

THE MAKING OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

During our late war with Spain we heard much about the moribund condition of the Latin race and the power and future destiny of the Anglo-Saxons, by the later being meant the people of Great Britain and the United States. It is questionable whether the term Anglo-Saxon can be used with propriety in that sense now. It may be applied to the people of England proper, particularly of southeastern England, but not to the people of the United States. Out of our population of 76,000,000 we had in 1900 nearly 9,000,000 negroes, about 8,500,000 foreigners not of English or Scotch descent, and about 13,000,000 natives with one or both parents foreign-born and not of English or Scotch descent. If to these be added all the other natives whose ancestors were of other than English or Scotch descent, we shall have a number equal to considerably more than half of our entire population. To call ourselves Anglo-Saxons is therefore manifestly wrong and misleading, at least in a numerical sense. The only race-name that we could properly apply to ourselves is the name Teutonic, for I think we are, and shall long continue to be, chiefly Teutonic in race; that is to say, I think the people of English, Dutch, German and Scandinavian immigration or descent constitute, and will long constitute, more than half of the American people. But the name Teutonic cannot be appropriated by us or by the English, for the Dutch, Germans and Scandinavians can claim it with equal right. So there is no race name that we can adopt that will apply to us distinctively or to us and the English conjointly. Perhaps American for ourselves and Anglo-American for us and the English are the best designations we can find, if we usurp the right to use the name American. Anglo-Saxon is out of the question.

But the particular subject of this article is the making of the English people.

The English people are a mixture of the Teutons and Celts that met in Britain in consequence of the Anglo-Saxon and later conquests of that country. The British Islands in the time of Julius Caesar—and we have no sure knowledge of them from an earlier time—were inhabited by the Celtic race, as were also Gaul and other parts of the European continent. The southern part of the island of Great Britain, as far north as the Scotch high-

lands, was called by the Romans Britannia, and the northern Caledonia, and the people were called respectively Britons and Caledonians, or Picts. Ireland was called Hibernia, from the sixth to the thirteenth century also Scotia, and its inhabitants were called Scots. All these people were Celtic, but are divided by writers on the subject into two main divisions, the Brythons, or Cymry, in the south of the main island, and the Gaels in the north and in Hibernia and the Isle of Man.

The first conquest of Britain was made by the Romans. Julius Caesar made an unsuccessful attempt to gain a foothold in the summer of the year 55 B. C. and again the following year. The real conquest began in the reign of Claudius (A. D. 43) and ended in the reign of Domitian (A. D. 84). It extended northward to the highlands of Caledonia, where Agricola built a line of forts across the country from the Firth of Forth to the Firth of Clyde, known as the Wall of Antonine and later as Graham's Dyke. In the second century a fortified wall, known as Hadrian's Wall and later as the Wall of Severus, was built farther south, from the mouth of the Tyne to Solway Firth, or from Newcastle to Carlisle, some distance south of the later boundary between England and Scotland. The Roman province of Britain, then, corresponded to present England and Wales; for the northern part, between the two walls, was often overrun by the Picts, and the Romans found it difficult to maintain a continuous dominion over that country. During the long occupancy of Britain the Romans drained marshes, constructed roads and in other respects developed a material civilization, of which signs remain to this day. But they did not succeed in changing the language and nationality of the natives, as they did in Spain, Gaul and Northern Italy. Only a few Roman words remained, which were later adopted into the language of the English, such as port, wall, foss, street and a few others. Neither is it likely that there was much blood mixture with the natives, or that many Romans remained in the island after the Roman dominion came to an end. The Roman legions were recalled about the year 410 to defend Rome and Italy against the West Goths and other Teutons, and the Britons were left to themselves. During the Roman occupation the province had been exposed to attacks from two external enemies, the Saxons and other Teutons, who troubled the eastern shore, and the Picts and Scots, who came down upon the country from the north.

During the Roman occupation the Britons had become unwarlike, and after the withdrawal of the legions they were ill

prepared to ward off the attacks of these foreign enemies, as they were also broken up into parties by internal dissensions. In their distress they made the mistake of pitting one enemy against another. A party of Jutes under Hengest and Horsa are said to have been engaged by King Vortigern to drive back the Picts and Scots. This they did effectively; but being dissatisfied with their reward, or whatever the cause was, they next turned their weapons against the Welsh, or British, and the long war of the conquest of Britain by the English, or Anglo-Saxons, began, a war which lasted more than a century and a half, or from 449 till 613. It was a bloody exterminating war of race against race, Teuton against Celt, heathen against Christian, out of which conflict grew some of the traditions concerning King Arthur, the national hero of the Welsh in this struggle for existence.

