant and Roman Catholic, which indeed have little to say in the matter) may be distinguished by the usual names of Scotch and Irish; the former including the descendants of all the Scotch and English colonists who have emigrated hither since the time of James I., and the latter comprehending the native and original inhabitants of the country. Than these, no two classes of men can be more distinct: the Scotch are remarkable for their comfortable houses and appearance, regular conduct and perseverance in business, and their being almost entirely manufacturers; the Irish, on the other hand, are more negligent in their habitations, less regular and guarded in their conduct, and have a total indisposition to manufacture. Both are industrious, but the industry of the Scotch is steady and patient, and directed with foresight, while that of the Irish is rash, adventurous, and variable.”¹

It is not necessary to follow the history of Ulster during the present century, for the Union brought back the English and Scottish settlers into full communion with the great national life which they had a right to share, and opened up to them a part in the great future of what we lovingly call the English

¹ Statistical Account of Ireland, Dublin, 1814, vol. ii. p. 307.

*The English Scotch and Irish
in Ulster are now (1860) hopelessly
mixed and a very large proportion*

nation. The legislation of 1782 and of the following session broke the shackles which had fettered hands which Nature had fashioned to be skilful in manufactures, and took away that clog on intellectual powers which were fitted to excel in commercial pursuits; while the Union of 1801 induced these men of the North to become in very deed citizens of the United Kingdom, instead of living, as they had been wont to do, with their hearts across the Atlantic, in company with their brethren who were serving under the shadow of the Stars and Stripes. It is profitable, however, standing as we do among the closing years of the nineteenth century, to look back on the work accomplished by our kinsmen who left Scotland in the seventeenth century, and to trace the indelible marks which they have left on the "sands of time," and on the face of Ulster. And we may safely assert that they were strong men, full of firm determination and governed by deep religious feeling, because, after three centuries, their descendants bear not a few traces of the strength of character and fire of their forefathers. The Ulster of 1888 tells, deeply written across its face, the story of the emigration which began in 1606.

It is necessary to recapitulate what this emigration amounted to, and what effect it really had on Ireland. The settlement made by Hugh Montgomery and James Hamilton, in 1606, opened up the county of Down to Scottish emigrants. They took possession of the whole of the north of the county, but they

*x Burke, Savage, Fitzsimons, Buckard
are all Anglo-Normans and are the
representative in North and East D.*

were satisfied with the arable lands which they found there, and did not intrude on the hill-country of the southern baronies, which therefore remained Irish and Roman Catholic. To the west of the county the Scots were met by the English colony which Chichester had founded at Belfast, and which spread up the river Lagan, along both its banks, towards Hillsborough, on the County Down side, and far into County Armagh on the west. Their common Puritanism formed a bond of union between these English and Scottish colonists. It made them unite and form into communities wherever they met, whether on the banks of the Lagan or northward throughout the length and breadth of County Antrim, when it was opened up to settlers by Sir Arthur Chichester along the shores of Belfast Lough, and by Macdonnell northward to the Giant's Causeway. The only district of this county not thoroughly colonised were the highlands along the north-east shore. Then came James's great scheme of colonisation in 1610, which threw open other six counties for English and Scottish settlers. In some of these counties, and in some parts of them, the settlements were successful; in others they failed to take root. In Armagh the British colony took firm hold, because, as soon as the county was opened up, settlers flocked into it across the borders from Down, and in even greater numbers from the English colony in Antrim. On the other hand, the "plantation" of Cavan was, comparatively speaking, a failure. In County Tyrone

the British settlers did not invade the mountainous country on the borders of Londonderry county, but contented themselves with the finer lands in the basin of the Mourne, and on the shores of Lough Neagh, and along the streams which flow into it. Londonderry county was, during the early years of the Settlement, left very much to itself by the "Irish Society of London," which kept its contract largely in the direction of drawing its rents—an operation which is still performed by the London Companies, the valuation of the Londoners' property being stated in the Government return for last year at £77,000 per annum.¹ At the mouths of the two rivers which drain the county, however, the London Society founded the towns of Londonderry and Coleraine, and these as time went on became ports by which emigrants entered and spread all over the fertile lands of the county. In Donegal the British only attempted to colonise the eastern portion; while in Fermanagh the Scots seemed to be so little at home that they handed over their lands to the English, who here established a strong colony, from which have sprung some of the best-known names among the English in Ireland. Into these districts of Ulster both English and Scottish emigrants, but especially the latter, continued to stream at intervals during the whole of the seventeenth century.

