SCOTCH-IRISH EMIGRATION, AN IMPERIAL PROBLEM

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When the first Elizabeth came to the throne, Ireland was the only overseas possession of the British Crown, and it was in Ireland that the earliest developments of English imperialism took place. During the later Middle Ages, the native Irish lords had regained control of wide areas, and the Anglo-Normans had largely gone over to Irish law and customs. Th Renaissance Englishman saw this situation as a mixture of Irish barbarism and degenerate feudalism. Accordingly, Tudor policy in Ireland was to bring to an end the tributary relationship of Ireland to the Crown which had existed since the time of Henry II, to establish a unified system of law in place of the confusion of common law and Irish Brehon law, and to compel the Irish chiefs to behave like an ordinary territorial nobility. It was the difficulty of carrying through this program that first interested the government in colonization as a means of securing the country and extending the benefits of civilization to the natives by the example of British neighbors.

The first experiment in colonization took place on the borders of the English Pale in Mary's reign, and various colonizing projects were put forward to counter the serious problems of the Highland Scots who were moving over into Ulster. It was in Elizabeth's reign that colonization promoters first made their appearance in Ireland, notably Sir Thomas Smith in Ulster and Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh in Munster.

The most famous of all Irish colonization projects was the Ulster Plantation of 1610. The background of this plantation was the long and difficult war which Elizabeth's government waged against Hugh

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O'Neill, the Earl of Tyrone. The earl and his followers submitted on good terms in 1603, but the rapid extension of English administration and justice in their territories so alarmed them that four years later, in September, 1607, O'Neill, O'Donnell, and Maguire fled to Spain. Six whole Ulster counties now passed to the Crown, and there was an unrivaled opportunity to put a large scale settlement scheme into effect.

Certain aspects of the Ulster Plantation need to be emphasized, especially the distinction between the actual planned settlement and the unorganized Scottish immigration which continued right through the seventeenth century. The idea of the plantation was to settle English and Scots among the Irish "that they might grow up together into one nation," to quote the words of Sir John Davies, the attorney-general. Elaborate precautions were taken, most of which proved fruitless, to see that great lordships such as had destroyed English rule in Ireland in the Middle Ages were not established again, and that British settlers really were brought in. Of special interest is the Irish Society, the city of London's undertaking in Ulster, which founded Londonderry and settled the county of that name. The Virginia Company and the Irish Society were largely run by the same city companies, but it is important to remember that the Irish undertaking was forced on the city by the Crown as the body best able to carry it through and was not a genuine private plantation scheme. The two Ulster counties of Antrim and Down, where the aims of the plantation were most fully realized, were outside the 1610 plantation and were settled by the exertions of individual grantees and purchasers of Irish lands.

The great Ulster Plantation was almost as much a failure as the other colonizing ventures, at least in so far as the intention of the men who planned it was concerned. The fact that Ulster became largely Protestant and British in the seventeenth century was due mainly to the flow of Scottish immigrants produced by the unsettled social and religious conditions in that country. The rebellion of 1641 and the years of war which followed almost entirely destroyed the original plantation. As might have been expected, the races did not mix, and their relations developed as a bitter triangular struggle between Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Catholic. As had happened in the Middle Ages, the English and the Scots settled on the good land, and the Irish were forced to the mountains and the swamps where their powers of resistance were much greater. Undoubtedly, at the Plantation there was plenty of land for
native and settler after a century of devastating war in Ulster. What
was not foreseen was the bitter religious tensions that were to focus
around the original racial difference between settler and native.³

The Scots continued to increase in numbers; the head of the Irish
administration wrote in 1673 that their numbers had risen to 100,000
men fit to bear arms from about 14,000 in the 1630's.⁴ After the Revo-
lution in 1689, they came over in very great numbers attracted by the
low rents on Irish estates which had been devastated during the war.
In 1715, Archbishop Synge estimated that 50,000 Scottish families had
settled in Ulster since the Revolution.⁵ These people constituted a
large and very distinctive element in the Ulster population. Originally,
it had seemed that the state church might be made broad enough to
satisfy the Presbyterians, but their connections with Scotland were so
close that they could not escape the effects of the religious struggle in
that country during the reign of Charles I.

It was at this time that emigration from Ulster to the American
colonies began. In 1636, some one hundred and forty people, deposed
ministers and laymen, set out from Belfast for New England in the
"Eagle Wing." They had been encouraged by invitations from the
governor and council of Massachusetts, and without doubt the project
had been discussed when John Winthrop, Jr., had visited Ireland in
1635. The "Eagle Wing" ran into heavy storms in the Atlantic, was
severely damaged, and the emigrants turned back, so discouraged that
they never renewed the attempt.⁶

There was some Presbyterian and Quaker emigration to Pennsyl-
vania and the eastern shore of Maryland and Virginia, resulting from
the persecution of Irish nonconformists around 1680. Several ministers
of the Laggan Presbytery in Donegal, of whom the best known was
Francis Makemie, emigrated to this section. By the new century Pres-

³ For all this, see T. W. Moody, The Londonderry Plantation, passim (Belfast, 1939). The writings of Edmund Spenser and Sir
John Davies on Ireland are conveniently brought together in Henry
Morley, ed., Ireland under Elizabeth and James the First, 33-342,
381-390 (London, 1890).

