

THE UNSPEAKABLE SCOT

Excellently intended, my dear Dr. Archer, excellently and honestly intended! But could gratuitousness, or egregiousness, or flat-footedness go further? Such an oration, happily, might come out of none but a Scotch mouth, or from any pen but that of a Scotchman. In point of unnecessariness it rivals pretty well aught that I have had the felicity to see in print. And it illustrates to admiration the Scotch faculty for spreading out the commonplace and being sententious over it.

What Dr. Archer's view of the theatre may be, nobody knows. In the beginning of the speech I have quoted he refers to "our accursed system," so that there must be a screw loose somewhere. For years Dr. Archer has been pounding away at this same system, and it seems to continue. Nor has Dr. Archer made the slightest dint upon it. A little while back, one of the wags in which London appears to abound pointed out that plays praised by Dr. Archer invariably come in for the shortest of runs. To which impeachment Dr. Archer replied, with great ingenuousness, by printing a formidable list of plays which had survived his approval. Another wag having said something against

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the Scotch in a paper called the *Outlook*, Dr. Archer exclaimed in cold type, "*Outlook* indeed! Methinks that North of the Tweed they will call it *Outrage!*" This, of course, is a Scotch joke, and therefore an old one. In the year 600 or thereabouts, Gregory the Great, noting the fair faces and golden hair of some youths in the market-place of Rome, inquired from what country the men came. "They are Angles," was the reply. "Not *Angles*," quoth the worthy Gregory, "but *angels*." For thirteen centuries the pun of the Bishop of Rome had remained decently tucked away in the history books. And in 1901, Dr. Archer, who really is a wit, drags it forth and makes another like it.

These, however, be small deer. If we wish to acquaint ourselves with the true inwardness of Dr. Archer as critic, we must turn to his *magnum opus*—that great guinea work of his, entitled "Poets of the Younger Generation." Now, on the question of modern poetry, and particularly of the younger school of poets, people interested in poetry are always glad to hear words of wisdom. Have we any contemporary poets? If so, are they writing poetry for us, con-

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temporary or otherwise? The subject invites. Somehow and for some reason or other it invited Dr. Archer. Indeed, it went further than inviting him; it inveigled him. No doubt the notion of writing a book about poets came to him on one of his discouraging days. He had been hammering, hammering, hammering at the theatre and "our accursed system," and he was fain for a softer job. What work could a poor tired critic take up outside the potter's field of our "accursed system?" When a critic gets into that frame of mind he always thinks of the poets. Dr. Archer thought of the poets—the living poets—the poets of the younger generation. Being a Scotchman, to think was to act. Dr. Archer thought, and straightway set to work. He appears to have plodded steadfastly through the writings of no fewer than thirty-three of the minor contemporary poets of England and America. Of each of these thirty-three children of the Muse, beginning with the Rev. H. C. Beeching and ending with William Butler Yeats, he wrote painful notices, bejewelled with quotations, put them into a book, and got them published by Mr. John Lane. With the beauty or other-

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wise of his thirty-three notices, in spite of their exquisite thirty-threeness, I do not propose greatly to concern myself. Their general drift and tenour may be inferred from the following examples, culled from the article on Mr. Kipling :—

“Far be it from me to disparage ‘Scots Wha Hae,’ but I am not sure that it possesses the tonic quality of the refrain of Mr. Kipling’s song of defeat :—

An’ there ain’t no chorus ’ere to give,
Nor there ain’t no band to play;
But I wish I was dead ’fore I done what I did
Or seen what I’d seed that day !

What in the name of goodness have “Scots Wha Hae” and this quatrain got to do with one another ? How can they be compared, except only as verse, and where, oh where, does the tonic quality of the Kipling lines come in ? Again :—

“In all the poetry of warfare, was there ever a more exactly observed and yet imaginative touch than that which describes the guns of the enemy ‘shaking their bustles like ladies so fine’ ? It is grotesque, and it is magnificent.”

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As a matter of fact it is not observed at all, and it is certainly not magnificent. Ladies do not shake their bustles. Nowadays, indeed, they have no bustles to shake, and I should imagine that the sound criticism about the simile is that it is too temporary and sadly too far fetched. And for the third and last time :—

“Only by some narrow trick of definition can such work [‘McAndrew’s Hymn’] be excluded from the sphere of poetry; and poetry or no poetry, it is certainly very strong and vital literature.”

Here let us agree to differ with Dr. Archer, inasmuch as “McAndrew’s Hymn” is merely rhymed note-book eked out with a few phrases of the Doric.

On the whole, “Poets of the Younger Generation” might well have gone down to posterity as a collection of middling and slightly wrong-headed reviews, had Dr. Archer possessed a tithe of the shrewdness commonly imputed to persons of his blood. But in putting the book before the world, Dr. Archer could not be content to figure as a simple reviewer, he must needs preface it with a pompous and bloated introduction. “Appre-

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ciation," he begins nobly, "is the end and aim of the following pages. The verb 'to appreciate' is used, rightly or wrongly, in two senses; it sometimes means to realise, at other times to enhance the value of a thing I use the word in both significations. While attempting to define, to appraise, the talent of individual poets, I hope to enhance the reader's estimate of the value of contemporary poetry as a whole." After several pages of this sort of thing, we come upon a full-dress "personal statement," the like of which has never before been given us by mortal critic. Practically, it is a biography of Dr. William Archer, with special reference to Dr. William Archer's spiritual and intellectual growth, and his "qualifications as a critic of poetry." The pose and tone of it are inimitable. It puts Burns and his "wild artless notes" utterly in the shade. As Dr. Archer himself would say, it is grotesque, and it is magnificent. It opens with a rataplan on ancestral drums: "In the first place, I am a pure bred Scotchman. There is some vague family legend of an ancestor of my father's having come from England with Oliver Cromwell and settled in Glasgow; but I never could discover any

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evidence of it. The only thing that speaks in its favour is that my name, common in England, is uncommon in Scotland. My maternal grandfather and grandmother both came of families that seem to have dwelt from time immemorial in and about Perth, at the gateway of the Highlands. This being so, it appears very improbable that there should not be some Keltic admixture in my blood ; but I cannot absolutely lay my finger on any 'Mac' among my forbears. Both my parents belong to families of a deeply religious cast of mind, ultra-orthodox in dogma, heterodox and even vehemently dissenting, on questions of Church Government. I can trace some way back in my mother's family a strain of good, sound, orthodox literary culture and taste; of specially poetical faculty, little or none. It may, perhaps, be worth mentioning, that one of my great grandfathers or great great uncles printed, and I believe edited, an edition of the poets, much esteemed in its day."

Nothing could be better worth mentioning, Dr. Archer. Pray proceed.