The two counties which have been the most

¹ Thom's Irish Almanac, p. 736.

thoroughly transformed by this emigration are the two which are nearest Scotland, and were the first opened up for emigrants. These two have been completely altered in nationality and in religion. They have become British, and in the main, certainly Scottish. Perhaps no better proof can be given than the family names of the inhabitants. Some years ago, a patient local antiquary took the voters' list of County Down "of those rated above £12 for poor-rates,"¹ and analysed it carefully. There were 10,028 names on the list, and these fairly represented the whole proper names of the county. He found that the following names occurred oftenest, and arranged them in order of frequency—Smith, [Martin], [M'Kie], Moore, Brown, Thompson, Patterson, Johnson, Stewart, Wilson, Graham, [Campbell] Robinson, Bell, Hamilton, [Morrow] Gibson, Boyd, Wallace, and [Magee]. He dissected as carefully the voters' list for County Antrim,² in which there were 9538 names, and found that the following were at the top: Thompson, Wilson, Stewart, Smith, Moore, [Boyd] Johnson, M'Millan, Brown, Bell, [Campbell], [M'Neil], Crawford, M'Alister, Hunter, Macaulay, Robinson, Wallace, Millar, [Kennedy] and Hill. The list has a very Scottish flavour altogether, although it may be noted that the names that are highest on the list are those which are common to both England and Scotland; for it may be taken for granted that the English

¹ Ulster Journal of Archæology, vol. vi. p. 77.

² Ibid., p. 323.

All bracketed names are of Scot (Irish) origin

"Thompson" has swallowed up the Scottish "Thomson," that "Moore" includes the Ayrshire "Muir," and that the Annandale "Johnstones" have been merged by the writer in the English "Johnsons." One other point is very striking—that the great Ulster name of "O'Neill" is awanting, and also the Antrim "Macdonnel." The scrutiny was interesting, too, as showing that certain peculiarly English and Scottish surnames of less frequency were localised in certain parishes, and only found in these; a colony had settled on that spot in the seventeenth century, and there their descendants remained. Taking Down and Antrim together, twenty-five surnames covered 17 per cent of the population. Another strong proof of the Scottish blood of the Ulster men may be found by taking the annual reports presented to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, held in June 1887. Here are the names of the men, lay and clerical, who sign these reports, the names being taken as they occur: J. W. Whigham, Jackson Smith, Hamilton Magee, Thomas Armstrong, William ^{A. Saxon} Park, J. M. Rodgers, David Wilson, George Macfarland, Thomas Lyle, W. Rogers, J. B. Wylie, W. Young, E. F. Simpson, Alex. Turnbull, John Malcolm, John H. Orr. Probably the reports of our three Scottish Churches taken together could not produce so large an average of Scottish surnames.

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Scottish colonisation of Ulster is the Presbyterian Church of Ireland. Its career since the Union has been highly honourable, and one which gives promise of good work in the future; for it has been steadily consolidating, and closing its ranks, in presence of the great masses of its opponents. In 1818, a union was brought about between the two bodies of non-conforming Presbyterians who bore the quaint Scottish titles of Burghers and Anti-burghers, and they became a "Secession Church"; in 1840, this Secession Church made up its differences with the main body of Presbyterians, and formed the Presbyterian Church of Ireland. The United Church has since gone on striking its roots deeper and deeper into Ulster society. The Disestablishment Act of 1869 put an end to the Regium Donum—the grant to the Presbyterian Church, begun by Charles I. This endowment had been given, with one slight break, every year since its institution, had been frequently increased, and in the last year it was voted, amounted to £39,000. The clergy who had received allowances from the Regium Donum were, however, entitled to allowances for life; these as a body they commuted for a slump sum, and handed over to the Church the sum of £587,735, to form a permanent endowment for the Presbyterian Church of Ireland. The interest of this sum has been supplemented by a Sustentation Fund.

The Presbyterian Church of Ireland now numbers over 550 congregations, and there are, besides, small

many of the English settlers of Belfast and the country west of it were English Presbyterians following the lead of many of the English colonists

United Presbyterian and Reformed Presbyterian Churches.¹ The Presbyterians number over half a million—about one-tenth of the population of the country. The Episcopalian Church claims over 600,000. The Presbyterians may with safety be taken as representing with sufficient accuracy the Scots of Ulster. The manner in which the Presbyterians are distributed is itself sufficient proof of this. Ulster claims fifteen-sixteenths of them, and they are found just where we know that the Scots settled. In Antrim they constitute 45 per cent of a total population of 422,000; in Down, 40 per cent of a population just under 300,000; while in Londonderry they are 33 per cent; in Tyrone, 19; and in Armagh, 16 per cent of the population. But it is when we come to examine the details of the census of 1881 that the clearest traces of the Scottish emigration are to be found. Down has only 40 per cent of Presbyterians, but that is because the south of the county was never colonised, and is still Roman Catholic. The old Scottish colony in Upper Clannaboye and the Great Ards is still nearly as Presbyterian as in 1630. It has already been recorded how James Hamilton, immediately after settling in 1606, raised churches and placed “learned and pious ministers from Scotland” in the six parishes of his estate—Bangor, Killinchy, Holywood, Ballyhalbert, Dundonald, and Killyleagh. These parishes have gone on flourishing, so that when

