Irish Church Quarterly

The Ulster Scot: His History and Religion by J. B. Woodburn

Review by: G. A. C.

The Irish Church Quarterly, Vol. 8, No. 31 (Jul., 1915), pp. 258-259

Published by: [Irish Church Quarterly](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30067525>

Accessed: 18/06/2014 03:30

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Irish Church Quarterly is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Irish Church Quarterly*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

poured on coloured men, lynchings, etc., have proved almost as great a wrong as slavery itself.

But we Christians cannot abolish war. What is then our duty? We are told that we must educate our young that peaceful methods are easier, better and permanent. We must never lend support to wars of aggression. Let us hope the world has learnt this lesson by now. We must do all in our power to promote the reign of peace.

The book should be read by all who, publicly or privately, would speak in the name of Christianity, for it will cause all such to examine our received institutions in the light of the Gospel before hastily praising them. It ought to be read if only for the sake of the following call to work:—

“When a sufficient number of men are casting about with God-directed determination for something better . . . something better will be found. The Kingdom is within reach.”

This is Practical Christianity.

G. W. E.

THE ULSTER SCOT: HIS HISTORY AND RELIGION. By the Rev. J. B. Woodburn, M.A. (H. R. Allenson.) 5s. net.

Irish History no less than Irish Politics has proved itself the grave of so many reputations, that the historian who ventures to explore the distressful and distorted story of this country does so at his peril, and in more senses than one takes his literary life in his hands. Dark Rosaleen has a strange power of inducing the passion which inspires Romance, rather than that right judgement which must be the first equipment of a mind moving in the Science of History. We congratulate Mr. Woodburn on his excellent book; we congratulate him on its opportune publication at a moment when a fierce light is beating upon Ulster; and we congratulate him on the spirit and temper in which it is written. The author holds no brief; he sets himself to give an accurate and impartial account of his subject, without distortion and without suppression; and it is not too much to say that without trying to please anybody he will succeed in pleasing most. As we read his book the conviction grows on us that we are dealing with a careful and honest man who is trying to write true history.

One of the most interesting chapters in the book is that in which the author investigates the genesis of the Ulster Scot, and endeavours to account for those marked differences of temperament, character and genius which distinguish him from his fellow countrymen. Mr. Woodburn points out that Ulster has always been “excluded” from the rest of Ireland. Mountains and lakes and inlets of the sea form a natural barrier. Its colder and more bracing climate has tended to produce a more virile stock, and this distinction is reflected in the cycle of legends which is peculiar to Ulster. From the earliest times

Ulster has been a place apart. The common opinion that the Ulsterman has a larger Teutonic stream in his blood does not seem to be true to fact, for the successive waves of Teutonic invasion, from the early Danish incursions to the Cromwellian settlements, hardly gained more than a painful inch behind the mountainous ramparts of the Northern province. Nor had the "planters," who came chiefly from the western lowlands of Scotland, many drops of Teutonic blood in their veins. The author gives good reasons to support his conclusion that the Ulster Scot is at least as Celtic as the Southerner, and we are inclined to agree with him when he attributes the "peculiar difference" of the Ulsterman not so much to race as to the combined influences of geographical isolation, climate, and the potent factor of religion.

The accounts of the settlement of Antrim and Down in 1605, and the Plantation of Ulster in 1610 are well told. At this period Ulster was regarded as a dumping ground for the scamp and the scoundrel. "Going for Ireland was looked upon as a miserable mark of a deplorable person—yea, it was turned to a proverb, and one of the worst expressions of disdain that could be invented was to tell a man that Ireland would be his hinder end." As an inevitable consequence, Religion was at a low ebb. Mr. Woodburn gives an interesting sketch of the early history and development of the Presbyterian Church, and draws for us some interesting and vigorous personalities, such as Welsh, the grandson of Knox, known by his congregation at Templepatrick as "the Cock of the Conscience," on account of his arousing preaching.

A most interesting chapter traces the fortunes of the Ulster Scot in America, where the exiles plunged into the wilderness as leaders of the white advance. A right emphasis is given to the leading part these men took in the War of Independence. Their unbending hostility to England, their grit, and their power to command helped in no small measure to stiffen the resistance of the American colonists. "I'll storm hell, if you'll only plan it, General," said one of them to Washington.

As we close this delightful record of a remarkable race, and think of the names enshrined in the memories of Ulster, we feel the justice of Lord Rosebery's words: "I love Highlanders, and I love Lowlanders, but when I come to the branch of our race that has been grafted on to the Ulster stem I take off my hat in veneration and awe."

G. A. C.

ELEMENTARY BIBLE STUDIES. By A. du T. Pownall.
(Longmans.) 1s. 6d.

This is an elementary guide to the reading of the Old Testament. It does not deal with critical questions, but aims at giving simple instruction as to the contents of the various books of the Bible. Inasmuch as there is a good deal of popular ignorance as to what the Bible really contains, these studies may be useful.