The Teutonic tribes that conquered Britain from the Welsh and made it into England were the Jutes, the Angles and the Saxons, later called collectively the Anglo-Saxons. They called themselves *Angeleyn* or *Angeltheod*, that is, the English people. They came from Jutland, Schleswig-Holstein and the adjoining part of what is now northwestern Germany. They were then close akin and next-door neighbors to the Germans (Saxons, Frisians and Low Franks) on the one hand and to the Scandinavians (Danes, Swedes and Norwegians) on the other. King Alfred the Great (849-901), who wrote the first geographic and ethnographic account of the Scandinavian countries, says, in speaking of Jutland, Schleswig and the Danish Islands: "In these lands the English dwelt before they came to this land," that is to England. The first to come were the Jutes (*Eotas*), who were perhaps related to the people that still occupy Jutland. They began the English conquest in the year 449. Occupying the island of Thanet as their base of operations they, bit by bit, gained possession of Kent, which became the first English kingdom in Britain, as Canterbury became the first seat of English learning. The Welsh were killed or driven westward. Other Jutes occupied the Isle of Wight and a part of the adjoining mainland. Twenty-eight years later (477) a band of Saxons under Aelle and Cissa took possession of the district westward of Kent (Sussex), and eighteen years after that (495) another party of Saxons under Cerdic and Cynric sailed up Southampton water and began the conquest of the rest of Southern Britain. In the year 520 they met with a terrible defeat at Badon Hill at the hands of the Welsh, who were led in this battle, it is believed, by King Arthur. After this defeat there was a long lull in the

Saxon advance in this part of the country; but eventually the West Saxons, as they were here called, built up the largest and strongest of the Saxon kingdoms, comprising all the country south of the Thames, except Kent and Sussex, and much of the country north of the Thames and along what is now the Welsh border. Other Saxons occupied the district immediately to the north of Kent (Essex) and still others the adjoining district west of Essex (Middlesex). These Saxons were doubtless a part of that great northern tribe of Germans then known as Saxons, who were afterward conquered by Charles the Great and by him converted to Christianity at the point of the sword. They were the ancestors of the present Low Germans, or Plattdeutsch. With the Saxons that went to Britain there were also Frisians.

The third tribe, that which gave its name to the three tribes spoken of collectively as well as to the country, was the Angles (Engle), who came from Schleswig and are believed to have been the most numerous of the three. They lived between the Jutes and the Saxons and are said to have left their old home in a body. Their memory is preserved to this day in the name of Angeln, which is the name of a district in Schleswig, between Flensburg Fiord and the Schlei, and which is said to have remained waste after the Angles had emigrated. The Angles settled the country between Essex and the Wash, where they were known as the Northfolk and the Southfolk, or collectively as East Angles, forming one of the Anglian kingdoms, East Anglia. Others settled the great interior between the Humber and the Saxons, where they were known by various names, but collectively as the Mercians, or Marchmen, and their country as Mercia. Still others occupied the districts between the Humber and the Firth of Forth. They were known as the Northumbrians and their country as Northumberland, or Northumbria. This was sometimes one kingdom and sometimes divided into two, Deira between the Humber and the Tees, and Bernicia between the Tees and the Firth of Forth. These various parties of Saxons and Angles gradually pushed their way farther and farther westward. The Britons were doubtless in part subdued and enslaved and may eventually have mixed with and contributed a strain of Welsh blood to the English. This is inferred from the nature of the Welsh words in English, which are mostly names of farm and kitchen utensils and indicate the social position of the people that introduced them. But the war was very fierce and bloody, and there is every reason to believe that, at least in the early period of the long struggle, the Welsh were for the most part

either killed or bodily driven westward. They were at last confined to Wales proper (North Wales) and Cornwall (West Wales), the latter being for centuries looked upon as a separate country and not thoroughly anglicized till within recent times. Cornish was spoken till near the end of the eighteenth century. Another part of the country where they held out for a while was the kingdom of Cumbria and Strathclyde, comprising the northwestern counties of what is now England and the southwestern counties of present Scotland. In 613, after a great victory, the Angles pressed on to the Irish Sea at Chester, thus separating Wales from Cumbria and Strathclyde. Somewhat earlier, after the battle of Deorham, in 577, the Saxons had extended their dominion to the Bristol Channel, separating Wales from Cornwall. From about the year 613, then, we may regard the continuous war of conquest to be at an end and the English to be in permanent possession of at least half of Britain; and the rest was little by little absorbed and anglicized except Wales proper, where the Welsh language is still enthusiastically maintained.