"The earliest symptom I can find in myself that can possibly be taken as showing any

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marked relation to the poetic side of life, is an extreme susceptibility (very clearly inherited from my father) to simple, pathetic music. It is related that even in my infancy, one special tune—the *Adeste Fideles*—if so much as hummed in my neighbourhood, would always make me howl lustily; and, indeed, to this day it seems to me infinitely pathetic. I have carried through life, without any sort of musical gift, and with a very imperfect apprehension of tonality, harmony and the refinements and complexities of musical expression, this keen sensibility to the emotional effect of certain lovely rhythms and simple curves of notes. I am not sure that *Lascia ch'io pianga*, *Che farò senza Euridice*, and the cantabile in Chopin's Funeral March, do not seem to me the very divinest utterances of the human spirit, before which all the achievements of all the poets fade and grow dim. But it is all one to me (or very nearly so) whether they are reeled off on a barrel-organ or performed by the greatest singers—the finest orchestra. Nay, my own performance of them, in the silent chamber concerts of memory, are enough to bring the tears to my eyes."

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Good man !

“I cannot remember that the poetry I learned at school interested or pleased me particularly—‘On Linden, when the sun was low,’ ‘FitzJames was brave, yet to his heart,’ ‘The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,’ and so forth. . . . The first composition of mine that ever found its way into print was some sort of a rhapsody (in prose) on Byron at Missolonghi. The attack passed off in six months or so, and I am not aware that it left behind any permanent ill effects. About the same time I read the greater part of *The Faery Queen*, with a certain pleasure, but without any real appreciation.”

Wordsworth this remarkable youth “read for a college essay” ; “Coleridge came to him in the train of Wordsworth” ; and at seventeen “The Ancient Mariner” seemed to him “the most magical of poems.” Tennyson he read “with pleasure” ; Keats “had not yet taken hold” of him ; and Milton he “could not read.” Ultimately, however, he came to appreciate Milton in this wise. “I spent my twentieth year idling in Australia, and being somewhat hard up for literature, I set myself

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to read *Paradise Lost* from beginning to end, at the rate of a book a day. I accomplished the task, but it bored me unspeakably. . . . I did not return to it for seven or eight years, until one day I found myself starting on a railway journey with nothing to read, and paid a shilling at a station bookstall for a pocket *Paradise Lost*." On that journey the scales fell from Dr. Archer's eyes. Ever since *Paradise Lost* has been to him "an inexhaustible mine of the pure gold of poetry." Later, we learn that Dr. Archer's own metrical efforts have been "almost entirely confined to comic, or, at any rate, journalistic, verse" though he "never attained even the fluency of the practised newspaper rhymester." Greek and Latin verses, he adds, "were undreamt of in the Scottish curriculum of my day. Practically we knew not what quantity meant."

Altogether, therefore, Dr. William Archer's "qualifications as a critic of poetry" would seem to be, on his own showing, of a negative rather than a positive order. He is a pure bred Scotchman; he may have a little English blood in him, but he has not been able to trace it; he is without any

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sort of musical gift; he likes his music "reeled off on a barrel-organ"; poetry had no charms for him till he was seventeen; and he did not discover Milton's "inexhaustible mine of the pure gold of poetry" till he was twenty-seven or twenty-eight years of age. Also at his college they "did not know what quantity meant." Yet at the age of forty-three he had "ready for press" five hundred pages of appreciations of poets of the younger generation. It is truly marvellous and prodigiously Scotch. And it sets one wondering. At what epoch in his extraordinary life did Dr. Archer begin to take a critical interest in the drama? Was he shovelled into that interest by the exigencies of his work on newspapers, or did it come to him, like his love of Milton, on a railway journey? Furthermore, how many of his brither Scots, who labour so solemnly in the vineyard of literary journalism and plume themselves on their "pull" in contemporary letters, are of the like origins and possess the same disqualifications as Dr. William Archer? I doubt if one per cent. of them is really competent. I know for a fact that ninety per cent. of them are absolutely

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devoid of taste, much less of understanding and vision, and that they exercise critical functions not because they have insight or a feeling for literature, but because "a living" and certain petty powers are to be had out of it. The much vaunted "Scotch pull" in criticism is without doubt the worst trouble that has ever assailed English letters. In a great measure it has been responsible for the general slackening and stodginess which have overtaken the whole business during the past decade or so. Persons who write, not to mention persons who read, know full well that at the present time criticism is well nigh a dead letter in this country. Reviews are no longer taken seriously either by authors or the public; the literary papers languish, depending, for such revenues as they possess, upon publishers' advertisements instead of upon circulation; literary opinion has been fined down to sheer puff on the one hand and flagrant abuse or neglect on the other, and to be the friend or admiring acquaintance of certain persons is become the only sure road to literary advancement. It is the fashion to say that nobody, however ill-disposed, can stop the sale of a good book, or keep the

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author of such a book out of his meed of recognition. In the long result this is true. But waiting for the long result is a weary business, particularly when you discover that there is an inclination on the part of the people who have "the pull" to put the clock back for you at every turn ; what time they boom the work of their "ain folk" and shout loudly and insisently for catch-penny mediocrity. This, by the way, is not in any sense a "sore-head" asseveration ; because my own writings have, as a rule, been of so slender a nature that I have marvelled to see them noticed at all. Besides, I do not think that I am without friends even among the apostles of the "Scotch pull." They have done me many a service, and with a lively sense of favours to come I hereby offer them gratitude. All the same, I should not be sorry to see them disbanded. I should not be sorry to hear that never a one of them was to be permitted again to set pen to paper in the capacity of reviewer. Literary journalism would be all the sweeter and saner for such a closure, and judging by the rates of payment they take, the "Scotch pull" combination would be very little the poorer.

CHAPTER IX

THE SCOT AS BIOGRAPHER

THERE are three Scotch books of biography, all published, I believe, within the last six years, which invariably raise my gorge. One of them is "Margaret Ogilvy" by Dr. J. M. Barrie, the second is "J. M. Barrie and his Books" by Dr. J. A. Hammerton, and the third is "In Memory of W. V." by Dr. William Canton. The first and the third are works that nothing but a sense of duty could induce me to handle in the present connection—one of them dealing with a dead mother and the other with a dead child. Both, however, have been put before the public without so much as an attempt at justification or apology, and with the plain intention of being sold precisely in the manner of other literary wares, and they must therefore take their chance. "Margaret Ogilvy" appears to have gone into no end of

