



ROBERT BONNER.

# THE SCOTCH-IRISH IN AMERICA

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## ULSTER AS IT IS TO-DAY.

BY REV. DR. JOHN HALL, OF NEW YORK CITY.

*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—*

I would like to say in the beginning, in order to prevent this audience from being disappointed, that I am not at all an orator, that I am a mere preacher, and that what I say out of the pulpit is not much more than conversation, in a voice loud enough, if possible, to be heard by those who are present. When I lived in Ireland, I frequently read letters from people who had come to America. Since then I have read many letters from people who lived in Ireland. One feature that has always impressed me, is the word or two at the close of the letter, which went something like this: "Remember me to"—and all the uncles and aunts and cousins, and all the second cousins and all the neighbors would come in, and then in order to prevent leaving out anybody, they would add, and also "to all inquiring friends." That usually came at the end of every letter. Now, I am coming at the end of this great congress, and I am to serve the purpose of that clause: "Remember me to all inquiring friends." I am to try to remember you to those from the other side of the deep, as I expect to be there within about thirty days, and I feel that I will have little trouble, but great pleasure in doing so. I expect, of course, to go through the same experience that has come to the lot of others who have visited America, and it will please me to answer when I am asked by this old lady or that old gentleman, "Doctor, did you see our Mary?" But I fear when I am compelled to answer "No," to some of these queries, they will doubt my having been in America at all.

Now, in order to bring the subject before you that has been selected for me to-night, namely "Ulster as it is to-day," it is proper to recall some of the lessons that we used to learn in the school of geography. There are four provinces in Ireland, Ulster, Munster, Leinster and Connaught. Those who make a trip over to Great Britain and Europe, make the acquaintance of Munster when they land in Queenstown, and as many of them have their admiration aroused when they see the distinctive beauty of that province, and I dare say some of them have an experience something like that which Sir Walter Scott recorded of his visit to that region, when he gave the driver a shilling when he really owed him six pence, and said "There, you can owe me the balance," and got for his reply, "Very well, may your honor live till I pay you."

Those who go farther upward make the acquaintance of the province of Leinster, when they visit Dublin as it was. Then they make the acquaintance of the province of Connaught, which contains some of the most beautiful spots in all Ireland. The question is how do these places look to the eye in our own day. Ulster as it is to-day furnishes, indeed, the food for many a happy thought to those who are bound to it by the chains of friendship and ancestral blood. I can remember when I was a boy at the mature age of eight or nine years, that happy period when one knows almost every thing going. I remember of going to meeting on the sabbath with my parents, where we used to come across a number of the people that were going to their worship in the chapel, as we called it. Many of these would be found carrying their shoes in their hands, for reasons that I could not explain. It may be that they wanted to save the shoes, the wear and tear of the way, and then again it may be that they were not much in the habit of wearing shoes, and would carry them, and would wash their feet near the chapel and then put them on. That was a common thing in my boyhood days. Now, comes the contrast in Ulster. Last summer I was over there, and of course I preached every sabbath. You can not tell the tenderness of the feelings, with which the man stands up and speaks to the children of those whom he used to look up to in his boyhood. I was sitting in the upper room in the house of my sister, in front of which the road happens to run, and I had my manuscript in my hand preparing myself to preach, but I could not get my eye on it. And why? Because the people I used to see going to their places of worship, bare of foot and shoes in hand, were passing down the same road, but in different garbs. The transformation was wonderful. The young ladies had gloves upon their hands, and not only that, but the heels of their boots were about as broad as these two finger tips and about an inch and a half in height. I noticed, also, the general rule was that the ladies carried parasols in their hands, the handles of which were about as long as the lamp-lighter's pole. Not only that, but in the other hand they usually carried a beautiful bouquet of flowers. This, I think, is a marvelous change even in my time. I remember, too, when the farmer had to take his threshed oats to market. Two or three sacks were put in the cart, and if the wife had to go to market in the town, she was compelled to get into the wagon, and sit upright on one of the sacks and ride all the way to town in that position. That was the old way of being transported from the farm-house to the city. They have railroads now, and they have abolished these methods of transportation. Don't you remember the farm-house with which we were all familiar, the little farm-house composed of three apartments in which they cooked, and ate and slept.

You would drive up to the front door and talk to the hostess in the kitchen before you went in. First there was the kitchen in which they did the cooking. Then there was the lower room in which they slept, and then the extra or spare room which they used for the purpose of receiving visitors. There was a little mahogany table in the center of the room, probably a few pictures hanging on the wall. When any body called, he was taken to that room and there the entertaining went on. Sometimes then there was another little room with beds in it. That is the condition in which the people of Ulster are living to-day. They are happy, they are prosperous, and they are enjoying the comforts of life. But, you must not understand me as confining my sympathies to the Scotch-Irish, of whom I am speaking. The Irish people, as a people, have many admirable qualities—qualities that I admire, and qualities that I appreciate. In fact there is some need of explanation on this point. Many talk of the "pure Irish." Now, I don't know that there is any such a thing as pure Irish. There are others who talk about "Irish who are not Protestants," and so on. Don't you know that until the tenth century Ireland was called Scotia! Don't you know that Ireland gave its name to Scotland? Don't you know that the Irish people are made up of many races and many nationalities? There are Spaniards among them in Galway, and Swedes and Norwegians among them in nearly every county in Ireland. But, whatever their origin, I am here to say that apart from influences surrounding their birth they have done something for their country of which they should be proud, and they have made impressions upon the Scotch-Irish on the other as well as on this side of the Atlantic, which we ought to recognize with admiration.

