

**ULTONIAN HERO-BALLADS
COLLECTED IN THE HIGHLANDS AND
WESTERN ISLES OF SCOTLAND;
FROM THE YEAR 1516, AND AT
SUCCESSIVE PERIODS TILL 1870**

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Ultonian hero-ballads collected in the highlands and western isles of Scotland; from the year 1516, and at successive periods till 1870 by Hector MacLean

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HECTOR MACLEAN

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FROM THE YEAR 1516, AND AT
SUCCESSIVE PERIODS TILL 1870**

ULTONIAN HERO-BALLADS.

TO MY
ESTEEMED AND HONOURED FRIEND
John Crawford Graham, Esquire,
LAGAVULIN, ISLAY;
A GENTLEMAN CONNECTED WITH ISLAY
BY
BIRTH AND ANCESTRY;
A WARM FRIEND OF THE LATE
John F. Campbell, of Islay,
AND THE
TRUSTED PATRON OF ISLAYMEN EVERYWHERE:
THIS WORK IS DEDICATED
WITH THE AUTHOR'S PROFOUND RESPECTS.



PREFACE.

Professor Zimmer tells us that early Irish history falls into three periods, the first reaching from pre-historic times, to about the year 350, A.D., the second to the end of the 7th century. No external activity on the part of the Irish is recorded, during the first period; the second, on the contrary, witnesses the harrying of the coasts of Britain, the establishment of the kingdom of Dalriada and the settlements in North and South Wales; whilst the third period is filled by the wars of the Northmen invaders. These historical periods are reflected in the heroic sagas, the oldest of which are concerned solely with intertribal conflicts, the heroes of which do not leave Ireland, the topography of which is coherent and accurate. The bulk of the sagas took shape, however, in the second,—the Irish viking period as it may be called. The heroes sally forth out of Ireland, especially to the western seaboard of Scotland, colonised as we know by the same Ulster tribes to whom

we owe the oldest heroic tales. The third, or Norse period, has also left its mark on the sagas; allusion is made to Norway, Norse warriors appear as foes or allies of the Irish chieftains. Nay more, a close examination of the sagas shows that they are in part corrupted by an admixture of elements derived from the Teutonic hero-tales.—*Archæological Review*, Vol. ii. No. 2, p. 138.

What relations Ireland had with foreign countries or how it was peopled we have nothing but fictitious and fabulous accounts. Ethnological research has succeeded in ascertaining that the Iberian race constituted its population as well as that of Britain before the Celts arrived.

The inhabitants of Donegal county and Kerry, who are of smaller stature than the other Irish, and swarthy in complexion are considered to be descendants of those old Iberians; and for similar reasons, the southern Welsh. The Spanish Basques from their stature and other physical characteristics are identified with them. The same race extended at one time from the north of Britain. Another tall race fair or red-haired and white-skinned, extended from Africa, through Spain and France westwards to the British Isles. Professor Sayce speaks of this race in his book on the Hittites, pp. 15-17, "The Hittites and Amorites were therefore

mingled together in the mountains of Palestine like the two races which ethnologists tells us, go to form the modern Kelt. But the Egyptian monuments teach us that they were of very different origin and character. The Hittites were a people with yellow skins and 'Mongoloid' features, whose receding foreheads, oblique eyes, and protruding upper jaws, are represented as faithfully on their own monuments as they are on those of Egypt, so that we cannot accuse the Egyptian artists of caricaturing their enemies. If the Egyptians have made the Hittites ugly, it was because they were so in reality. The Amorites, on the contrary, were a tall and handsome people. They are depicted with white skins blue eyes, and reddish hair, all the characteristics, in fact, of the white race. Mr. Petrie points out their resemblance to the Dardanians of Asia Minor, who form an intermediate link between the white-skinned tribes of the Greek seas and the fair complexioned Libyans of Northern Africa. The latter are still found in large numbers in the mountainous regions which stretch eastward from Morocco, and are usually known among the French under the name of Kabyles. The traveller who first meets with them in Algeria cannot fail to be struck by their likeness to a certain part of the population in the British Isles. Their clear-white freckled skins, their blue eyes, their golden-red hair

and tall stature, remind us of the fair Kelts of an Irish village; and when we find that their skulls, which are of the so-called dolichocephalic, or 'long-headed' type, are the same as the skulls discovered in the pre-historic cromlechs of the country they still inhabit, we may conclude that they represent the modern descendants of the white-skinned Libyans of the Egyptian monuments.

"In Palestine also we still come across representatives of a fair-complexioned blue-eyed race, in whom we may see the descendants of the ancient Amorites, just as we see in the Kabyles the descendants of the ancient Libyans. We know that the Amorite type continued to exist in Judah long after the Israelitish conquest of Canaan. The captives taken from the southern cities of Judah by Shishak in the time of Rehoboam, and depicted by him upon the walls of the great temple of Karnak, are people of Amorite origin. Their regular profile of sub-aquiline cast, as Mr. Tomkins describes it, their high cheek-bones and martial expression are the features of the Amorites, and not of the Jews.

"Tallness of stature has always been a distinguishing characteristic of the white race. Hence it was that the Anakim, the Amorite inhabitants of Hebron, seemed to the Hebrew spies to be as giants, while they them-

selves were but 'as grasshoppers' by the side of them (Numbers xiii. 33). After the Israelitish invasion remnants of the Anakim were left in Gaza and Gath and Ashkelon (Joshua xi. 22), and in the time of David Goliath of Gath and his gigantic family were objects of dread to their neighbours (2 Samuel xxi. 15-22).

"It is clear, then, that the Amorites of Canaan belonged to the same white race as the Libyans of Northern Africa, and like them preferred the mountains to the hot plains and valleys below. The Libyans themselves belonged to a race which can be traced through the peninsula of Spain and the western side of France into the British Isles. Now it is curious that wherever this particular branch of the white race has extended it has been accompanied by a particular form of cromlech, or sepulchral chamber built of large uncut stones. The stones are placed upright in the ground and covered over with other large slabs, the whole chamber being subsequently concealed under a tumulus of small stones or earth. Not unfrequently the entrance to the cromlech is approached by a sort of corridor. These cromlechs are found in Britain, in France, in Spain, in Northern Africa, and in Palestine, more especially on the eastern side of the Jordan, and the skulls that have been exhumed from them are the skulls of men of the dolichocephalic or long-headed type."