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editions. It is an account of the character and sayings of Dr. J. M. Barrie's mother, viewed in the light of Dr. Barrie's own "literaryness." I have no hesitation in pronouncing it to be one of the most snobbish books that has issued from the press any time this hundred years. It begins snobbishly, it goes on snobbishly, and it ends snobbishly. Offered to the reading public as a piece of fictional sentiment, it would still have been open to the charge of mawkishness. Offered unblushingly as a transcript from the life, and for the perusal of all who care to purchase, deplorable is the mildest epithet one can justly apply to it. Wordsworth writes somewhere of a person "who would peep and botanise about his mother's grave." This is exactly the feeling that a reading of "Margaret Ogilvy" gives you. Comparisons in such a case would be doubly odious. Yet one does not find that Margaret Ogilvy, in spite of everything that her son has done for her in the way of "keying-up" to literary requirements, was any the sweeter, or any the nobler, or any the more intellectual than one may presume the mother of any other writer of Dr. Barrie's parts to have been. She was a

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good mother, she gave birth to Dr. Barrie she ministered to him in childhood, she denied herself for him; she took pleasure in his educational and literary progress, she offered him much advice: she believed in "God" and "love," and she died in the faith. The mothers of most literary people have done as much. It has been left to Dr. Barrie to snatch away the decent veil which hides the sanctities of life from the common gaze, and to let all the world into the privacies of the filial and maternal relation at five shillings a time. If I understand Margaret Ogilvy aright, she would have cut off both her hands rather than permit some of the things in this book to become the property of strangers, sympathetic or otherwise.

Of course the excuse immediately forthcoming from Dr. Barrie's friends and admirers will be "the lesson." It is the only excuse that can possibly be raked up, and like the majority of excuses, it is a poor stick to lean upon. For "the lesson" of "Margaret Ogilvy" simply amounts to this, that conceit and self-advertisement may bring a man to the silliest and least dignified of passes. In point of fact Dr. Barrie's "little study" is

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just as much a study of himself as of his mother. If it shows Margaret Ogilvy in the figure of an excellent mother, it also shows J. M. Barrie in the figure of a preternaturally excellent and dutiful son. If it shows that Margaret Ogilvy was a simple, unsophisticated woman of the people, it shows also that J. M. Barrie had compassion on her intellectual shortcomings and was ever ready to humour the poor body and to twinkle tolerantly on her whimsies, when he might, had he so chosen, have withered her with a word. To take a sample passage :—“ Now that I was an author I must get into a club. But you should have heard my mother on clubs ! She knew of none save those to which you subscribe a pittance weekly, and the London clubs were her scorn. Often I heard her on them—she raised her voice to make me hear, whichever room I might be in, and it was when she was sarcastic that I skulked the most: ‘ Thirty pounds is what he will have to pay the first year, and ten pounds a year after that. You think it’s a lot o’ siller ? Oh no, you’re mista’en—it’s nothing ava’. For the third part of thirty pounds you could rent a four-roomed house, but what is a

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four-roomed house, what is thirty pounds, compared to the glory of being a member of a club?' . . . My wisest policy was to remain downstairs when these withering blasts were blowing, but probably I went up in self-defence.

“‘I never saw you so pugnacious before, mother.’

“‘Oh,’ she would reply promptly, ‘you canna expect me to be sharp in the uptake when I am no’ a member of a club.’

“‘But the difficulty is in becoming a member. They are very particular about whom they elect, and I daresay I shall not get in.’

“‘Well, I’m but a poor crittur (not being member of a club), but I think I can tell you to make your mind easy on that head. You’ll get in, I’se uphaud—and your thirty pounds will get in, too.’”

And so on. Humour, of course! The sagacious, garrulous mother, the highly diverted, patient son! The picture has pleased the Scotch and English-speaking nations of two hemispheres. Yet is it of the stupidest and the most foolish.

On another page we get the following

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pretty piece of curtain lifting: "So my mother and I go up the stair together. 'We have changed places,' she says; 'that was just how I used to help you up, but I'm the bairn now.' She brings out the Testament again; it was always lying within reach. . . . And when she has read for a long time she 'gives me a look,' as we say in the North, and I go out, to leave her alone with God. . . . Often and often I have found her on her knees, but I always went softly away, closing the door. I never heard her pray, but I know very well how she prayed, and that, when that door was shut, there was not a day in God's sight between the worn woman and the little child."

We can do without such books, Dr. J. M. Barrie—even though they sell well.

As to "In Memory of W. V." I am constrained to confine myself to quotation. Comment would be altogether too painful.

"I take what follows from her mother's account in our House book," writes Dr. Canton. "She wandered a good deal all day, which we attributed partly to the morphia she was taking, and she kept asking what day it was. When I said it was still Sunday, she

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laughed at herself quite in her old way. 'I *am* a donkey!' The doctor thought her certainly no worse when he came in the evening. . . . She was sick several times again; I think she counted the number, poor child. I helped nurse to wash and change her, and Will came up and helped too. She talked quite rationally about some things, though she wandered at times. Once she said, 'Shall I have to marry the King's eldest son? You know you must if you find the King's signet ring.' I told Will, and he said, 'Oh, you needn't if you don't want to,' which seemed to reassure her. . . . The doctor said he would come back about one. I sent a telegram to Will at once to say that a physician was coming, but almost immediately she began to change. Nurse felt her hands and found them cold and wet. 'Oh, she is going!' she said. We gave her brandy, but her teeth were clenched, and we could not get her to take it. . . . I stood by trying to realise that she was leaving me. Her eyes were wide open, all pupil, but quite unseeing. I kissed her and spoke to her, but she never replied, and she just breathed a few times, and it was all over."

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“ We laid her to rest in Highgate Cemetery on the 18th. . . . At the funeral not only did the sun shine on the coffin, but in the grave itself there was light. All during the service, which was conducted by her friend, Dr. Robertson Nicoll, a robin, I am told, sat close to the grave ; she would have liked that. When I went up next day the bees were busy among her flowers, and that too would have been to her liking.”

Even as Dr. Archer has discovered in “ Paradise Lost ” an inexhaustible mine of the pure gold of poetry, so have I found in Dr. J. A. Hammerton’s “ J. M. Barrie and his Books ” an inexhaustible fund of the pure gold of Scotch opinion not only as to Dr. Barrie, but also as to other matters. First let me string together a few pearls about Dr. Barrie.

“ I have seen it argued [says our excellent author] that the publication of such a book as this is a reprehensible practice (*sic*), in that it implies the elevation of its subject to the rank of a classic. . . . A sufficient answer to this charge would seem to be that in such writers as J. M. Barrie, Thomas Hardy,

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“Ian Maclaren,” Rudyard Kipling, and several others (*sic*), the public that reads books is vastly more interested than it is in its mighty dead.”

The collocation of “such writers” in this passage is as ingenious as it is absurdly Scotch.

“Among the literary men of the present day there is none who has been more personal in his writings than Mr. Barrie; he is as personal in prose as Byron was in poetry. His own heart, his own experiences, the lives of his ‘ain folk,’ these have been the subjects out of which *his genius has made literature.*”

The italics are our own.

