

**SCOTTISH
NATIONALITY,
AND OTHER PAPERS**

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Scottish nationality, and other papers by John Ker

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JOHN KER

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BY THE LATE

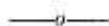
REV. JOHN KER, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF 'THE ISLANDS IN HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY,'
'SERMONS,' ETC.

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PREFACE.



THE following papers, from the pen of the late Dr. John Ker, are chiefly reprints; one article only, the 'Canadian Letters,' appears for the first time. As many of the papers cannot now be obtained, it has been judged advisable to issue them in this collected form.

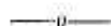
At a time when our Scottish nationality is developing fresh life, and is showing a power to conserve all that is best in the past while laying deep its foundations for progress in the future, it is thought that the article bearing this title has not inappropriately been placed first. The variety of subjects contained in the other papers will testify to the fact that the author, though a true patriot, was as broad in his sympathies as he was deep in his affections.

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Best thanks are due to Mr. C. L. Wright (Glasgow), Mr. James Gemmell (Edinburgh), and Messrs. W. Isbister & Co. (London), for permission to reprint the papers respectively published by them; and to Senator Boyd, a distinguished member of the Canadian Parliament, for Notes appended to the 'Canadian Letters.'

THE HERMITAGE, MURRAYFIELD,
EDINBURGH, *March 15, 1887.*

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SCOTTISH NATIONALITY.¹

THESE reprints belong to a period of our history which marks very strongly the character of the people, and which has done much to fix it; and it may not be out of place, in this Introduction, to make some remarks on Scottish Nationality, as to how it took its rise and came to be what it is, both socially and religiously.

While we believe in an overruling guidance which divides to the nations their inheritance, and moulds their character, we can see that it makes use of means to gain the result. The features of the country have, no doubt, had their influence. The brown moorlands and misty hills are in harmony with the grave, and sometimes sombre, temperament of the people; and the sweet romantic dells and hidden nooks of beauty that surprise one, ever and again, in the midst of the barest stretches, are reflected in the tenderness and picturesqueness of the national lyrics, and in the latent poetry which breaks the hard surface of prevail-

¹ Written as an Introduction to Miss Jean L. Watson's *Lives of Peden and Renwick* (James Gemmell, Edinburgh), in which reprints are given of some of the sermons and letters of these worthies.

ing reserve among the country population, wherever they are found in their old simplicity. Yet it is easy to make too much of this. The magnificent scenery of Switzerland has produced no great poet, no outbreak of song and romance, even equal to what has come from the flats of the Netherlands and the sandy downs of Denmark.

The mixture of races that has gone to form the Scottish people might be made use of to account for many of their characteristics; but here, too, it is possible to exaggerate. Some generalizing historians, for example, have laid it down as a rule that the Teutonic nations must necessarily be Protestant, and the Celtic, Roman Catholic; but the reverse might be argued as plausibly. Scotland, which is more Celtic than England, is more intensely Protestant, and no part of it more markedly so than that which contains the pure Celtic element. It was the Saxon Wilfrid, and, later, the English Margaret, Queen of Malcolm Canmore, who helped to supersede the simpler system of the Culdees by the government and ritual of Rome. If the Celts of Ireland have become the ardent retainers of the Papal chair, the Celts of Wales, a kindred branch of the same great stock, have shaken off its influence more thoroughly than their English neighbours; and if Brittany is devoted to the Mass, nowhere, in England proper, is there a population more hostile to it than their kinsmen of Armoric blood in Cornwall. The truth is that many of these