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What a Newspaper Man
Saw in Britain

BY

J. A. MACDONALD

THE GLOBE: - TORONTO

Price 25 Cents

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1909
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What a Newspaper Man Saw in Britain

What Most Impressed Me
The Men from the Glens
Where Honor Rules the Market
From Culloden to Quebec

BY

J. A. MACDONALD

EDITOR OF "THE GLOBE"

THE GLOBE: TORONTO

1909

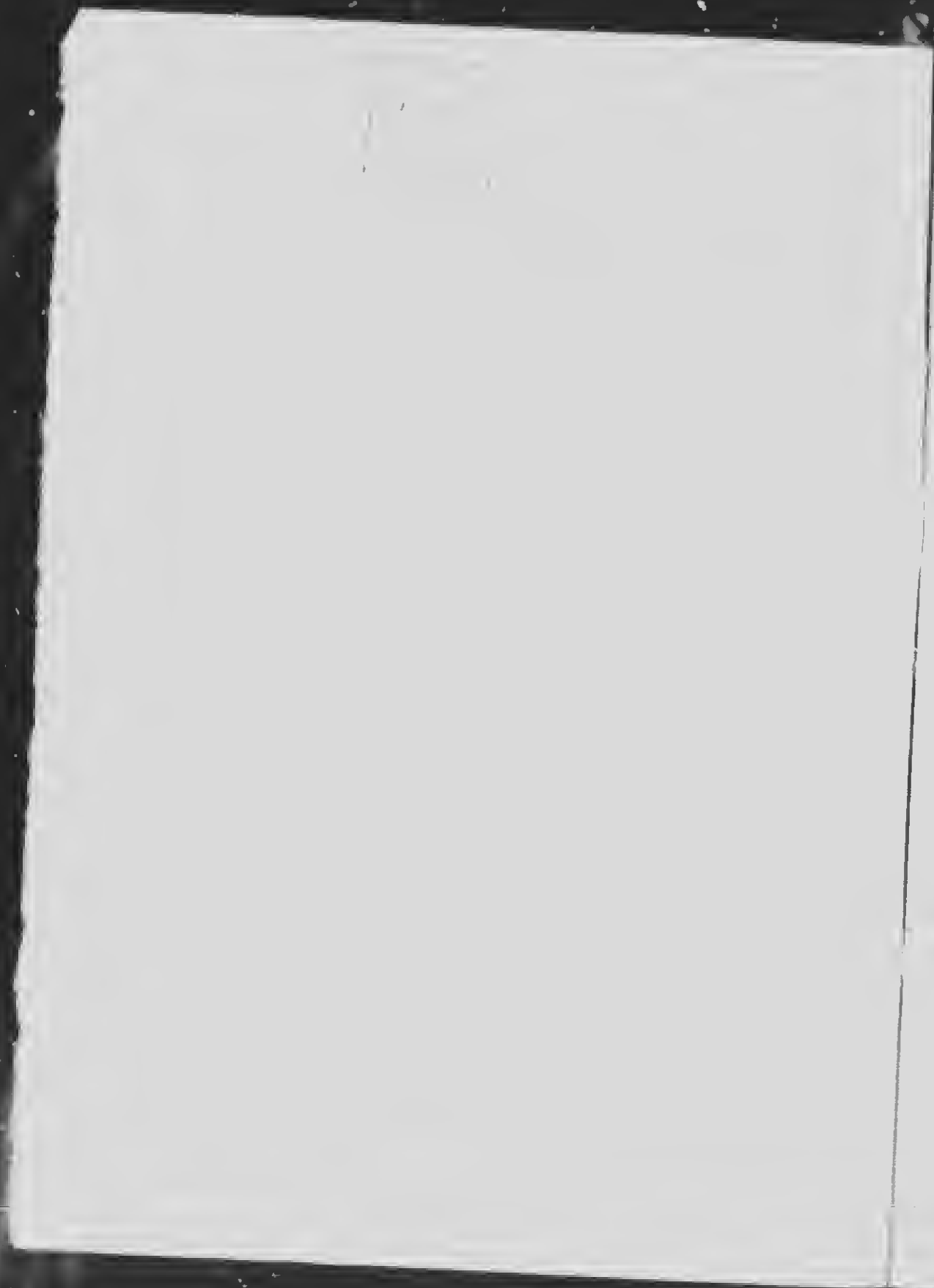


A NOTE.

These four Sketches were written for *The Globe*. They are handbills of the aftermath of the Imperial Press Conference which met in London in June last. Their original publication attracted considerable attention both in Canada and in Britain. They are gathered together and issued in this present form, almost without a change of word, to meet a demand that has been widespread and constant and that could not otherwise be supplied.

J. A. M.

THE GLOBE OFFICE,
December, 1909.



What Most Impressed Me.

"Of all you saw or heard in England, what impressed you most?" The question has been asked so often since I returned to Toronto, as it was asked while I was in Britain, that I have taken myself in hand to answer it. All the remarkable experiences, all the striking incidents, all the men of note, and all that series of events which made the months of June and July memorable, have been recalled and reviewed. I have lived over again the month spent with the other delegates to the Imperial Press Conference, and the weeks of private roaming about England and Scotland, seeing and hearing and being impressed. The Conference month was crammed, mornings, noons and nights, with opportunities for the delegates such as come to a few men once, to no man twice. The memory of the days unrolls as readily and evenly as a web. If at any point the mental impression is dimmed by the multitude and variety of sensations, all that is needed is a glance at the pages of the official report of the Conference, and the old sense movements return on their former tracks with all the vividness of first experiences. What, then, left the most distinct and indelible impression?

It was not Lord Roseberry's speech, brilliant and striking though that speech was. It was not the face or the message of any of the statesmen or pro-consuls or scholars or heroes—Asquith, or Grey, or Haldane, or Morley, or Crew, or Birrell, or Balfour, or Churchill, or Cromer, or Curzon, or Milner, or Roberts, or French, or Beresford, or Fisher—whose names gave distinction to the programme. It was not the Mother of Parliaments, or the glories of the Church, or the shrined history of Oxford, or the liquid history of the Thames. It was not the splendor of Stafford House, with the charming Duchess at the head of the grand staircase, or the exclusive privilege of Apsley House, with its art treasures of the "Iron Duke," or the Lord Mayor's freedom of the Mansion House, or the Archbishop's benediction at Lambeth. It was neither Aldershot, with the Army, nor Spithead, with the Navy. It was not Warwick, or Chatsworth, or Windsor itself with the Territorials on the lawn. It was not even a glorious day at Marlborough House, the guests of

the Prince and Princess of Wales, with the cordial personal greeting of the King and the winsome welcome of the most beautiful Queen.

All such experiences come back at call. Their story is good to tell. But they do not abide. They do not permeate and color the very texture of one's thought and life. Other experiences cut deeper. Other scenes cast heavier shadow-lines. Other memories return as of themselves, with a more haunting insistence. Frankly, the thing that impressed me most, the thing that stands out as the background of every reminiscence, was the bloodless, mirthless, hopeless face of the common crowd.