“The main distinction of Nottingham journalism lies in the fact that it is associated with the name of Mr. J. M. Barrie. . . . To-day the so-called ‘Press House’ is a tavern a few yards removed from the ‘Frying Pan,’ and there penny-a-liners and half-fledged reporters drink beer and fancy themselves full-blown journalists, carrying down the traditions of Billy Kirker and that bright Bohemian band. But there are no Barries among them.”

Nottingham, evidently, is in a parlous way.

“It is well known that Mr. Barrie’s start

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was like that of so many others who have won their way to greatness in the Republic of Letters: a brief spell of journalism, and then—the plunge into literature.”

One can hear Dr. Barrie splashing about for dear life.

“It had never occurred to him (Barrie) that his task lay so near his hand; that to turn the lives of his fellow townsmen into literature was the way that God had chosen for him to make the age to come his own.”

I should think not, indeed!

“In Barrie’s case it was comparatively a short struggle, and two or three years after the time when he found that Scots dialect was enough to damn a book, he had succeeded in making it an attraction; presently its charm became the most striking feature of contemporary letters, and what we may call the Barrie school arose, to accomplish feats unique in the literary history of the nineteenth century.”

Prodigious!

“Sydney Smith was witty; so too was Sheridan; Dickens was a humourist; Hood, like Barrie, was at once a wit and a humourist.”

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Who would have thought it?

“The noblest book which Barrie has given to the world is none other than ‘Margaret Ogilvy,’ in which—to use the vile and vulgar phrase—he has made ‘copy’ of his mother. . . . If he had done nothing more than draw that sweet picture of a good woman’s humble happy life he would have deserved well of his generation. It was a delicate, almost an impossible, task to take up, and only an artist of the first order could have dared to hope for success in it. . . . There is no passage in all that Barrie has written more essentially Scottish in character than the delightfully humorous account of his mother on the prospect of his election to a well-known London Club, for which he had been nominated by the good fairy of his literary life—Frederick Greenwood.”

Most interesting and most illuminating. Now for Dr. Hammerton on smaller matters. He assures us that “if one will only read the anecdotes of village ‘loonies’ with which Scots literature abounds—especially Dean Ramsay’s ‘Reminiscences’ and ‘The Laird o’ Logan’—he will find that the average Scots idiot was a creature of considerably

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more humour than the average Englishman"—which is a palpable hit. Also, "Only once have I felt inclined to wince in reading anything of Barrie's, and that was one chapter entitled 'Making the best of it' in 'A Window in Thrums'; for here it seemed to me he was dwelling on an unworthy element of character which is more typical of the English rural and working classes than of the Scots. I mean the flattering of wealthy fools with a view to largess."

Dr. Hammerton is quite amusing. His notion of the tremendousness of Dr. Barrie and of the vast superiority of the Scotch does him credit. One day, perhaps, he will wake up to the fact that Dr. Barrie is not among the persons who write literature. And even though Dr. Hammerton should never realise it, the fact remains.

CHAPTER X

THE SCOT IN LETTERS

DR. ARCHER was once at pains to prove, that his countrymen had contributed "at least their share" of good works to the main body of English literature. Dr. Archer did this with the help, I believe, of an anthology by Mr. Henley. Properly wielded, an anthology is an excellent weapon, inasmuch as you can prove almost anything out of it. In the supposition that Scotland has done admirably by letters, Dr. Archer has the support of a large body of Scotchmen. For my own part I am quite ready to admit that she has done her best. What a poor best that is, everybody is aware, though so far as I know it is now for the first time set forth in print. When one comes to look upon English literature in the mass, beginning with Chaucer and coming down to Tennyson, and dealing only with the larger forces which

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have gone to the production of it, one perceives at once that Scotland's share in the matter has been so small as to be scarcely worth counting. Against Chaucer, perhaps, she can place James I., but the difference is as the difference between chalk and cheese. Against Shakespeare and the Elizabethan dramatists she has nothing to show you, good, bad or indifferent. Against Milton I suppose she will offer you Drummond of Hawthornden, and for Shelley and Keats, Burns. And of course she vaunts herself on Scott and Carlyle, and takes a certain haughty pride in the fact that R. L. Stevenson was Scotch.

To James I. and Drummond of Hawthornden she is welcome; both of them are what may be termed tolerable poets, and there the matter ends. Of Burns and his work I have already given my view, but I would say here that while at the present moment his popularity is of the widest and has all the appearances of stability, the circumstance that he wrote in the vernacular must ultimately relegate him to a position of comparative obscurity. As Scotland gradually extricates herself from the sloughs of

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barbarism in which she wallows so joyfully, she will inevitably shed her uncouth dialect, and, as soon as that is accomplished, Burns, excepting as a curiosity, will no longer exist.

For Scott and Carlyle little need be said. Both, I believe, have had their day. Scott, erstwhile the Wizard of the North, is rapidly dropping out of public favour. At the present moment he is what may be styled "a school-prize classic. "Ivanhoe" and "The Lady of the Lake," once considered to be marvellous performances, are now doled out to grubby children for punctual attendance at board schools. In the libraries, public and private, Scott of course figures, but the public library statistics go to indicate that he is not being read with avidity, and in private libraries he is felt to be rather a cumberer of space. Talking to a well-known Scotch critic as to the general decay of interest in Scott, I found him to be under no illusion on the point, and he comforted me by saying, "Scott—well, of course! But between ourselves, man, I cannot read the damned books." This is pretty well everybody's case. To avow that you have not read Scott is still

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perhaps to confess to a defect in your reading. All the same, if you are a person of average tendencies, you have not read Scott; neither do you propose to do so.

Thomas Carlyle—"true Thomas" as Dr. Archer pathetically dubs him—is another Scotch rocket which has already touched its highest and begun to descend. Both intellectually and as an artist Carlyle, it is true, was worth a dozen Scotts, but he was a Scotchman, and come as near it as he may, a Scotchman cannot do enduring work. So that Carlyle in the natural order of things is, as one might say, dropping down the ladder rung by rung. He has ceased to be a "force." People have discovered that his so-called gospel is a somewhat cheap and snobbish affair. All that is really left of him is "The French Revolution," which survives because of a certain vividness of style. For the rest Carlyle looks like going to pieces. A century hence he will be of no more account than Christopher North is to-day.

As to Stevenson, while the Scotch are disposed to brag about him when occasion arises, they have always fought more or less shy of him. He has never been admitted to

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that cordial intimacy of relation which a Scotchman extends alike to Robbie Burns and Dr. S. R. Crockett. As a matter of fact he wrote too well and with too sincere a regard for the finer elements of literature to be properly understood in Scotland. Further, he took the precaution not to interlard his English with such phrases as "ben the hoose," "getting a wee doited," and so forth. He had no use for Scotch idioms, and when he dropped into them he was sorry for it. And he did not stiffen his pages with panegyric of the Scotch character. In fact Stevenson tacitly refused to have anything to do with the advertising of his countrymen. He had the good sense to perceive that if you are to use the English language as a medium for expression, you might as well use it skilfully and decently while you are about it. More than all, he did not boast of having been born in a wynd, or of having pu'd fine gowans wi' Jeanie, the auld sweetie wife's dochter, at Drumkettle.