Shortly before this long war ended, missionaries had been sent from Rome to convert the English (597), and within a hundred years the whole country became Christian. Schools were founded, and in the eighth century literature and learning flourished as nowhere else in Western Europe. Politically the history of the seventh and eighth centuries is largely a record of internal war among the various English kingdoms, in which the Welsh often took part on one side or the other, the spirit of nationality among the English being weak. The outcome was the supremacy of Wessex under the strong hand of Egbert, which supremacy became the nucleus of resistance against the new enemy that had already begun to threaten the country and every year became stronger and bolder.

The Anglo-Saxon conquest of Britain was the last ripple of that first great wave in the movement of the Teutonic race southward and westward, beginning in the fourth century, which destroyed the Roman Empire in the West and erected new states upon its ruins. The second great wave in this general movement was that on which the northern representatives of this race sought new outlets for their surplus energy or new homes for their overflowing numbers; in other words, the Viking expeditions, which began in the eighth and lasted to the eleventh century, resulting in the foundation of new states, with far-reaching influences on race, language, literature, manners and institutions. Excepting northwestern France, where Danes and Norwegians in the ninth

century settled in such numbers as to found a new race, the British Isles were more directly exposed to their attacks than any other part of Europe. In Ireland they founded kingdoms at Limerick, Waterford and Dublin, which lasted for centuries, at least the kingdom of Dublin. Their power here was broken by King Brian, who inflicted a crushing defeat upon them in the battle of Clontarf in 1014. At the same time they were in possession of the Isle of Man, the Hebrides, Orkneys, Shetlands, Faroes, Iceland and Greenland and large parts of the mainland of Scotland, such as Caithness and Sutherland. Iceland, Greenland and the Faroes we leave out of consideration, as they have remained permanently under Norwegian or Danish dominion. In parts of Scotland and the Isle of Man and the islands north and west of Scotland, which for centuries were tributary to Norway, the Norse overlordship was broken in the battle of Largs, in 1263, when the great King Hakon the Fourth of Norway was overthrown by King Alexander the Third of Scotland. In the Orkneys, where the people were for the most part Norse, and in the Shetlands, where they were wholly Norse, the Norse speech maintained itself for about a thousand years and did not become extinct till the seventeenth and the eighteenth century respectively.

In England the first Viking attacks were made in 789 and in 793-94, but were at first sporadic and made by small bands of men, the object being booty. In the course of the following century the invading parties became greater and greater, until 866, when an army came that overwintered and never again left the country. They brought their families with them and settled down permanently. In a few years they had conquered and occupied all the northeast half of the country. By the peace of Wedmore, concluded in 878 between King Alfred and the Danish King Guthrum, the Danes were left in undisputed possession of the country lying north and east of a line drawn from London to Chester, more than half of England. A part of this territory was reconquered by Alfred's great son Edward, and Edward's son Aethelstan won a great victory over Danes, Scots, Britons and Norwegians in the battle of Brunanburh in 937. In the third quarter of the century the great King Edgar was recognized as overlord over the whole of Britain. But under his weak son Aethelred the Unready, who attempted to have all the Danes in England massacred, November 13, 1002, the country was again invaded by great fleets of Danes and Norwegians, led by such men as Olaf Tryggvesson and Swein of the Forked Beard, whose sister had been among the massacred. 1013 Swein, then king of Denmark,

conquered and was recognized as king of all England. He died in 1014, but in 1016 the country was again conquered by Swein's son, Cnut the Great, who reigned till 1035 and was king also of Denmark and Norway. He was followed by his sons Harold (1035-40) and Harthacnut, who died in 1042, when Edward the Confessor, son of Aethelred, was made king. The Danish dominion then over England, or a part of England, lasted politically about 175 years; but on the people and their language the Danish influence was permanent. The part of England that the Danes settled was long known as the Danelaw (Denalagu) and was subject to Danish law. In some of the counties, such as Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, the Danes settled very densely and were possibly in the majority. Here the Danish place names are the thickest, and here the language as still spoken is most Danish in character. The two peoples being of the same race and their languages so nearly allied that they could understand each other, amalgamation by intermarriage doubtless began early and was soon complete; yet the linguistic difference was considerable in the forms and inflections of words and in phrases and idioms, so that English in the north of England and throughout Scotland has a marked Scandinavian character in pronunciation and diction to this day.