Nothing seems able to dim or wipe out or soften the hard lines of that impression. The dress-receptions, the gorgeous pageants, the galleries, the colleges, the storied castles, and all that rare procession of beauty and wonder and worth may fade into a dreamlike memory, but the pale and sunken faces of the nameless city crowd haunt one like a weird. We were given, as we had been promised beforehand, rare and illuminating glimpses of "Britain at work and at play," but we could not shut our eyes or steel our hearts to that Britain which is out of work, which may not even want to work, and which has long forgotten how to play.

At first London seemed less hopeless than it was twenty years ago. Nowhere had civic improvement shown more signs of headway. The running of great new arteries, like the Kingsway, through congested areas had changed for the better some localities. Even East London on a fair day seemed less damning than of old. The spirit of reform is plainly at work, both in civic circles and among the captains of industrial life. But the social problem everywhere is appalling almost to the point of despair. Wherever we went it forced itself upon us. The least dangerous aspect of it was that hollow-eyed procession of the homeless of London kept moving along the pavements by the police in the early dawn, waiting for the opening of the soup-kitchens. London, Sheffield, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh—each had its distinctive features, but everywhere the marks were deep of disease and degeneracy in body and mind and morals.

In some of the smaller places where the industrial percentage is large, or the occupations unhealthy—as in the Black Country or the pottery-making communities—the blood-poisoned workers present an appearance that to unaccustomed eyes is simply ghastly. In places like Portsmouth, where we drove through the streets after viewing the greatest array of warships ever presented in the whole

world's history, the human sediment that littered the doorways and lanes crowded out of mind all thought of Britain's glory. It was hard to exult over the spectacular realism of the sham-fight on the shore with those haggard skeletons of life's real conflict shuffling before our eyes uncheered and uncheering on the street.

Sheffield staggered all the delegates. Its residential districts and its neighboring hills are good to see. It is a hive of industry. Its name the world over is a warrant for good steel. But its human specimens! The conditions of the poor may, perhaps, be worse in other industrial centres in England, but certainly no delegate to the Imperial Press Conference had ever seen the like in any white country overseas or even imagined it possible within the limits of human nature.

We had been at the great gun works. We had seen the making of armor-plate and of cannon. It was all wonderful. Then our procession of motor cars wound slowly and with many hockades through the narrow, crowded streets to the type foundry whence come the fonts that furnish the printing offices of the world. The finished product of the machines everywhere was perfect. The human product alone was marred.

It was not that the people were poor. It was not even that they were hungry. Poverty and hunger are curable conditions. What struck every observant delegate was the utter blankness of the faces that looked up at us from the pavement, or down on us from the windows, with scarcely enough capacity for human interest to wonder who we were or what we wanted. Block after block it was the same. Never a sign of humor. Never even a flash of human envy. Stooped shoulders, hollow chests, ash-colored faces, lightless eyes, and, ghastliest of all, loose-set mouths with bloodless gums, and only here and there a useful tooth. Literally hundreds of women between seventeen and seventy crowded close to our motor cars that day, and the marks were on them all. Those toothless mouths of men and women and children told the story. One touch of disease made that whole crowd kin. "What do you think of it?" asked a London reporter of a Canadian editor. "It's hell," said the Canadian. And his companion from Australia could not suggest any other fitting word.

Not that any district in Sheffield is worse or more depressing than the West Ham district of London, the High Street district of Edinburgh, or corresponding districts in and about Manchester or Birmingham or Glasgow. Not that any one city has warrant for

casting stones at any other city in the matter of neglect of the social problem. Wherever we were close enough to the facts to see the details without having our sensibilities dulled, the impression was essentially the same: the haunting impression of misery sodden with drink and without ambition for better things. One of the attendant tragedies was the way in which even the very worst conditions were accepted as inevitable or acquiesced in as a matter of course.

Certainly there were bright spots and splendid signs of hopeful discontent. Churches, benevolent institutions and a myriad of agencies of reform were found at work. But they did not seem to make much headway. If they held their own against the downgrade movement they did not fail. The influences making for decay were so many and so strong that the "uplift" agencies were everywhere overtaxed.

The thing that impressed me most hopefully was the growing recognition on the part of the strong of a real responsibility, personal and national, for those who are weak. With this is joined a growing tendency to go back to the causes of these desperate results. Original sin and total depravity no longer explain adequately and finally the social problem. Other terms are used. "Land laws" and "liquor laws" are the modern phraseology. The social reformers are making the public understand that the poor people cannot, with safety to the nation, be crowded out of the open country where their forefathers tilled the soil, and be huddled together in disease-rotted tenements where they breed and fester in crime and plague. The civic authorities are being taught that a running social sore in the downtown tenement is a menace to the people in the uptown villa. Even the evangelists and missionaries of religion have come to see that "free" services and "free" breakfasts are only makeshifts so long as the diseased and the unfit go on multiplying themselves in squalor and crime. Fresh air and honest work are called for. The objective of it all is "back to the land." Then you get into the politics of the problem.

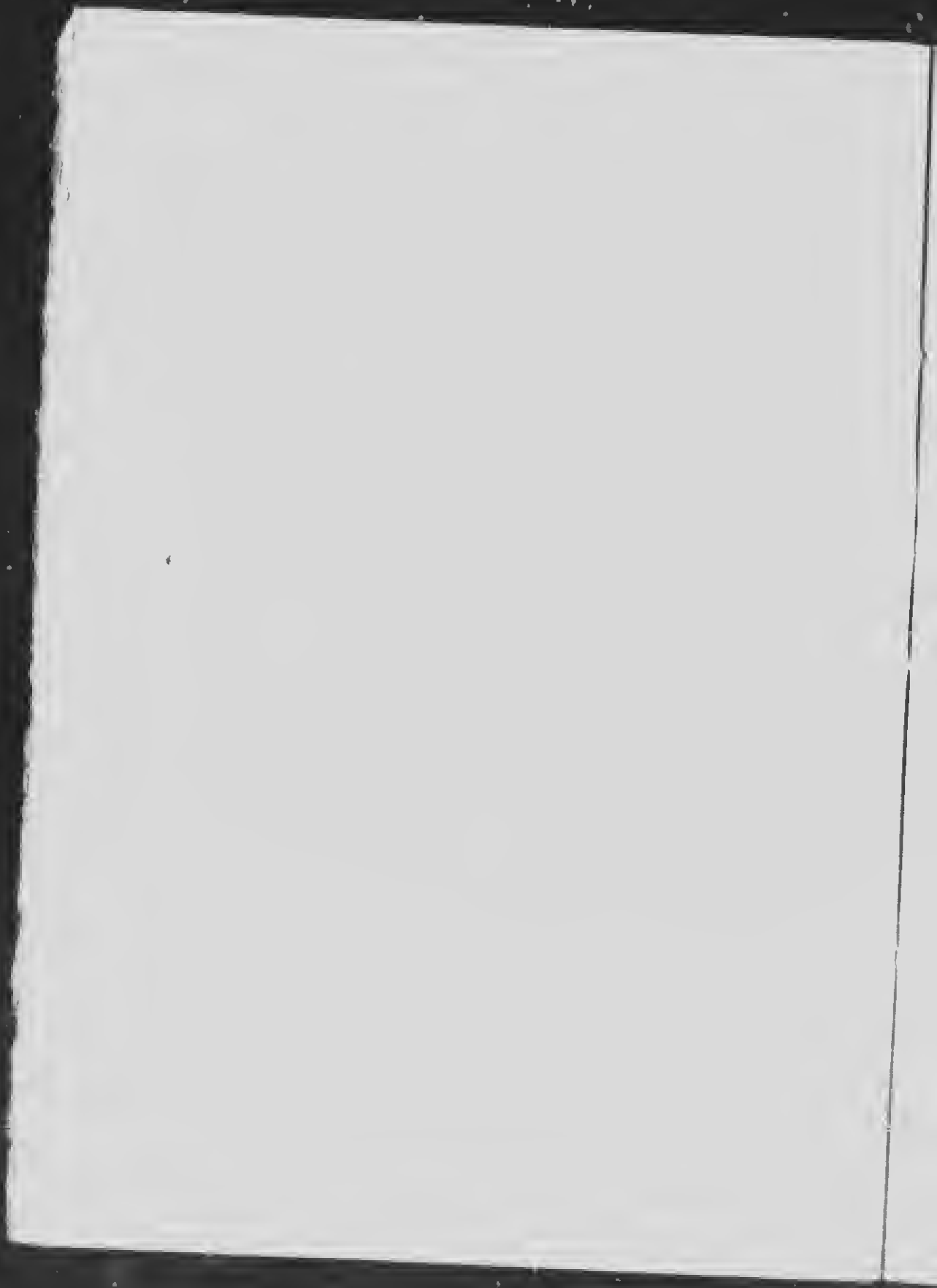
At the heart of the wretchedness and poverty and disease of the British slum is the drunkenness of the people. To a Canadian nothing is more shocking than a look into a typical public house, with its motley crowd of men and women in various stages of intoxicated imbecility. And the children! They are cursed before they are born. And while they are yet infants they are doomed to drink and crime. One despairs even of the children, so scarred and in-