And an author, a modern author, who is guilty of all these sins of commission and omission must not expect affection from the

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warm heart of Scotia. Somehow the Scotch seem to be a nation of persons without fathers. Every Scot one meets strikes one as being a first-generation man. You know instinctively, even if he does not tell you, that in his childhood he ran about with untended nose and called his mother "mither." Even after he has been to "the College," and made some progress in the business or profession to which he may have devoted himself, he clings to his squalid origins and to the manners of his forbears for dear life. He is the barbarian who scorns to be tamed. The tradition of Scottish independence demands that he should keep you well posted in the facts as to his humble descent and upbringing, and that he should go on speaking as much of his heaven-forsaken dialect as you will let him. To such a person a Scot of the Stevenson type does not appeal. Stevenson, of course, was a Scot, and meet to be bragged about as a successful Scot. For all that he was not a "brither Scot." He took to the English way and the English manner, and the brither Scots as a body had no alternative but to turn a sour face towards him. From the literary point of view, though he accomplished great things,

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R. L. S. is just another instance of the ultimate ineptitude of the Scotchman. He tried and tried and tried. No writer of our time has had nobler ideals. Yet he could not climb after his desire. His books are a procession of creditable and even splendid failures. The Scotchness of his blood, do what he might to eradicate it, was too much for him. It kept him from attaining the highest.

To treat of the new school of Scottish writers in the present chapter is perhaps to do them too much honour. At no period in the history of letters has such flagrantly bad writing been offered to the English public as is being at present offered by our Scottish authors. Their works have been boomed into a vogue which they do not deserve, and even Scotchmen admit that their so-called transcripts from life are as false and as shoddy as such transcripts well could be. Writing on this subject, Mr. R. B. Cunninghame Graham, himself a Scot, says: "If it pleases them [the hoot-awa'-man gang] to represent that half of the population of their native land is imbecile, the fault is theirs. But for the idiots, the precentors, elders of churches, the 'select men,' and those landward folk who have been dragged of late

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into publicity, I compassionate them, knowing their language has been distorted, and they themselves been rendered such abject snivellers, that not a henwife, shepherd, ploughman, or any one who thinks in 'guid braid Scots' would recognise himself dressed in the motley which it has been the pride of kailyard writers to bestow. Neither would I have Englishmen believe that the entire Scotch nation is composed of ministers, elders, and maudlin whiskified physicians, nor even of precentors who are employed in Scotland to put the congregation out by starting hymns on the wrong note, or in a key impossible for any but themselves to compass." Mr. Graham ought to know.

The other day I saw in a paper, edited I believe by a Scotchman, a reference to "many contemporary Scottish men of letters." I do not hesitate to assert that the number of Scottish men of letters now living can be counted twice on the fingers of one hand. Indeed, with the persons who might be expected to count in such a category in my mind's eye, I have difficulty in admitting that any one of them is a man of letters in the strict sense of the phrase. Even

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Dr. Andrew Lang, who is by far the most competent Scotchman now writing, would probably not care to lay claim to the dignity which the term "man of letters" suggests

CHAPTER XI

THE SCOT IN COMMERCE

WHEN a Scotchman's parents decide that he shall be neither a minister nor a journalist, or when a wee laddie who has been dedicated to one or other of these offices kicks over the traces, or turns out something of a failure, there are still splendid openings for him. Far away to the South stretches that land of milk and honey—England—and there is scarcely a square mile of it whereon you do not find either a shop or a bank or a factory, or some other “hive of industry” created, of course, for the special benefit of Scotchmen. Donald, the hobbledehoy that would not be a minister, and was not intended for a professor, and had not shorthand enough to be a journalist, is packed off South to wear an apron, to shovel gold behind bars, or “to work his way up” in an engineering establishment, as the case may be. Furthermore, he

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is understood to make an excellent gardener, and not a few English noblemen like to keep him about their places weeding and pruning, and feeding hens. In the main, however, he rather tends to become a clerk in an office. There is something about being able to keep your coat on while you work and to be in the confidence of Mr. Foozlem's books, of holding in short "a position of trust," at thirty shillings a week, which is peculiarly attractive to the Scottish mind; and employers of clerical labour appear to be firmly convinced that Donald is the man for them. They like him because he is never late, he is always putting a bit by, and he is as cheap as horseflesh. His slowness and want of sagacity are no great matter. The fact that he can only work in grooves also does not matter. Thrift and punctuality, not to mention cheapness, clothe him with virtues like a garment, and when higher posts fall vacant, your employer, good easy man, has a way of turning a hopeful eye on "that steady young Scot." The late remarkable case of Mr. Goudie, who was as Scotch as you make them, and, perhaps, the greatest and stupidest rogue that has adorned the

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annals of modern banking, shows what a Scotch clerk can do when he tries. The genius of his country asserted itself in the matter of Mr. Goudie, and we saw what we saw. In banks, at any rate, to be Scotch will not be to rank with Cæsar's wife for quite a little time to come. Of course I shall be told that the raking up of Goudie is unfair. It always is unfair to say anything to the detriment of Scotchmen. But the point I wish to insist upon is that Scotch clerks and Scotch managers and Scotchmen at large are no more trustworthy and no more to be depended upon, and no less human than Englishmen. The Scotch themselves spare no effort to have it believed that if you want men of true probity, you must go to Scotland for them. Employers have taken them at their word and continue to take them at their word, and other things being equal, if there are two applicants for a position in the average commercial house, and one of them is English and the other Scotch, the Scotchman gets the preference, simply because he is Scotch.