The Scandinavians who settled the east of England (the Danelaw) are believed to have been chiefly Danes; so they are mostly called in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which was written at the time of these events or shortly afterward. Those who settled in the Northwest of England, from Cheshire to Dumfries, and in Scotland, Ireland and the Islands, were mostly Norwegians. But in those days all Scandinavians spoke nearly the same language, so that their influence on English was about the same in the Norwegian as in the Danish settlements.

The last foreign conquest of England was that by the Normans under Duke William. The Normans were descendants of the Danish and Norwegian adventurers who two centuries earlier had begun to occupy the valley of the Seine, but especially from the beginning of the tenth century, when Normandy was formally ceded to them by the king of France (912). They had intermarried with the French and formed that mixed race which played so conspicuous a part in the history of Western Europe and in the Crusades of the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The strong government they established in England put an end forever to the local interests and dissensions which hitherto had divided that country. Spreading all over England and partly

over Wales, Ireland and Lowland Scotland, they contributed the last element in the formation of the English people. On the language and literature their influence was greater than all previous influences.

To sum up, the conquest of Britain by the Angles, Saxons and Jutes (449-613) and of the England that these founded by the Danes (866-1042) and later by the Normans (1066), who were already a people of mixed Teutonic and Celtic blood, brought the Teutonic and Celtic races together in that country, and the result of this race contact was the English people of today, who are a Teutonic people with a Celtic admixture. In the counties bordering upon Wales and in the southwestern and northwestern counties the Welsh blood is doubtless considerable, and in Cornwall the people are almost purely Celtic; but in the southern and eastern parts the English are almost purely Teutonic, Saxon south of the Thames and in Essex and Middlesex, Anglo-Danish from Essex to Edinburgh, especially as far north as the Tees, and Anglo-Norwegio-Celtic in the Northwest. Anglo-Saxon is not a very accurate term to apply to the race now. Anglo-Danish would be better; for the first part of the compound would comprise all the English tribes that first conquered Britain, as they themselves used the word English in that comprehensive way and not the word Saxon, though this came to be the collective term used by their Celtic enemies; and the second part of the compound might be understood to include the Norwegian element, according to the common usage of those times. Still better would be Teuto-Celtic or Teuto-British.

Of Ireland and Scotland I have already spoken incidentally. The Irish have a Teutonic element in their blood dating back to the ninth century, when many parts of the island were occupied by Norwegians, and to the time of Henry the Second, and later, when many Normans and English settled in the country. In Scotland likewise the people are a mixture of Teutons and Celts, the Celtic element being stronger than in England, but not so strong as in Ireland, except perhaps in the Highlands. To begin with, we have here the Picts of Roman times; then the Scots, or Milesians, who from the fourth to the sixth century crossed into Caledonia from northern Hibernia, settled on the islands and in the west, north of the Clyde, and eventually became one people with the Picts (844) and in the eleventh century imposed their name, Scotia, upon the country; next the Angles and Danes, who settled in the south, and the Norwegians, who settled especially in the north, west and southwest and on the Hebrides. The High-

landers, then, are Celts, with a Scandinavian strain in their blood; the Lowlanders Teutons (Angles, Danes, Norwegians), with a Celtic admixture, the Celtic perhaps predominating in the southwest. The people of the Hebrides are largely, and those of the Orkneys and the Shetlands almost wholly, of Norse stock. In the Welsh there is a slight Norse, English and Norman admixture, the Norwegians having settled especially in Pembrokeshire. In the Manx the Norse blood is considerable. The Norwegians had occupation of that island about four hundred years, it having been conquered by Harold Fairhair in the ninth century and ceded by King Magnus of Norway to King Constantine the Third of Scotland in 1266. The English people, then, those of England proper and of Lower Scotland, are, to repeat once more, of Old English, British and Scandinavian blood, and perhaps in that ratio, and may be represented by the names Brown, Jones and Robinson.* That is to say, the English are a people of mixed Teutonic and Celtic blood, the Teutonic blood predominating; as the Welsh, Irish and Gaels are of Celtic and Teutonic blood, the Celtic blood predominating.

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*Flavell Edmunds, "Traces of History in the Names of Places," (London, 1872,) p. 6.