grained are their whole natures with the diseased conditions which destroy alike nerve, and brain, and blood. Some of the social reformers talk of Canada as the hope of the slum children. It offers at least a chance.

But quite plainly Britain must do something more and something else with her social problem than to go on generation after generation multiplying the unfit and transporting them to the overseas dominions. The open country and the cleaner social conditions of Canada may redeem a few of the least hopeless. But why not try the open country of Britain itself? One sees simply millions of acres of untilled land in England and Scotland, the unused areas of great estates. Why not reclaim that land from the pheasants and the deer?

And why not do something more to clean up Britain's social life? Why should the public house and the brewery go on dominating the legislation and the social institutions of a free people? In the "historic mile" of Edinburgh between the Castle and Holyrood there are more liquor-selling places, more and filthier, than in the whole city of Toronto. And Edinburgh is not worse than Glasgow or the large cities of England. How long will a great nation go on breeding weaklings and criminals? How long will such a nation remain great? And how long will it be counted safe for Canada to admit the human output of Britain's drink-cursed slums?

But all this may be a matter of politics.



The Men from the Glens.

"O yes, you must go to The Glen. It would never do for you with the blood in you, to come all the way from Canada to Inverness and not see The Glen. It would never do at all; you must go."

The compulsion of that "must" was partly in the sibilant persuasiveness of the Celt who spoke it, and partly in the discovery he had just made that the blood of men from Glen-Urquhart was in my veins. He was himself a native of the place, and as the author of a large and beautiful volume entitled "Urquhart and Glenmoriston" he had put all lovers of Highland parish history in his debt.

I had not been in Inverness for one whole day before being introduced to Mr. William Mackay, one of the leading citizens of the Highland capital. He is of high standing in the legal profession, and as the historian of Glen-Urquhart he has distinction all his own. One soon learns that Glen-Urquhart, among all the glens, is "The Glen," and that its children, whether in Inverness-shire, or beyond the seas, profess no other pedigree.

"Yes, you must go to The Glen. You will see no more populous glen in all Scotland, and none more prosperous or richer in traditions and historic associations," said Mr. Mackay, as we stood there beside the statue of Flora Macdonald on Castle Hill looking across the Ness to the Beaulie hills. "It is only ten miles' sail down Loch Ness, and you must go."

I soon learned that The Glen has a place in Empire history. A great English historian—it may have been Macaulay—once said that for a hundred years India was ruled from Speyside. In that he seems to have been partly in error. The Grants who controlled the East India Company sprang ancestrally from Strathspey, the Highland habitat of the clan, with its clan-cry "Stand fast, Craighellachie," but they were born and reared in Glen-Urquhart. The castle of Urquhart, from which The Glen takes its name, was once one of the great fortified strongholds of the Scottish Kings. In 1509 James II. put the castle in charge of the Laird of Grant from Speyside, and gave him authority over the Barony of Urquhart. From that time until the present day The Glen has been sending

Grants and Macdonalds and Macmillans and Mackays and men of many other clans to London and to India and to Canada.

All this was of but minor interest to me, for, truth to tell, while the clan names were familiar to my Canadian ear, my own forbears, for aught I then knew, might have come from any other glen between the North Sea and the Isle of Skye. But something I said about political incidents in Pictou county, Nova Scotia, in the olden days touched a new key. It involved the name of a former Canadian Minister of Justice. At the mention of the name Mr. Mackay exclaimed with some excitement.:

"Why, man, I have him in my book!"

The book was got from the library shelf. Its title date was 1893. He soon found the page and read the following paragraph which has genealogical interest for other Canadians:

"The man who first led the way from Glen-Urquhart to Nova Scotia was Patrick Mackay, brother of Alexander Mackay, of Achmonie. Patrick was tenant of Polmaily, and about the year 1770 he crossed the Atlantic with a few other Urquhart men, and settled in Pictou. He subsequently returned to Scotland, where he died. His companions remained in the country, and were joined in 1784 by other Urquhart people, who settled on the East River of Pictou, which is known in Gaelic as 'An Abhainn Mhor'—the Great River. Among these newcomers were Finlay Macmillan, Peter Grant, Donald Cameron, Samuel Cameron, and John Macdonald, better known as 'Iain Mac Iain Bhain,' and his sons, Duncan, Hugh and James. James' grandson is now Chief Justice of Nova Scotia."

"There you are, sir," he exclaimed as he finished reading. "That means that you are the great-great-grandson of Iain Mac Iain Bhain, and you will probably find that you are the great-grandson of Peter Grant, two men from The Glen who were pioneers in Pictou county. Do you think it would be a proper thing for you to go back to Canada without seeing the Glen?"

And so it came that the early morning found us aboard the boat going down Loch Ness. In the misty grey light we passed beautiful Dunain, the old home of the Baillies, and the cultivated grounds of Aldourie, associated with the Fraser-Tytlers of legal and literary note, and sailed along by the picturesque range of Abriachan, peaked and wooded on the right, with the turreted slopes of Stratherrick on the left. Every mile is crammed with historic interest and

famed in story and song. Ten miles down from Inverness we came to a pier bearing the name, "Glen-Urquhart."