Among Dr. Maclaren's Drumtochty marvels there is an old couple who have a son

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who is a professor. That son, being of course a model of what a son should be, writes home to his good mother once a week, and the letter is invariably forthcoming in the kirk yard on Sundays, so that all who care to read may be informed as to the professor's condition and progress. Many touching things are said by the admirers of this honest couple as to the honour their son has conferred upon "the Glen," and the general prodigiousness of his character and position. But it never occurs to Dr. Maclaren to put into the mouth of any of his people a single word as to what is thought of the professor by the persons with whom he is dealing. What do his fellow professors think of him? What do his students think of him? We all know that professor from Drumtochty, and we all wish that Drumtochty had kept him. Not only in universities, but wherever there is a modest living to be made, there you will find him in full bloom, and the more authority he has, the less possible is he to get on with. As a colleague, too, he is equally objectionable. When a certain Scotch lady was informed during the time of the Indian Mutiny that her son had been captured by the enemy with other

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prisoners, and that he had been put into a chain-gang, she said with emotion, "God help the man that's chained to oor Sandy." And this is precisely the trouble. To work amicably with a Scotchman in any commercial capacity is well nigh an impossibility. He is eaten up with a squint-eyed envy; the fear that for some inscrutable reason you wish to oust him out of his occupation, is ever with him, and it is part of his creed and code to shoulder out any fellow worker who happens to be getting a little more money or a little more credit than himself. In fact when he comes to take up any sort of a berth, it is with the consciousness that, as a Scot, it is his duty by hook or by crook to make himself master of the situation, and if needs be to turn out in the long run his own employer. If you ask a Scotchman how it comes to pass that so many of his compatriots hold positions of influence in commercial houses, he will reply nine times out of ten, "Well, you see, we just drop into them." If this were so, nobody would mind, but as a matter of fact your Scotchman is far too calculating to drop into anything. His great game is the game of grab; he will move heaven and earth to get

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what he wants, and as Dr. Robertson Nicoll has told us, he is none too gentle in his methods of getting it. Every commercial man could give instances of this over-reachingness which is such an essential feature of the policy of the Scotch employée. Live and let live is not at all in his way. Of gratitude for help rendered he knows nothing. He begins life with fawning and sycophancy, and the moment he meets with any sort of success, he assumes a truculent over-bearingness which he is pleased to call force of character. When you hear of men being deprived of their positions by sharp practice and shiftiness, no matter whether it be in a draper's shop or in a gilt-edged bank, you will find that nine times out of ten there is a Scotchman in the case; that it is the Scotchman who has got up the bother, and that it is the Scotchman who is to take the post the other man vacates. Dr. Nicoll, who is a veritable encyclopædia of Scotch character, wrote some time ago a number of articles which he called, "Firing out the Fools." He asserted very properly that in most business houses there are always a number of fools who are a dead weight on progress. The capable men who are not quite capable enough

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are the plague of most heads of commercial concerns. You want a man to do such and such things; you look round your staff; you consider the merits of this and that person, and you feel that none of them is exactly the person you want. What are you to do? If you endeavour to get a man from outside, the chances are that he will be no better than the men you have. Dr. Nicoll of course knows exactly what you should do. He does not say, "Send for the nearest Scotchman," because that would be a little too explicit, but he does say, that plod is the great quality which distinguishes competence from foolishness, and as everybody knows, the Scot is nothing if not a plodder. Plod, plod, plod with plenty of divagation into plotting and scheming is the essence of his life. And when all is said and done, plod may be counted about the meanest and least desirable of the virtues. It is to the plodders that we owe pretty well everything we wish we had not got. The very word plod is about the ugliest and the most nauseating in the English language. Your plodder may plod and plod and plod, but he never does anything that is more than middling. In the arts this is a

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fact beyond traverse. The plodding artist is still a student at fifty; the plodding writer is a fool to the end of his life; the plodding actor says, "My Lord, the carriage waits," till the workhouse or the grave claims him for its own. This being so, why should the plodder be the only wear in commercial matters? Brilliancy and imagination are nowadays just as much wanted in business as in any other department of life. Tact and a reasonably decent feeling for your fellow man are also wanted. Your Scot on his own showing does not possess these qualities. He even goes so far as to disdain them and to assure you that they are not consistent with "force of character" and "rugged independence." The moral is obvious, and I should not be surprised if English employers of labour have not already begun to take it to heart. "Fire out the fools" is a shibboleth which comes ill from a Scotchman, because to a great extent it means, fire out the Scotchmen.

CHAPTER XII

THE SCOT IN HIS CUPS

UNDER the inspiring tutelage of the National Bard, Scotland has become one of the drunkenest nations in the world. In Scotch cities drunkenness is the preponderating vice. In the rural districts whiskey is the only beverage that finds any sort of favour. There is no occasion of life which does not provoke the average Scotchman to inhibition. Births, marriages and deaths are all celebrated in drink. On Burns Day, Scotland rushes to the bottle as one man. The same is true of New Year's Day, and year in and year out everybody "tastes" and "tastes" and "tastes" from morn to dewy eve. The land simply seethes in whiskey, and though you take hold of the wings of the morning, you cannot get away from the odour of it. In twelve hours spent in Edinburgh I saw more drinking than could be seen in an English

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town of the same population in a couple of days, and I know what drinking means. Whiskey to breakfast, whiskey to dinner, whiskey to supper ; whiskey when you meet a friend, whiskey over all business meetings whatsoever ; whiskey before you go into the kirk, whiskey when you come out ; whiskey when you are about to take a journey, whiskey all along the road, whiskey at the journey's end ; whiskey when you are well, whiskey if you be sick, whiskey almost as soon as you are born, whiskey the last thing before you die—that is Scotland. There is a cock-and-bull tale to the effect that all the finest clarets go to Leith and are drunk in Edinburgh. Practically, there is no really good claret in all Scotland, unless it be at the hotels which have been built for the reception of English and American tourists, and the Scot to the manner born would not give you a "thank you" for the best claret in the world. Go bring to me a pint of wine and bring it in a silver tassy was a mere piece of swagger on the part of "the Bard." Wine is not drunk in Scotland ; the Scotchman can get no "for-rader" with it, and as for drinking it out of a silver tassy, there are not more than three

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silver tassies in the country. Whiskey, and that of the crudest and most shuddering quality, is undoubtedly the Scotchman's peculiar vanity. The amount that he can consume without turning a hair is quite appalling. I have seen a Scotchman drink three bottles of Glenlivet on a railway journey from King's Cross to Edinburgh, and when he got out at Edinburgh he strutted doucely to the refreshment bar and demanded further whiskey. In London, and particularly in Fleet Street, his feats in this connection are notorious. In the more central quarters of London there are a number of hostelries which are almost wholly devoted to Scottish requirements in the way of ardent spirit. Under some Scotch name, such as the Scotch Stores, the Clachan, the Highland Laddie, and so forth, these places flourish, and the proprietors of them wax fat. Here any morning in the week you will find brither Scots assembled, elbow on counter, indulging in the whiskey which delights their souls. All day there is plenty of company, plenty of Doric, plenty of discussion on Burns and the questions of the hour, and more than all, a steady flow of whiskey. And by eleven P.M.

