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PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE SCOTCH-IRISH.

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THE churches of Derry and Paxtang, to which we are making a pilgrimage to-day, are among the oldest Church organizations in this part of Pennsylvania; and those who effected these organizations a hundred and seventy-five years ago, as we have just heard from one of their worthy representatives, William Franklin Rutherford, were from Ulster, the prolific hive from which our Scotch-Irish fathers and mothers swarmed during the early part of the last century. These churches, with their pastors and the men who sustained them, have deservedly an honored place in the history of Pennsylvania and of our nation; and there is something peculiarly befitting and inspiring in this meeting of our National Scotch-Irish Society on this historic ground, and in this house which our fathers and mothers erected for the worship of God a hundred and fifty years ago, which stands close by the old graveyard in which so many of them sleep, and among the giant oaks that spread their arms toward heaven, and as the sun goes down cast their shadows on the graves of our honored dead.

It should not be a difficult matter for a Scotch-Irishman, on an occasion like this, to speak. There surely is inspiration in our environments. But personally, though claiming relationship to the Rutherfords and Elders and others of the Scotch-Irish ancestry, into whose faces I look, I am somewhat at a loss just how to speak. I had supposed that this was to be a kind of familiar "experience meeting," and I have arranged what I have to say along that line.

Since the organization of the National Scotch-Irish Society, and the publication of our annual, so full of personal and national Scotch-Irish history, there is no excuse for ignorance on the part of the descendants of the Scotch-Irish fathers, as to who these fathers were, where they came from, their motives in coming here, their character, the part they acted in the great Revolutionary struggle with the mother country that made us a free nation, and the influence they exerted in shaping the Constitution of the United States. The historical papers that have been read from year to year before our Society and published are already invaluable, and they will grow in interest as the years go by. But there are some things we know in regard to the Scotch-Irish that are not matters of history, and that could scarcely be woven into

a dignified historical paper. They are matters of experience—what Thomas Carlyle would possibly call “smatterings of domesticity.” We have lived with them, they nursed us, we ate at their tables, we slept under their roofs, we can speak with confidence of what we have seen and heard and felt, as well as of what has been told us. We have eaten of their oatmeal that Dr. Johnson thought was only good “for horses and Scotchmen,” and their mush and milk, that never failed; on Sunday evening we have recited with them the “Shorter Catechism,” that they prize next to the Bible; on Sundays and on other days we have committed and sung with them the Psalms of David without the accompaniment of the organ or any other “chest of whistles;” we have listened to two long sermons in a day with only a short intermission between, and stood up through the “long prayers;” and bowed with them around the old family altar morning and evening as long as we were under their roof; and felt the rod they did not hesitate to use, that Solomon recommends, designed to correct “the outbreakings of sin and folly.” These Scotch-Irish fathers and mothers in whose honor we are here to-day, and whom some of us remember very distinctly and tenderly and lovingly, *were a religious people*. If they were acquainted with the Hamiltonian philosophy, they took no stock in it. They were strangers to the spirit of agnosticism. They left Ulster and came to this land not so much for bread as for liberty to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience. They believed that the Bible is the word of God, and taught their children accordingly. They made no effort to eliminate from the Bible all that was supernatural, believing as they did in an invisible and almighty God. While a student in college and at home on a vacation I attempted to tell my mother some of “the mistakes of Moses” as suggested by the “stone mason of Cromarty,” Hugh Miller. She heard me through, and then said with some emphasis: “I have heard enough of that kind of talk from you.” That ended the matter. These fathers and mothers who founded our Church in this wilderness believed that the Bible was the word of God, and taught their children accordingly. They built for themselves and for their families sanctuaries in which to worship God. They took their children with them to the sanctuary, sometimes two or three on a horse, as Goldsmith tells us they did who attended on the services of the “Vicar of Wakefield.” They may have erred in the strictness with which they insisted on the observance of the Sabbath and the performance of other religious duties. We thought so when we were children. We do not think so now. Confessedly they were the *de-*

terminated friends of education. In their view the Church and the school-house could not be divorced. They did not find in this land of their adoption universities in which their sons could be trained for the work of the ministry, and sent them across the Atlantic for their diplomas. Our colleges grew out of this feature of their character. It gave to Pennsylvania the old log college and to New Jersey the "University of Princeton." The same feature of character in the Puritans gave to New England Yale and Harvard. With both the Puritans and the Scotch-Irish a college training, or at least a knowledge of Greek and Latin, was a *sine qua non* on the part of any one who aspired to the position of a gospel minister.