The first impression was of silence and peace. When the boat pulled off into the grey mist on its way to Fort Augustus everything seemed still as life can be. Looking northwest up the glen whose glories we had come to see, there rose on the right the almost mountainous ridge that runs many miles inland toward Corrimony. Over that ridge in the brave days of old the clans passed and repassed between The Glen and Strathglass, the clan-home of the Chisholms, and the Upper Aird, where dwelt the Frasers. Across the wide valley the left bank sloped up more gently, and in the distance might be seen the palatial residence of Mr. Bradley Martin, the New York millionaire. Jutting out into Loch Ness at the mouth of The Glen, on a conspicuous rock that rises sheer out of the dark waters, stand the ruins of Urquhart Castle, the scene of many a hard siege and bloody struggle, and for whose keeping the Grant clansmen came from Strathspey more than four hundred years ago.

When the steamer's smoke faded beyond the ruins of the castle the pier-master pointed to a well-set youth on the road a little way off with a dog cart from the hotel up The Glen. The road is the main highway from Inverness. It runs down the side of the Loch and turns up Glen-Urquhart to Corrimony, and on over the hills to the wild and solitary glens leading back from Strathglass. I did not learn the history of this road, but so solid is it that it might have been built in the eighteenth century as part of the "Wade" system of Highland transportation immortalized in the couplet:

"If you saw this road before it was made
You would thank the Lord and General Wade."

After a winding drive of a mile or two up The Glen we came in sight of a scattered village, and drew up for breakfast at the Drumadrochit Hotel. The stranger may not speak the name, for it is of a language he does not understand. It tells of "the Back of the Bridge." This is a famous restort for travellers from the Lowlands and England. The men of the past generation were familiar year after year with the kindly face and soft voice of John Bright as he tramped these roads and stood on the bridge, and showed with satisfaction his fine string of "tarr-dheargan," the red speckled mountain trout.

After breakfast the youth with the dog-cart came back, and we started up The Glen. On either side of the road were seen glimpses

of century-old homes sheltering behind trees and vines—the “imar crann”—pearled in the morning sun with beads of Scottish mist. On we went past the three churches of The Glen. There were no visible signs of any religious interest contrary to the creed of Calvin or the Church of Knox. The Kirk, the United Free, and the “Weo” Free, are all there. Roads branched off to right or to left, and led to small estates, each with its landlord’s house and its crofts and tenant homes.

The land situation in Glen-Urquhart is interesting and instructive to the stranger. The greater part of The Glen, including the great area on the farside of the strath, now for many years controlled by Mr. Bradley Martin, belongs to the Seafield estate, as the inheritance from the old Lairds of Grant. The distinction of Glen-Urquhart is that the side up which we drove is divided into many small holdings, each with its own landlord and its own tenant policy. There are such estates as Sbewglie, Corrimony, Buntait, Lochletter, Craskaig (Kilmartin), Polmaily and Achmonie. In this The Glen had advantage over its neighbor Strathglass, and, indeed, over most of the glens, in the old hard days of Highland evictions. It knew nothing of the unforgotten cruelties of the “Sutherland Clearances.” There was no one landlord who could force his will over the whole glen. It is true that one side has for more than twenty years been leased for shooting privileges to the American millionaire and in all that district the growing of men has given place to the breeding of rabbits and red deer; but the other side has always been in small holdings, and its crofts climb hundreds of feet far up the steep hillside and stretch over the brow to the wide sheep-runs of Buntait and Lower Strathglass.

The Glen illustrates one aspect of the land question as it presses hard for solution in Scotland. On the one side is seen the human blight that accompanies and follows absentee landlordism, and the leasing of great estates for the shooting of grouse and pheasants and rabbits and deer. Granted that the landlord gets more money from sport-loving Londoners or American capitalists. But what about the people? No people are bred on one side of Glen-Urquhart. The other side is dotted with farm-steadings and alive with human interests. It illustrates the beneficial working of the crofter legislation of 1886, which secures fixity of tenure, bequeathment privileges and fair rent to small tenants. Had the House of Lords not rejected the land act for Scotland two years ago the advantages of the Crofters’ Act would have been extended to the larger holdings

throughout all the country, and would have gone far to solve the vexed land problem of Scotland. If ever the House of Lords forces itself as an issue into a general election Scotsmen will not forget.

As we drove up and down and in and out over the quiet road, now in the shadow and now in the sunshine, there was heard the long note of the laverock "lilting wildly through the glen," and there came back the memories that haunted these nooks with that deathless passion and heroism and tragedy of the "Forty-five." In these very homes were born the men who made up the kilted regiment that followed Prince Charles Edward Stuart and fought at Culloden Moor. These tenant farms were despoiled by the ruthless King-men during those cruel months when the Prince was a fugitive in the friendly glens between Culloden and the Isle of Skye. For wearing the white cockade the people of The Glen were harried and tortured by "Butcher" Cumberland, and some of them were transported to the Barbadoes.

On the way back to Drumnadrochit we fell to talking with our driver about his own chances. "I am not so handy with the English as with the Gaelic," he said, by way of apology. But whether in Gaelic or in English he showed his intelligence and his keenness to "get on" in the questions he asked about Canada.

"Yes, that would be fine. A hundred and sixty acres! My, my! And it would be all my own as soon as that! All my own!" He spoke in a low, measured, reflective tone, as though making comparisons. "Man, that would be fine. You see yon place away up at the very top of the brae. That is our place. My father was born there, and his father, too. But it still belongs to the Laird. There is hardly twenty acres fit for the plough. It would not be enough for us boys, but if it were only our own I would rather stay in The Glen."

There was a touch of pathos in his voice and a glint of reverence in his eye as he looked up the brae at the home of his fathers and said that word: "If it were only our own I would rather stay in The Glen." There is the true soul of patriotism for you. That deep love for the old place made the cruel evictions doubly cruel. Today it makes the human appeal for such radical reform in the Scottish land laws as would meet the unconquerable ambition of the Scot to have a home of his own. The wilds of America have been redeemed from waste by men who looked back to some shining handbreadth of moor or sunny brae with the same love-strain: "If it were only our own I would rather stay in The Glen." I reflected long on that

saying, for in it was the aroma of the heart's oxilo that touched the Uist settlers in Canada:

"From the lone sheiling of the misty island
Mountains divide us and a waste of seas;
But still the blood is strong, our hearts are Highland,
And we in dreams behold the Hebrides."

It was noon when the dog-cart swung back through the quiet village to Drumnadrochit and we were met by the hotelkeeper, a Macdonald, who came to the Glen from Forres many years ago. "You are welcome," he said. "A Canadian with a dash of Glen blood in him needs no introduction."

After lunch he sat with me on the form at the side of the hotel and talked to me about—what? About the great, noisy, spluttering motor-cars that rushed up the road with their superior-looking occupants, who might all be Dukes or brewers? No. About the grouse moors or deer forests? No. About The Glen's distinction in being so largely leased to an American millionaire? No. He mentioned none of these things.