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¹ Report of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, 1887.

the census collector did his rounds through Hamilton's old estate in 1881,¹ he found that it contained 29,678 inhabitants; and that although it was situated in what has been called the most Catholic country in Europe, only 3444 Roman Catholics were there to be found, as against 17,205 Presbyterians. For two centuries and a half these "Westlan' Whigs" have stood true to their Scottish Church. The record of Hugh Montgomery's settlement is quite as curious. His old headquarters, Newtown-Ards, has grown into a flourishing little manufacturing town; and Donaghadee is a big village well known as a ferry for Scotland. Still ^{NO} they remain "true blue" Presbyterian. Montgomery's estate is pretty well covered by the four parishes of Newtown-Ards, Grey Abbey, Comber, and Donaghadee. These have a united population of 26,559; the Presbyterians number 16,714, and the Roman Catholics only 1370—the balance being mainly Episcopalians and Methodists. In Armagh and in Fermanagh, on the other hand, the Episcopalians are more numerous than the Presbyterians. In the former there are 32 per cent belonging to the Church of Ireland, and only 16 to the Presbyterian Church; while in the latter there are only 2 per cent of Presbyterians, as against 36 of Episcopalians. The balance of nationalities and of religions remains to all appearance what the colonisation of the seventeenth century made it, and that

¹ Detailed Census of Ireland, 1881, County Down.

Montgomery - of Norman stock not "Scot stock"
was not a Presbyterian, but a Churchman
His settlers were nothing.

notwithstanding the great emigration from Ulster during the eighteenth century. The only strange change is, that Belfast, which was at its foundation an English town, should so soon have become in the main Scottish, and should remain such unto this day.¹

The most outstanding feature of Irish industry is the linen manufacture. In this the Scots have done their full share of work, although it cannot be said that they have any right to claim any exclusive credit for its present importance. It is indeed altogether the creation of the colonists, but English and French have contributed their share as well as the Scots. It is only right to bear testimony to the debt of gratitude due to the Huguenot refugees, who seem to have possessed rare mechanical genius. The descendants of these French settlers are among the most honoured of the Protestants of the North. The linen trade of Ireland is now one of the important industries of the United Kingdom ; it is almost entirely confined to Ulster ; and a glance at the list of the members of the "Linen Merchants' Association of Belfast" will convince the most sceptical how thoroughly the captains of the industry are English and Scotch. According to the factory inspector's reports for 1885, 61,749 persons were employed in the flax mills and factories in Ireland.² Of these the greatest number were in

¹ Benn's Belfast, p. 88.

² Twentieth Annual Report of the Flax Supply Association, Belfast, 1888.

County Antrim—the great town of Belfast bringing up the total; Armagh comes second; Down third, with Londonderry and Tyrone far behind; and the other counties of Ulster represented to a very small extent. The supremacy of Ulster in the linen manufacture is shown in a very striking way by taking the statistics for 1885 for the United Kingdom. Of the total of 1,155,217 spindles used in the spinning of linen in the United Kingdom, 817,014 were in Ireland, as against 220,644 in Scotland and 117,559 in England; while of 47,641 power-looms employed in the trade of the United Kingdom, 21,954 are in Irish mills. The application of steam-power to the weaving of linen may be said to be the work of this generation of Ulster men, as in 1850 there were only 58 power-looms in Ireland, although steam-power had been already extensively introduced into Scotland and England. It is pleasant to know that Ulster retains her supremacy for the quality of her linens, as well as for the quantity produced.

But the linen manufacture is also a blessing to the North of Ireland from the stimulus it gives to her agriculture, by encouraging her farmers to grow the flax which the factories spin and weave into linen. The acreage under flax has varied much from year to year; in 1887 it stood at 130,202, almost entirely in Ulster, and the value of the flax produced was nearly one million sterling. As four times this quantity is consumed in the United Kingdom, a wide margin for profitable increase is still left to the agriculturists of

Ulster. Of the Irish counties, Down heads the list for the production of flax, with Tyrone and Londonderry as second and third. It is a crop which scourges the ground, and requires good farming, but in successful years it is exceedingly profitable.