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or thereabouts the company begins to exhibit a tendency to song. And at closing time it staggers forth singing "Scots Wha Hae," and "My Ain Kind Dearie O" in various pathetic keys. "Scots Wha Hae" is a poor song to sing in the circumstances, and as for "My Ain Kind Dearie O," she probably fumes at home and is not in the least kind in her welcoming of her whiskeyful lord. It is certain that the number of persons in Fleet Street employed upon the press either in literary capacities or as advertisement canvassers or printers is very considerable, and among the lower grades of them, the drinking of whiskey appears to be considered part of their duty to themselves and mankind at large. At the same time it is only fair to say that a drunken Scotchman is not by any means a common spectacle, the reason being that the Scot is so inured to the consumption of whiskey from his youth up, that he can take almost any quantity without becoming drunk about the legs. Drink, however, he must and will have, and both at home and abroad he makes a point of getting as much of it as his means will allow. In Scotland it is quite general for men and

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women alike to drink whiskey raw and to take the water afterwards. This is done at every meal, and if you call upon a Scotch household at any hour of the day you will be at once offered a four or five finger dose of the national drink. To refuse it is to be set down for an evilly-disposed person. Burns the almighty approved of whiskey drinking; with him it was the symbol of good fellowship, and he is quoted to you continually as the justification of all excesses.

We are na drunk, we're no that drunk
But just a drappie in our ee,

is the great retort used by Scotchmen if one suggests that they have had enough or too much.

It is to the Scot's amazing capacity for the consumption of spirit that one may fairly attribute some of his minor defects. Dourness, of which every Scotchman possesses a fair share, and of which he is invariably more or less proud, has always struck me as being in a great measure the outcome of too much whiskey overnight. It is not till he is properly exhilarated with drink that a Scot can unbend himself in the smallest degree.

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Once primed he does his best to prove himself an excellent and generous fellow by becoming as uproarious as the host of the tavern in which he is drinking will allow him to be. But next morning, when the whiskey is out of him, he is a very sad and sober man indeed. Then it is that he passes for "dour." You talk with him and get for answers grunts: he cannot smile; he plods heavily away at whatever labour stands in front of him; he is glum, rude of tongue and dull of mind, and his brethren set it down for you to his "Scots dourness."

His gift of steady drinking also accounts in my opinion for his general mediocrity. Whiskey may be a fine and healthy drink for persons who do not take enough of it; but to be braced up with it by day and to swim in it by night is calculated to have a lowering effect even on the bright intellects that come out of Scotland. I have not the smallest desire to suggest that there are not plenty of hard drinkers whose blood is more or less purely English, yet somehow there is no kind of man in the world who makes the drinking of furious spirit a cultus and a boast in the way that the Scotchman does. To be

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fou', or as he would put it, to have a drappie in his eye, is the Scotchman's notion of bigness and freedom and manly independence. He is a ranter and a roarer in his cups, and on the whole much more distressing to meet drunk than sober—which is saying a great deal.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SCOT AS CRIMINAL

BURNS, like nearly every other Scotchman that has trailed a pen, did not fail to help along the Scottish advertisement with a suitable contribution. He wrote "The Cotter's Saturday Night" and thereby did a great thing for Scotland, setting up a picture of Scottish home life and piety which the generations seem to regard as authentic. We have all been taught to admire the moral excellences of that Cotter, not to mention the moral excellences of his wife and children :

With joy unfeigned brothers and sisters meet,
And each for others' welfare kindly spiers ;
The social hours swift winged, unnotic'd fleet,
Each tells the unco's that he sees or hears.
The parents partial eye their hopeful years,
Anticipation forward prints the view ;
The mother, wi' her needle and her shears,
Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new,
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

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Their masters' and their mistresses' command
The younkers a' are warned to obey.
And mind their labours wi' an eydent hand,
And ne'er tho' out of sight to jauk or play—
And O! be sure to fear the Lord alway.
And mind your duty, duly morn and night
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore his counsel and assisting might,
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright.

All of which is very fine, and with much more to the like effect has helped the Scotch peasant into an odour of sanctity which on the whole does not appear to be quite his element. Indeed, so far from conducting his life in the manner suggested by the "Cotter's Saturday Night" the average Scot of the lower orders appears to base himself on the more scandalous portion of Burns's writing.

According to the latest returns the population of Scotland is 4,472,000. In the year 1900, which is the last year for which statistics are available, a matter of 180,000 persons were charged with criminal offences in Scotland. So that out of every twenty-five Scotchmen in Scotland one is either a convicted criminal or a person who has been charged with a criminal offence. From the official

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But-book dealing with the subject I take the following :

The criminal returns for 1900 show an increase over those for the previous year under all the important classes into which crime and offences are grouped, the number of persons charged has risen to close upon 180,000, and if we compare this with the last published English tables for the year 1899, we shall find, for equal numbers of population, Scotland has over three charges for every two in England.

Furthermore, imprisonments in Scotland continue to be proportionately much higher than in England, and for every three committals in England there are seven in Scotland. The increase in criminal offences during 1900 is distributed under the following heads :

Culpable homicide	28
Assaults of husbands on wives	690
Cruel and unnatural treatment of children	242
Housebreaking of all kinds	190
Theft	1916
Malicious mischief	986
Betting games and lotteries	96
Breach of the peace, &c.	519
Cruelty to animals	145
Offences in relation to dogs	148
Drunkenness	5785
Offences against Elementary Education Acts	397
Army deserters	1207
	12,349
Carried forward	12,349

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Brought forward	. 12,349
Offences against Police Acts, by-laws and regulations	9570
Prostitution	613
Bicycling, &c., offences	367
Obstructions and nuisances, and other Road Act offences	2664
Public Health Act offences	162
Lodging without consent of owner under Vagrancy Acts	425
	26,150
	26,150

It will thus be seen that theft and drunkenness bear the gree among Scotch crimes, while the large number of offences against Police Acts, by-laws, and regulations tends to show that the Scot is not a good citizen. The mere statistics as to crime, however, do not give one anything like an adequate idea of the general depravity of the Scotch character. To understand it properly we must add to the criminal returns the illegitimacy returns.

From Dr. Albert Leffingwell's¹ book on illegitimacy I borrow the following passage :

In 1881 the census of Scotland showed that there

¹ Albert Leffingwell, M.D., "Illegitimacy : Two Studies in Demography."

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were then living in that portion of the kingdom 492,454 unmarried women (that is to say spinsters and widows) between the ages of fifteen and forty-five. During the ten years 1878-1887 there were born in Scotland 105,091 illegitimate children, or an annual average of twenty-one to each thousand unmarried females at this specified age. In England and Wales the corresponding number of the unmarried females was 3,046,431, and the number of illegitimate births during the same period was 426,184, or 14 to each thousand of the possible mothers. In Ireland, the number of unmarried women at this age was a third larger than in Scotland, or 731,767. Yet to each thousand of these were born every year less than five illegitimate children during a ten-year period, 1878-1887. Here again we are perplexed with the problem why Scotia and Hibernia should present such widely different contrasts. Every year in Scotland there are *five times the proportion* of bastards that see the light in Ireland!