"Have you been down to the school?" he asked.

"No, not yet; but they tell me you have a fine school in The Glen."

"O, it is not so bad," he said, with true Gaelic reserve. "You see, it is only a glen school. But it is 'recognized.' They tried hard to keep it from being 'recognized.' There is an academy at Inverness, and one at Kingussie, and one at Nairn. They thought a mere glen school could not prepare students for the university. But we stuck to it. We got 'recognized.' More scholars are prepared for university matriculation here than at any academy in the county. We had seven 'firsts' in one year. And this very day there are a hundred and forty children in the school."

All this the hotelkeeper told with evident pride. He mentioned the name of a Cambridge professor: "You passed his father's house up The Glen this morning." Another and another in educational circles, others in law, others in medicine, others in the ministry. "They are all Glen boys, and they went to Aberdeen University straight from the school down yonder."

"Two boys went from here to the university at Aberdeen, they graduated one first and the other second. They intend going to Cambridge, but the Aberdeen professors persuaded one to go to Oxford so as not to compete. They came out one first at Balliol College, Oxford, the other first at Trinity College, Cambridge."

"The student who stood first at Aberdeen this year is a Glen boy. He was here the other day. I said to him, 'We are very proud of what you did at Aberdeen. You must have worked very hard at the University.' 'No,' he said, 'I found the university easy; the hard work was all done at the school in The Glen.'"

I said something about the cost of supporting the school—

"O yes, it costs money. We have three M.A.'s on the staff. But it is worth all it costs. They will be telling me—the people from other parts will be saying to me: 'What is the use of spending all this money on schooling? These young people all go away from The Glen after you educate them.' Of course they do. We have not much for them in the Glen. They go to Glasgow and Edinburgh and to England and many of them to Canada. Of course they do. And we are proud of them. The only thing we have to export is educated people."

I can still see the look of worthy pride on the hotelkeeper's face as he set forth the staple export of The Glen. "Educated people!" Who will not say that for Britain's sake and for the world's sake the export trade of Glen-Urquhart ought to be encouraged? But how can it be encouraged if the people are not there? The glens of the north, like the moors of the south, are still being robbed of their people. Leases falling in are taken up by the landlords and the lands are added to the vast areas of shooting preserves. Everywhere the same story is told. The rural population is decreasing. There are no children for the schools. There are few people for the churches. One minister told me that in one month he gave 113 certificates to members of his church who were removing to Canada. They cannot own the land they till. The great estates are absorbing the small holdings. The Highlands and Islands Commission reported that in the Crofting Counties alone as suitable for moderate sized farms are "no less than 1,782,785 acres now used for deer forests and sheep farms." In a given five years in Germany 700,000 acres of what was moor and bog were added to the cultivated area, while during the same years in Britain "2,000,000 acres have gone down to grass." Twelve persons together hold 4,339,732 acres in Scotland. One owner holds 1,326,000 acres. Facts like that give something more than pathos to the lad's remark, "If it were only our own I would rather stay in The Glen."

What will the cities do if the country places are robbed of their intelligent and virile population? City life makes for physical and moral decay. For two centuries London has been a hungry

devourer of rural blood and brawn and brain. They say it is not more than three generations from the farm to the slum. The great industries are manned and worked, in most cases, by country-born men.

A Glen-Urquhart man in London gave me an instance. In a nook of the roads in The Glen stands one of the many Grant homes. Of that family one son went to India. One went to Glasgow and got a situation in Arthur & Co.'s warehouse at five shillings a week; "when his wage was raised to eight shillings his father would be praying every day that James might be kept from the love of riches." James is now manager of that great commercial institution, one of the largest in Britain, doing business all over the world. Another son is a leading and prosperous physician in London; another is a minister at Govan. One is the manager of a great life insurance company in London. That family is typical of The Glen's contribution to the commercial, financial and professional life of Britain. What will happen when such supplies of intelligence and moral character and personal power from country homes are cut off?

I put the same question to General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien at Aldershot. His reply for the army was not reassuring and made Kipling's query pertinent and pressing:

"Will the rabbit war with your foemen—the red
deer horn them for hire?

Your kept cock-pheasant keep you?—he is
master of many a shire."

That question is not answered by Lord Onslow's defence that "the numbers employed in deer-stalking are probably in excess of those engaged in sheep farming, while far more Saxon gold is poured into Highland glens." Very true. But much of that gold finds its way into the pockets of absentee landlords, and the sturdy sons of the soil are displaced by deer-stalkers, gillies and caddies for the sake of "Saxon gold."

It will be an ill day for Britain, both at home and overseas, when the places of service and responsibility in industry and commerce and the professions and the army look in vain for the annual recruitment of the Men from The Glens.

Where Honor Rules the Market.

When I registered my name at the Station Hotel I was told by the clerk in charge of the register that the house would be very full by the end of the week. It was early in July. The season was held to be somewhat backward. Not many tourists had been seen at the hotels in other parts of the north of Scotland. Inverness was evidently exceptionally popular.

"What's doing?" I asked.

"Why, the Wool Fair," said the clerk, with that air of casualness which suggested that even a stranger would need no more than a reminding hint.

"And what is the Wool Fair?"

When I spoke those words the clerk, a modest, soft-voiced maiden from Aviemore, down in Strathspey, looked first at my name on the register before her and then at myself, unable to conceal either her surprise or her pity that a man with such a name, even though "Toronto" were his home address, should let it be known in Inverness that he was so ignorant of one of the few really great institutions of the Kingdom. Could one be excused who in Edinburgh in May asked, "What is the General Assembly?" or, in London, had to be told the meaning of the Opening of Parliament?

Of course I should have known that among all the institutions of Highland life there is none more unique or more characteristic than this Wool Market. I should have known the history of Inverness as a market-town running back to the days of William the Lion and of David in the thirteenth century. And I should have known that in 1817 the Wool Fair in its present form was established at Inverness as a convenient meeting-place for drovers and woolen-millers from England and farmers from the Highlands, safe from such mishaps as befell Rob Roy on his return with the sales money from the Falkirk Tryst.

In my innocence I had to be told that once a year, for nearly a hundred years, the wool-growers come from all the shires of the North and Mull and Skye and the Outer Hebrides, and the wool-buyers come from the South and from England. They meet in

Inverness on the second Friday of July. Formerly the Caledonian was their rendezvous. Now it is the Station Hotel with its spacious reception rooms and its open quadrangle formed with the station-house of the Highland Railway.

The clerk was right. Before the end of the week the house was full. Their presence began to be felt on Thursday. The number and the variety of kilts seen about the hotel and on the quadrangle, and in the streets had greatly increased by Friday forenoon. Out of the medley of accents one could tell that Yorkshire was there and the Border counties and Glasgow, as well as the Norse blood from Caithness, the hardy Celts from Uist and Islay, the Aireghaidhealach from the West Highlands, and soft-spoken Inverness-shire itself.