In other commercial pursuits besides the linen trade, the descendants of the Scottish settlers have shown themselves worthy of the stock from which they spring, and have made Ulster a striking contrast from its wealth and prosperity to the other provinces of Ireland. The great town of Belfast is a most remarkable example of what energy and ability can do. A century ago, it was a small town of 12,000 inhabitants; it is now a handsome, thriving city of near 300,000. Besides its great linen trade, it is one of the most frequented ports in the United Kingdom. "Its custom dues are larger than either Glasgow or Hull, being surpassed only by London and Liverpool in the United Kingdom."¹ Its reputation for shipbuilding is rapidly extending, and at the present time there are in course of construction on the banks of the Lagan, what promise to be two of the greatest and swiftest ships of our mercantile marine. Into other branches of industry these Scots of the North of Ireland are throwing themselves with perfervid energy and wonderful success. Meanwhile the city is extending its arms down both sides of Belfast Lough; it has cut new streets through

¹ Article on "Situation in Ireland," 'Scotsman,' 16th January 1888.

old quarters, built handsome public buildings, inaugurated new drainage works, and is at the present time forming a new sea-channel three or four miles long through the shallows of the Lough. The success of Belfast is not due to the salubrity of its climate, to the richness of the soil, or to its natural position, certainly not to the small stream which forms its harbour. There are many towns more advantageously situated in Ireland. The increasing prosperity is the well-merited reward of the work of her sons, and her condition is widely different from that of the other great towns of Ireland, because her inhabitants differ in race from theirs.

It is, indeed, in the practical work of the world that those men of Ulster excel at home and abroad. They have made but little mark in art or literature; but in commerce and manufactures and science, in war and diplomacy, they have done their own share of hard and successful labour. Americans have ever been willing to bear testimony to the part which Ulster men took in building up the fabric of the United States. The Presbyterian emigrants were among the stoutest soldiers who fought in the War of Independence; and many of the best citizens of the United States spring from the same stock. Descendants of Ulster men have filled the President's Chair in the persons of James Monroe, James Knox Polk, John C. Calhoun, and James Buchanan; Stonewall Jackson came of the same blood; and A. T.

Stewart, who founded in New York the greatest business in the world, was from County Down. Ulster has produced three men who have in a notable way translated science into practice: Fulton, one of the inventors of steam navigation; Morse, whose name is linked with telegraphy; and M'Cormick, the inventor of the reaping-machine. To the service of this country she has given many who have upheld the honour of England as soldiers and administrators. Ulster can boast of the names of some of the best of the captains who served under Wellington; and she gave to India two men who helped materially to save her for England during the great Mutiny—Henry and John Lawrence. Of the blood of the settlers also sprang Lord Castlereagh and George Canning, Sir Henry Pottinger and Lord Cairns; and also one of the most brilliant and successful of living administrators, Lord Dufferin, who is the inheritor of the title of one of the first of the Scottish settlers, James Hamilton, Lord Clannaboye, and is the possessor of part of the old Scottish settlement on the south shore of Belfast Lough.

In literature and art these Scots of the North of Ireland cannot rival their brethren of the old land. Perhaps their history during the century and a half which succeeded the Restoration sufficiently accounts for their want of the power of expression in prose or verse, in sculpture or in painting; for during that period the North of Ireland was wretchedly

poor, and its Presbyterian inhabitants were by the Test Act cut off from the higher culture of the universities. Certainly the names which Ulster has produced in literature and art cannot rival the great men which she has brought forth for the active pursuits of life :—

“ He came from the North, and his words were few ;
But his voice was kind and his heart was true.”

But though these men of Ulster are not much given to the arts of poetry or oratory, still they are a strong practical race, full of energy, courage, and perseverance, who, if allowed fair-play, will leave the world a little better than they found it. They have had a hard fight for existence during the centuries they have been in Ireland ; and now when they have begun to enjoy the full fruits of the Union of 1801, we need not wonder if they protest, not loudly but deeply, against any attempts to impair the arrangement which has brought to them good government and prosperity. Time will, we trust, help to bridge over that deep chasm which separates the Scot and the Irish in Ireland ; but the cleavage is more likely to be closed if they both continue to live in the full communion of that great empire in which both may well glory. Certainly it seems little short of madness in any statesman to attempt to force a race so “dour” and determined as are these Ulster men—descended as they are from blood as “dour” as any

which the world has known, the English and Scottish Covenanters who fought together at Marston Moor—to attempt to compel men of such a stock to submit to a form of government against which they protest, and which they dislike and distrust with all the force of their nature.