I shall never forget the days I spent among those people, and the incidents which occurred are among the happiest of my life. There are many splendid natural qualities about these "so-called" pure Irish. Let us, the Scotch-Irish of America, give them some degree of credit. Certainly those who have lived among them so long know what their grievances are. They have received wrongs and they have felt grievances. They have fought many battles, they have met defeat and won many victories. Many of the most talented sons of Ireland—and I would like to have you keep this thing in mind regarding the Irish, as such—many of the most talented sons of Ireland, seeing they had little chance in their native land, went to the continent of Europe and became successful business men, others became military officers and made of themselves distinguished soldiers. Others became professors in the colleges, and others became missionaries to those who needed missionary work; and many reached high military and political

places in France and elsewhere. But, turning to Ulster, there is no question but that the Ulster people have made great progress in the generations that have passed. How is it to be accounted for? I venture to say that it is due in a great degree to the perseverance aroused in them under the many difficulties and adversities with which they have had to contend. Look at the soil of Ulster. It was not like the land you are in to-night. Much of it was bog, marsh, and stony ground, and abounded in brambles and briar bushes. All that had to be changed; but the very need of changing it, and the industrial example set by those who responded to the calls of necessity, have done the people good. Look at New England. Don't you think they have been made stronger by the natural difficulties with which they had to contend? I, for one, believe that it was a blessing to this country that the Puritans landed in New England. Suppose they had gone over to Ohio, to Kansas, to Iowa, with their broad, rich prairies. Would they not have naturally become indolent amid the luxuries that surrounded them? As it was, they went through the same process of getting strong through difficulties. It was the adversities strewn in their pathway that made them industrious, energetic, and enterprising, as they are to-day.

Now, I wish to say a word in regard to what I look upon as some of the good things to be accomplished through this Scotch-Irish Congress. The first of these, I will now mention. We meet and make a wide circle of friends. We are friends that know one another, consult one another, understand one another, and trust one another. There is another good thing. Some mistaken impressions will be corrected, and some new and good impressions will be made, I hope, as intelligence is diffused and the numbers and characteristics of this Scotch-Irish people come to be more generally known. So that when a merchant wants a clerk or a salesman, a family wants a teacher, a school board wants a schoolmaster, a city wants a governor, they may say to themselves: There are Irish and there are Irish, and since these Scotch-Irish have done so much for themselves, have done so well on the whole in the past, wouldn't it be a good thing for us to see that we get them and put them in position to exercise their intelligence, integrity and enterprise, and benefit us as well as themselves? That is one good thing. Here is another—the spirit of good will, the spirit of a mutual understanding and consequent unity that is being produced amongst us. The people of Ohio and New York, the people of New Jersey and California, who have these common convictions, this common origin, may be brought together with one another. The people of the South and the people of the North, that have in their veins this common blood, will be brought

closer and closer together; so will people of Canada, who come hundreds of miles that they may give utterance to their sentiments and manifest the spirit with which they are imbued, and express their feelings of good will toward this movement. One word for Canada. I am assured and requested to state that the people of Canada are with us, and whatever they can do for us to make our organization a grand success, they are prepared to do. Now is it not a good thing to get these people closer and closer together? Let us rise in intelligence, in public spirit, in the conception of right, in the conception of all things that make good citizens and noble men and women in every land. Do this, and we will rise to the level of our duty, and our every effort, our every impulse will be felt in the perpetuation of the grandeur and magnificence of this Union, of which we are so proud to constitute a part.\*

\* We very deeply regret that neither this address nor the sermon of Dr. Hall, which follows, are not nearly so long nor so explicit as delivered. For reasons which can not here be stated, the stenographer failed to report either of them in full. Dr. Hall had no manuscript, and therefore the omissions could not be supplied.

## FAREWELL MEETING,

Held at Exposition Building on Sunday evening. Presided over by General Aiken and addressed by Rev. Dr. John Hall and others.

General Aiken said:

*Delegates to the Scotch-Irish Congress:*

I beg to say to you and to the gentlemen of the Committee who have assigned to me the duty of presiding at this magnificent assemblage to-night, that I am deeply grateful for the honor conferred upon me. There are times when the lips fail to give expression to the sentiments of the heart and the thoughts and words of the mind. That feeling is upon me at this moment. I thank you with all my heart, and I trust that this grand building will be filled for the glory of God:

The Rev. Dr. McCallister then led in prayer. The 72d Psalm was then sung, after an exposition of the lines by Dr. McCallister, beginning with "The city shall be flourishing; her citizens abound in numbers like unto the grass."

Rev. Dr. Steele then read the scripture, "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered." After which, prayer was offered by the Rev. Dr. McMillen.

The 146th Psalm, beginning with the seventh verse, was then sung.

General Aiken here announced that the Rev. Dr. John Hall would preach the sermon, adding, "This is all the introduction of him that is necessary before an American audience."

Dr. Hall then spoke as follows:

My dear friends, I take three words out of the Book of Psalms to bring to your attention this evening. In the 96th Psalm, at the tenth verse, it is written, "Say among the heathen, the Lord reigneth;" and at the beginning of the 99th it is written, "The Lord reigneth, let the people tremble;" at the beginning of the 97th it is written, "The