"Yes, I am from Skye," said a sturdy six-footer in the Mackinnon tartan and with the unmistakable Sgiathanach accent. "I come every year. You see that bonnet,"—holding his Glengarry in his hand,—“well, that bonnet has been on the Wool Market every year for fifty-seven years. It came first with my father, now it comes with me, and some day it may come with my boy.” Both the man and the bonnet looked as though the venerable headgear might unfold many a tale not recorded in the sober chronicles of the Inverness Wool Fair.

In the innocence of my Canadian experience I supposed that great bales of wool would be exposed for sale around the soldiers' monument in the quadrangle, and that the business of the day would be carried on through the lingo of an auctioneer.

"Never a bit of it," said the maiden-clerk, from whom it was not needful any longer to conceal the density of my ignorance. "Never a fleece will you see, not a bandful. And there will be no auctioneer. You will be going to the Annual Assembly of the Gaelic Society in the Music Hall this evening; the Chiefs will be there; after that there will be the Supper, and then the Market will really be open. It will be all over in the morning."

And so it was to be an all-night affair. An Inverness newspaperman happened along, and through him I found my way about. The day was spent by the old-time sellers and buyers in the semi-social renewal of acquaintanceships. Newcomers of either class were approached with due caution, their qualities and resources were carefully adjudged, and when approved they were made welcome with touched glasses and a proper "Here's to you!"

Among the buyers were wool-brokers from Glasgow with a

list of customers in the Lowlands or England. Others represented the great mills at Galashiels or Hawick or Alloa. Buyers from England, for the most part, wanted not the wool, but the sheep and the lambs for the London meat market. The day was spent in preliminary negotiations, and by night both offerings and prices were generally known. All this seemed to be informal, but it followed rule and precedent.

The Annual Assembly of the Gaelic Society was a great occasion. The young Chief of the Camerons presided. The Mackintosh supported him. Dr. Carmichael, the venerable Gaelic scholar from Edinburgh, gave platform countenance to his own daughter as she made an eloquent plea in the Gaelic language for woman's place and service in Highland life. In his Chairman's address Lochiel himself proved true to the example and teaching of his venerated father in pleading for still greater interest in Gaelic education, in Gaelic sentiment and poetry, and in the enriching and brightening of life in the Highlands.

But all this and all the music and dancing were incidental to the Wool Fair, which began in real earnest about midnight. The scene in and about the Station Hotel could not be duplicated elsewhere on earth. The indirect commercial skirmishing of the day gave place to close man-to-man controversy over prices of "Cheviot" and "black-faced." Between midnight and one o'clock many sales were made over the small tables. No contracts were signed, although the buyers would suffer loss if the farmers repudiated the sales or failed to deliver at the stipulated time. Each man made his own memoranda of what he bought or sold, and celebrated in another "Here's to you!"

From time to time as the night wore on the huzzuh would be relieved with a song. The stranger came first, and being a Yorkshire man, he gave the rollicking "John Peel wi' His Coat so Gay." A man from Hawick, hurly and hois'erous, drowned all other voices with an evident favorite, the refrain of which I caught:

"Terri huss ye terri odin,
Sons of heroes slain at Flodden!"

As the wool business flagged and the spirit of hilarity rose there came up out of the deep places of the clan consciousness memories of the old heroic days, and the blood was stirred by some defiant clan-challenge. It was well on to four in the morning when from a recess behind the stairway there rose, wild and high, the

song of the Mackenzies, "Cabarfeigh," with its boast of the stag's supremacy. The voice of the man from Strathconon had scarcely ceased when from a table on the open floor the answer came to the same tune as through the smoke-laden atmosphere a Mackintosh from Stratherrick was seen to match the stag with the billy-goat in the bantering words of "Tha fonn air a bhoichd-ghaibhrc."

It was plain that the eleven o'clock closing clause of the Forbes-Mackenzie Act was suspended for the night. Never before had I seen so much whiskey served or fewer men incapacitated by fairly steady indulgence. If any stranger supposed that the shrewd buyer from the South got the better of the Highland farmers by reason of their too frequent response to a health in "Ferintosh" or "Tallisker," he would misunderstand the workings of the Highland nature in such critical circumstances.

On the boat going down Loch Ness next morning I asked a Dumfriesshire man if there was any risk in trusting to the word of these farmers and wool-growers, with no signed contract. "No risk at all," he replied. "We can make sales to our customers months ahead of the date of delivery and feel sure the wool will be on hand in time and up to the standard."

"What would you be wanting a signed paper for?" asked one of the group, a Macpherson, now in London, but whose forbears belonged to Kingussie or Upper Badenoch. "You have the man's word. What contract would hold if a Highlander's word of honor would break?"

"Has there never been an instance?"

"Yes, one, just one," said the Macpherson.

After much skillful fencing I got the story. It was of a young man from his home parish, who succeeded to his father's estate and took his place on the Market. In his second or third year the charge of deception was made against him by a buyer from Carlisle. It resulted in his being ruled off the Market. He protested his innocence, and on his paper were many "cautioners," who vouched for him. But for more than twenty years he had to sell the output of his large sheep-runs at the small markets or as best he could. The incident was forgotten until his former accuser lay a-dying in Carlisle, when he made confession that the accusation was based on information which he subsequently had found to be false, and begged a friend of his in Dumfries to have the wrong righted. The accusation was disproved. The man was reinstated, and a dinner in his honor was given in Inverness, when,

after more than twenty sore years, he again took his place on the Wool Market.