Dr. Leffingwell's perplexity is the perplexity of the scientific person. That Burns should have anything to do with illegitimacy of Scotia would probably seem ridiculous to the scientific mind, but I believe that Burns and the spirit of loose living for which he stands have been to no little extent responsible for bringing Scotland to the discreditable and degrading pass indicated by Dr. Leffingwell's figures.

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In Ireland the rate of illegitimacy is 4.4, in Scotland 21.5 to each thousand unmarried women. Now the poet who stands in the same relation to the Irish people as Burns does to the Scotch, is Thomas Moore. He has given Ireland quite as considerable a body of songs as Burns has given to Scotland. He is just as essentially Irish as Burns is Scotch; but compare the tone of the two men. One of them offers you "The lass who made the Bed to me," the other "Rich and rare were the gems she wore." In reading Burns you find that quite two-thirds of what he has written is marred by unpleasant and libidinous suggestion, but there is scarcely a line of Moore which would not pass muster in a ladies' school. To the rantin' roarin' Billies of Scotland the difference may form material for a sneer, but in the long run, clearly, the advantage is with the women of Ireland. If Scotland wishes to get rid of her drunkenness and to lessen the crime which arises out of it, and if she wishes to bring herself into line with the ordinary standards of decency, she will, I am afraid, have to put a little less trust in that mighty performer before the Flesh—Robert Burns.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SCOT BY ADOPTION

I HAVE been told that there are two kinds of Scotchmen, and that it would be a mistake to confound them or to suggest that they have any characteristics in common. One kind, and the best kind, I am assured, is the Highlander. The other, and the more disreputable kind, is the Scotchman of the Lowlands. I have met both sorts and I have not been able to discover that there is much to choose between them. For all practical purposes the blood is identical. It may at one time have been of two distinct strains, but these appear to have become in a great measure fused, and the blend is not beautiful. I think it was Dr. Cunninghame Graham who said of a certain Scotch pedlar that he looked like a cross between a low-class Indian and an ourang-outang that had somehow got itself baptized. This, no doubt, is a little severe.

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But a Scotchman does certainly make one feel that underneath his greasy and obviously imperfect civilisation the hairy simian sits and gibbers. Rouse him, thwart him, disappoint him, rally him, and your cross-eyed, sandy-haired, bandy-legged, but withal sleek, smug, moralising man suddenly "bleezes," and you perceive in him the ten thousand devils of an ancient and arboreal barbarity. Whether he be Highlander or Lowlander or mongrel, as he mostly is, it is just the same. He is Scotch and compounded for the most part of savage. Like the converted Krooboy he may at any time revert into his immemorial primalism, and you can never be sure of him. Whether he hail from the Isles or from the Lothians the Scot is just the Scot, and there is nothing more to be said for him.

There is, however, a kind of Scot who, while not of Scotch blood, has adopted the manners and habits of Caledonia, and is rather flattered if you take him for a true-born Scotchman. This type of creature usually owes his retrogression to the fact that he has married a Scotch wife. Of Scotchwomen as a body I do not wish to say anything that will be considered ungallant. If one passes

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over their abnormal capacity for thrift, I suppose they are pretty much the same as other women. So far as I am aware I have not met more than a dozen Scotchwomen in my life. Two of them I have known intimately, and I have always thanked my stars that I was not married to either of them. But to return to our Scotchman by adoption. Usually, as I say, he is married to a Scotchwoman. Before you arrive at a knowledge of this circumstance, you are inclined to wonder what is the matter with him. His style and proclivities have induced you to set him down for a Scotchman, yet you find that his Doric is bad, that he eats his porridge with sugar and takes his whiskey with soda, and that he was born in Gloucestershire. Also, he tells you frankly that his parents were not Scotch, and he adds, with a look of supreme satisfaction, "but my wife is." And straightway he plunges into tender reminiscence of the days of his courtship, touches modestly upon the wealth and importance of his wife's relations, hints at the fearful expense to which he was put by his many journeys North when he went a-wooing, and gurgles with a sickly smile that "it was worth

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the trouble," and that he "does not know what he would do without her." All of which is mightily interesting. If you pursue your investigations further, you will find that the man is perhaps a little more to pity than to blame. He has been compelled to become as Scotch as he knows how, willy nilly. At the head of his table sits the daughter of Scotia, ruddy, chapped and sharp of tongue; she looks down on things English, her husband included; her children are taught to remember that their grandfather is a Provost and magnificent in the jute line; she keeps her house in the Scotch manner, her servants are Scotch, her household linens are Scotch, her beef is Scotch, and her whiskey is Scotch; her little boys wear tartan; tripe is the great dish for supper, and her husband must eat oatmeal to the verge of scrofula. Abroad too this man must be as Scotch as the best of them. In his place of business, Scotchmen, protégés of his wife's relations, are the only wear: he loathes them, and they laugh at him behind his back, but he has to put up with them. On Saturdays they instruct him in the mysteries of "gowf"; on Mondays they tell one another what a

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“damned foozler”-he is. His holidays are always spent in the Western Highlands; he is everlastingly seeing his wife off to Aberdeen; he banks at the Bank of Scotland; he smokes the tobacco which has been so ably pushed into fame by Dr. J. M. Barrie; he believes that the Glasgow Bailies know what they are about; his money, which has been scraped together on the Scotch principle, is doucely put away in Scotch ventures; and altogether Scotland does very well out of him. The fact that he is a mean little man does not worry him. The practice and view of life which the lady of his affections has forced upon him is bringing him a due share of this world’s gear, and in that fact he takes consolation for his attenuated honesty, his lost manhood, and his lost nationality. This is one side of the picture and the brightest.

On the other side it were well for us not to look too closely. The Englishman who has been appropriated by a Scotch wife does not always succeed in profiting by the worldly wisdom with which his spouse would imbue him. Then there is trouble. For a Scotch-woman who cannot report to her kindred in

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Scotland that her husband is "getting on" feels that she has been robbed of the prime joy of existence. Her contempt for the man who cannot win and grip siller eats into her soul, until she has no other sentiment left. Bit by bit she develops into a scold and a curtain-lecturer; the man who found her so fair by the Birks of Aberfeldy becomes a furtive wanderer from her side, and it all ends in too much whiskey, recrimination and execration. I know an Englishman of parts who has never earned enough money to be under the necessity of paying income tax. He is a man of small stature and limp, and he has a great fear in his eyes. He is one of those men who might have done things and have omitted to do them. The gossip about him is that he is badly married. Once I saw his wife. She was a big, raw-boned Scotch-woman with a heavy accent on her. It was New Year's Eve and she had evidently been "tasting." At sight of me, out of the bigness of her Scotch hospitality, she proposed a "nep" and half filled three glasses from a stone bottle. Then, with hand on hip, glass uplifted and a blaze on her face, she cried: "Here's tae us and—to hell with the English."