There was one other feature of the Scotch-Irish character that some of us have reason to know something about. They (the Scotch-Irish) were, from principle or from necessity, a very frugal people. They did not give their children much money to spend at Christmas time, or any other time. They were not festive in their habits, nor ostentatious in their way of living. It was my privilege to be brought up in "the manse." My father received his college diploma at Carlisle at the same time that James Buchanan received his. He never had a theological diploma. The Presbyterian Church had no theological school at that time. He ministered to one of the oldest, if not the oldest, church organizations west of the Susquehanna River. Ninety per cent of the ancestors of those composing the organization when I was a boy came from Ulster. What my father's salary was I do not know. It may have been fifty pounds. It did not exceed that amount. Fortunately for the children, my mother had some property, and so did my father, and together they bought a farm near the church, on which we lived; and this farm supplemented the salary. We had plenty to eat always. It is possible to live without much money, and this the Scotch-Irish pastors and people did. The yankees are almost always ahead, and in the matter of economy in paying salaries to their preachers they certainly were not far behind. Rev. Dr. Jonathan Edwards, subsequently President of Princeton College, after being dismissed from Northampton (in Massachusetts), was induced to accept a call to the church of Stockbridge, on the banks of the Hoosatic, at an annual salary of £5 13s 4d. This was at a time when his daughters were being sought in marriage, and among the accepted suitors was President Burr, of Princeton College. Miss Edwards became Mrs. Burr; the mother of Aaron Burr. How the father of the bride managed to meet all the expenses incurred in furnishing "the wedding outfit" only a yankee can "guess." Besides the salary of thirty-five dollars in law-

ful money Dr. Edwards was to have a hundred loads of wood. This might suffice to keep his family warm if they were scant of clothing. In my father's family, until the children were old enough to be sent from home to school, the farm apparently furnished everything needed for our comfort. We had no bills to pay for gas or electric light: "tallow dips" furnished the house with light. We paid nothing for matches: when our fires, that were carefully covered up on going to bed, happened to go out, we could go to the neighbors for a few coals. Washbowls and pitchers in our sleeping rooms cost nothing: we could wash at the pump, and dry our hands and faces on the long towel that hung on a roller behind the kitchen door. Our bathtub was a mill pond, half a mile from home. The soap that we used was made from lye, extracted from wood ashes, that had some sort of affinity for grease. The cows furnished us with milk and butter. The chickens provided us with eggs. At butchering time we had a variety of meat laid by that served us for the coming year. The sheep furnished us with very much of our clothing. The price of coal did not concern us: we had plenty of good hickory wood. We could lay in shad and herring enough from the Susquehanna in the spring of the year, at a very small cost, to last through the year. Our orchards yielded all the fruit that we needed for our table, and some for the cider mill and the stillhouse. We had plenty of wheat and rye and corn and buckwheat. The children were never sent hungry to bed, except as a punishment for some type of mischief. It cost something to procure a swallowtail coat to be married in, but such a suit lasted a long time when used only as a Sunday suit. The firstborn son in the manse did not have the advantage over the younger boys that he would have had in England, or that Esau should have had over Jacob, but he did not have to wear "outgrown" Sunday clothes that were handed down to him from older brothers.

These Scotch-Irish fathers—to whom, under God, we owe so much, and who believed in "the perseverance of the saints"—were not all saints. They did not claim to be. The "old Adam" cropped out in them not unfrequently, as the history of their conflicts with their German and Quaker neighbors in the early settlement of Pennsylvania clearly shows; but they were industrious, frugal, intelligent, home-loving, self-sacrificing, conscientious, God-fearing men, of whom we have no reason to be ashamed, and in whose humble homes have grown up not a few men and women who have greatly helped to give our country her proud position among the nations of the earth, and whom the nations of the earth delight to honor.