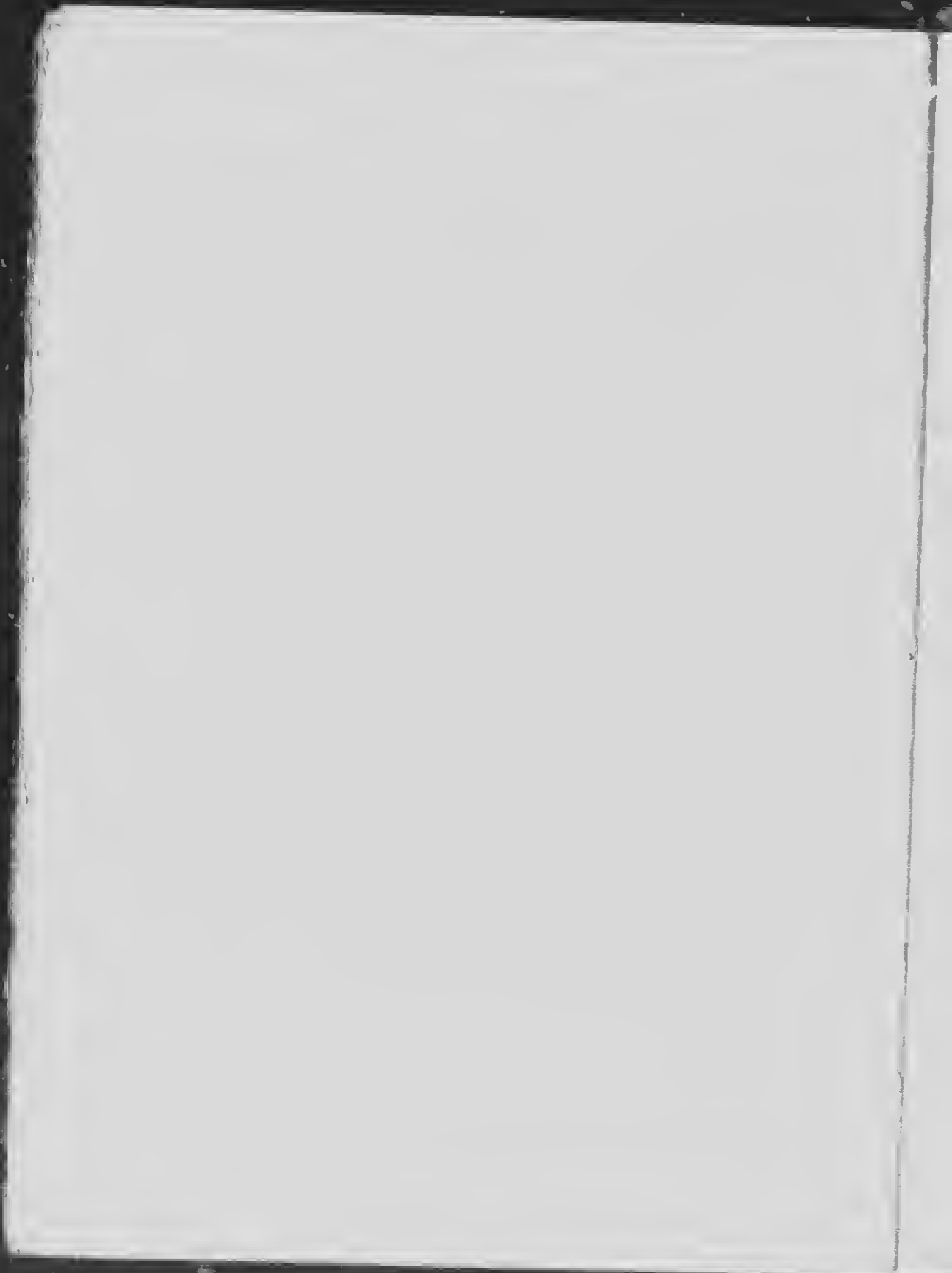
"No, his name was not Macpberson," said the Badenoch man from London, "but it was a good name for all that. And he was a man of honor who could not look himself in the face in the clear water of the mountain stream in his own glen if he had indeed deceived that Englishman from Carlisle on the Market at Inverness."

As I write these words to-day the fact is recalled that almost the first article I wrote after returning from Britain to Toronto in August commented on a despatch headed from Glasgow. That despatch reported the complaint of the largest fruit merchant in the North of Scotland, that many barrels of apples from Canada have several layers of first-class fruit in the top and bottom, but windfalls and inferior grades in the middle. That complaint comes from Inverness, the seat of the Market that for nearly a hundred years has stood on the business honor of generation after generation of Highlanders and Islesmen. That complaint comes to Canada where we boast of British blood and British honor. It turns the white light on the very fibre and essence of our Canadian life. It speaks to us of those features and qualities of life in Britain that in the old days made heroes, and in these gray days of cleverness and cynicism are the mainstay of the nation, and "make it loved at home, revered abroad."

It is good to recall the Macpherson's ideal of Highland honor. He would have been a poor clansman, unworthy of any undishonored tartan, who in the brave old days was slack of hand in "lifting" the cattle of the hated Sassenach. But "lifting the cattle" was "playing the game." And even to-day when the blood is up the old clan-enmities flash, as they did that night when the Mackenzie sang "Cabarfeigh," or when a Macdonald touched a Campbell, or a Cameron crossed "one of Assynt's name." But the feuds of clan or of blood do not go deep enough to warp the sense of personal honor.

"He was a man of honor," said the Macpherson. "He could not look himself in the face in the clear water of the mountain stream in his own glen if he had indeed deceived that Englishman from Carlisle on the Market at Inverness."

And that is why Honor rules the Market.



From Culloden to Quebec.

"Sir Wilfrid Laurier, when he was in Edinburgh four years ago, made a great speech—a very great speech. In that speech he wanted to pay a compliment to the people of Scotland."

The old Highland gentleman stood up as he told me this. He spoke in the rich, measured tone of the cultured Scottish Celt. It was plain he had something more to say. There was a look of solemn pride in the set of his face, as though the words of the French-Canadian Prime Minister were good to recall.

"Yes. Sir Wilfrid Laurier in that great speech at Edinburgh wanted to pay a compliment to the people of Scotland, and this is what he said: 'The Highlanders at the taking of Quebec fought as men never fought before.' Those were his very words—'as men never fought before.'"

He said those words over again and again in a low, soft, musical intoning voice, after the manner of the Gael—"as men never fought before."

I had been in Inverness for two or three days, and was arranging for a drive out six miles to Culloden Moor. The story of the "Forty-five" was a part of the background of my boyhood life, but I must needs see the field itself, with its records of tragedy and its memories of sadness and of pride for all who love their father's tartan and cherish the matchless heroism and devotion that turned defeat into deathless renown.

It was a glorious July day, with the sun glinting on the firth and touching with softness the Beaulie hills, the hearthstone of the Frasers. On the forenoon of that day I chanced to meet as fine a specimen of the old-time Highland gentleman as could be found even in the home of the Highland aristocracy. His white hair and long-flowing white beard suggested the snows of fourscore, but as he bade me welcome he stood there as erect and as light-stepping as the clan piper on parade. The dress tartan of his clan and the inimitable Argyllshire lilt in his voice told his pedigree. He came from near Lochawe and his services to Celtic literature have won for him distinction. When he learned I was from Canada and that in my veins was the blood and on my tongue the accent of

the Glen-Urquhart clansmen who rose in the "Forty-five," not even the rich-worded Gaelic itself could give him utterance. With his hand on my shoulder, he crooned over those endearing expletives that make up the deepest language of the Highland heart.

"And you will be going to Culloden Moor to-day? O, yes, it is a place of mixed memories for men of your clan—a place of mixed memories. It was an awful blunder—taking them from the right wing where they had been unbeaten ever since Bannockburn. It was a fatal blunder. That was the downfall of the Stuart cause. But it had to be—it had to be."

There came into the old man's eyes that far-away, reminiscent look by which I knew that for the moment I was forgotten. The mystic spell of the past was upon him. He was seeing the swift and awful slaughter of the Prince's clansmen by the King's regiments under command of the hated Cumberland, while the strongest of all the clans stood sullen and unmoved cutting the heather-bloom with their keen claymores.

"Yes, yes, it was all a blunder," he said again, partly to himself, and partly to me, for we had both been silent. "But it had to be—it had to be." And with that assured confidence in the ordered purpose of Culloden, as of whatsoever comes to pass, he took a turn or two about the room.

Then it was that he stood before me with a new look of pride in his eye, and spoke of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's speech at Edinburgh, when he said that "the Highlanders at Quebec fought as men never fought before."

"But when your Canadian Prime Minister spoke those words he did not say why it was that the Highlanders fought as men never fought before. It may be that he did not know why. I had a mind to write to him and to tell him why. For there was a reason." I knew I was expected to ask for that reason.

"Why was it?" I asked.

"Culloden was why," he said, with that note of eagerness which suggested the hidden secret. "Culloden and the 'Forty-five' was why the Highlanders fought as men never fought before."

"But what had Culloden and the 'Forty-five' to do with the taking of Quebec?"

"It had everything to do with it."

I could see by his reverent animation that the old man was now on sacred ground, and I did not again interrupt him until he had finished his story.

"On the afternoon of the day of the battle, the Duke and some of his staff were riding over the field in the direction of Inverness. They had not gone far until they came to where a young Highlander was lying on the moor. He was one Charles Fraser from Inverallochy, who commanded the Frasers in the absence of Lovat, and was terribly wounded in the battle. He had crawled and dragged himself off the field, and hearing the noise of the tramping of horses, he raised himself on his elbow and looked at the Duke and his friends as they rode past. Cumberland asked the wounded man to what party he belonged, and the answer came, 'To the Prince.' He said it just like that—'To the Prince.' Cumberland called him a vile name, and instantly ordered a young English officer of his staff to 'shoot that Highland scoundrel.' The young officer saw the young Highlander there on the moor mortally wounded, and had compassion on him, and he said back to the Duke:—

"Your Highness, my commission it at your command, but I decline to be a butcher.'

"That was his answer—'I decline to be a butcher'—because he did not want to shoot the poor Highlander lying on the moor. And you know that because of his cruelty and brutality to the Highlanders who followed Charles Edward, the Duke is known in history as the 'Butcher.'

"But the Duke was nettled by the young officer's reply, and he called to a common soldier who was walking past and commanded him to shoot the Fraser. The common soldier, not wishing to do such a thing, said: 'Your Highness, my ammunition is all gone.' The Duke got very angry, and, calling the common soldier a coward, asked him, 'What is the butt of your musket for?' and, using vile language about the wounded Highlander, he ordered the soldier to kill the Fraser. Stung by the Duke's words, the soldier did as he was commanded, and with the first blow the musket exploded. It was loaded all the time, but he did not want to do so cruel a thing.

"Then Argyll, who fought under Cumberland for the King, and was on his staff, said, 'Your Highness, this is brutal.' He said it just like that—'Your Highness, this is brutal.'

"Then the Duke was very much enraged, and used very vile words, and said that he wished every Highlander in Scotland was as that Fraser lying there dead on the moor.

"Argyll was indignant at this, and answered, 'Your Highness, if you had spoken those words yesterday the issues of this day might have been different.' You know the Campbells as a clan

did not follow the Stuarts, although there was a trench of Campbells at Culloden. The Argyll was on the King's side, and many say that it was his knowledge of Higbland warfare in making a flank movement with his Campbells on the right wing, from which the Maedonalds had been displaced, that decided the day at Culloden. However that may be, the Argyll said to the Duke just like that, 'If you had spoken those words yesterday the issues of to-day might have been different.'

The fire in the old Highlander burned in silence as he mused on what might have been if the Campbells and the other clans had worn the white cockade and not the red. Then I recalled him to his story by asking what these incidents at Culloden had to do with Quebec.

"They had everything to do with it," he said with that renewed eagerness which made me feel that I ought to hide the time until the sequel came.

"Yes, they had everything to do with it. It was just because of what happened on that afternoon of April 16, 1746, on Culloden Moor that the Highlanders at the taking of Quebec in 1759, fought as men never fought before. And this was the reason: That young officer who was ordered to shoot the young Fraser Highlander lying wounded on the moor, and who gave back the word to the Duke, 'I decline to be a butcher'—that young English officer was Wolfe. That's who he was—Wolfe!"

With the mention of that name there came a long and impressive pause. The story was not to be hurried.

"Yes, that young officer was Wolfe. He was only nineteen. He was stationed in this neighborhood for several months settling the disturbances after the 'Forty-five.' He was considerate and humane in his dealings with the followers of Prince Charles Edward and their families. Nothing was too brutal for Cumberland, and his name is held in abomination by every Highlander, but the name of Wolfe is revered, and it will never be forgotten that he spared the wounded young Fraser and gave back that brave word to the 'Butcher' on the moor at Culloden.

"And that is not all," the old man went on, his grip on his staff tightening as he reached his climax. "Thirteen years afterwards when General Wolfe sailed up the St. Lawrence he had under his command more than fourteen hundred Highland soldiers, many of whom fought against Cumberland at Culloden. Eight hundred of them were Frasers. Their officer was General Simon Fraser of Balanain, a cousin of Charles, the young Highland officer whom Wolfe

refused to shoot on Culloden Moor, and one of the captains was Charles' brother. All the great clans were represented: the Macdonalds, Camerons, Macleods, Macintoshes. They joined Wolfe's forces at Halifax, and won great glory at Louisburg, so keen were they to show him how brave and grateful they could be.

"You know what happened at Quebec the night before the victory. When Montcalm's sentry on the heights, hearing a noise down at the riverside, called out his challenge, he was answered in French by the Highland officer in charge of Wolfe's reconnoitering party. That officer was Simon Fraser, whose cousin was spared by Wolfe at Culloden. He had been educated in France and lived there after the 'Forty-five,' and was handy with the French language. That was why he was so clever with his answer to the sentry. '*De la Reine!*' he said, just like that. The sentry was put off guard and was despatched in a minute. In the morning Wolfe's forces were on the Plains of Abraham before Montcalm was aware. Then at a critical moment in the thick of the fight the Highlanders made a wild rush, and broke the French ranks, and Quebec was won. As Sir Wilfrid Laurier said, they fought as men never fought before. But it was for Wolfe.

"Yes, it was for Wolfe, not for the King. The Highlanders did not love King George at Quebec any more than they did at Culloden. It was for Wolfe and for his mercy to the Prince's men and the word he gave back to Cumberland about the wounded Fraser Highlander at Culloden Moor—that was why the Highlanders at Quebec fought as men never fought before."

That afternoon I saw Culloden with its tell-tale stones marking where fell the flower of many a clan. An old gamekeeper, a McDonnell of Keppoch, pointed out the place where tradition says the Fraser was lying mortally wounded when Wolfe gave back the word to Cumberland.

The next night there was held in the Music Hall of Inverness a great gathering of the clans at the Annual Assembly of the Gaelic Society. It was the time of the Wool Fair. Lochiel was in the chair. Between the singing of "A Hundred Pipers" and the clan-song of the Camerons, "Caismeachd Chloinn Chamarain," by a Macleod in the Assynt tartan, I was called on by Lochiel to prove the oneness in name and fame of "the sea-divided Gael." There was left in my Canadian vocabulary and accent enough of the "language" to pass as the shihholeth even in Inverness. My venerable Highland friend of the day before was on the platform. At the close he came to me,

and with the inexpressibly appealing low note of pride and love in his voice, holding my hand in both of his, he gave me his last charge:—

“When you go back to Canada you will tell Sir Wilfrid Laurier from me why it was that the Highlanders at the taking of Quebec fought as men never fought before.”

In obedience to that charge I have told his story.