⁴ Quoted in Richard Bagwell, Ireland under the Stuarts, 3:326n

⁵ W. E. H. Lecky, A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century,

⁶ Patrick Adair, A True Narrative of the Rise and Progress of the
Presbyterian Church in Ireland, ed., W. D. Killen, 40, 42, 44-47 (Bel-
fast, 1866).
Byterianism was well established there, the Philadelphia Presbytery holding its first meeting in 1706.\(^7\)

During the English Civil War, a Presbyterian church was organized in Ulster under the protection of a Scottish army. After the Revolution of 1689 the Episcopalians were prepared to recognize the division of Irish Protestantism, but not to accord equality to the Presbyterians. The sacramental test imposed in 1704 closed all public office to them. These restrictions fell most heavily on the more prosperous Presbyterians, prevented from being magistrates, from holding commissions in the militia, or from taking part in town government. While the Scotch-Irish emigrants were in no sense driven out by religious persecution during the eighteenth century, Episcopalian exclusiveness undoubtedly deepened the frustration which the Presbyterian felt in Ireland.\(^8\)

As the eighteenth century advanced, it became clear that Scotch-Irish emigration was no longer caused primarily by the difficulties of reconciling Presbyterianism with an Episcopalian establishment. The land system had now become the most important cause of emigration. Generally speaking, the Irish landlord was concerned only with getting the most return in the way of rent from his estates with the least possible outlay. Many of them were absentees and almost all were the Protestant owners of confiscated Catholic estates without either the interest or the feeling of security which might have encouraged them to improve their lands.

The Scots had taken up much marginal land in Ulster on which they found it increasingly difficult to make a living and to pay high rents. So far as the landlord was concerned, the most desirable tenant was the one who offered the highest rent, and in those circumstances the Catholic who would pay a high rent and accept a very low standard of living was often preferable to the Protestant. Agricultural productivity was low in eighteenth century Ireland, and the settlers seem to have done little to raise the standard. The history of the Scotch-Irish in America does not show them to have been very skilled farmers. The population of Ireland was small, but the fact that there was a famine

\(^7\) Charles K. Bolton, *Scotch Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America*, 21-25 (Boston, 1910). For the Quakers, see Albert C. Myers, *Immigration of the Irish Quakers into Pennsylvania*, 1682-1750, p. 82 (Swarthmore, Pa., 1902).

about every ten years shows that pressure of people on resources was fairly heavy.

In 1717-18, the leases which had been granted on such easy terms after the Williamite war to attract tenants fell in. The landlords refused to renew them except at much higher rents. Presbyterians, like everyone else, had to pay tithe for the support of the established church. As the tithes rose in proportion with the rent, this meant an additional burden. The Tory church policy of excluding Presbyterians from office and of irritating them in various ways had caused a feeling of great insecurity among their clergy. As a result, the first wave of emigration, though caused by a rise in rents, was largely planned and directed by Presbyterian ministers. Ever since the days of the "Eagle Wing," the Presbyterians had continued to think of the Puritan commonwealth as a possible refuge. A minister was sent out to Boston to deliver a petition from the intending emigrants and to treat with the governor and council. From what Cotton Mather says, apparently Massachusetts, like Pennsylvania, hoped to plant frontier settlements of the Presbyterians as a shield against Indian attack. In July and August of 1718, between five and seven hundred emigrants arrived in Boston from Ireland and were sent to the frontier. Their most permanent settlement was at Nutfield, which was incorporated in 1722 under the name of Londonderry.9

It has always been assumed that the hostility of the New Englanders towards strangers was the reason why there was no more Scotch-Irish immigration there, but the most obvious reason is the lack of any direct trade between New England and Belfast. It is worth noting that this was the only attempt at group emigration under the leadership of the ministers made by the Presbyterians. The passing of the Toleration Act in 1719 eased the situation in Ireland, and the outbreak of the controversy over the Westminster Confession of Faith the following year fully absorbed the energies of the Presbyterian clergy for many years to come.10

There was emigration to the Delaware ports in 1717-19 as well. It was reported that "many hundreds" of people from the north of Ireland had landed at Philadelphia in about four months of 1717, and again in

9 Bolton, op. cit., 79-265. The most valuable feature of this work is the long and careful account of the 1718-19 emigration to New England.
10 J. S. Reid, History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, 3:225 (new edition, Belfast, 1887).
1719 that twelve or thirteen emigrant ships had arrived from Ireland during the summer.\textsuperscript{11}

The emigration problem did not become really serious until about ten years later, after the three successive bad harvests of 1725-27. Hugh Boulter, primate of the Irish church and also head of the administration, wrote to the Duke of Newcastle in July, 1728, that “we have hundreds of families (all protestants) removing out of the north to America.” He wrote again to Newcastle in November, telling him that more than three thousand people had emigrated from the north during the summer. In December, the British government forbade the export of corn from Ireland in response to Boulter’s request. An effort was made to buy corn in the south, where there had been good harvests, and to ship it north, but this only led to riots at the ports. The government had meanwhile decided that there could be no prohibition of emigration or interference with the level of rents, and henceforth confined itself to fact-finding.\textsuperscript{12}

The Presbyterian clergy in Dublin were asked to give a written report based on such accounts of the emigration problem as they had received from their northern colleagues. First among the reasons for emigration came poverty resulting from high rents, and the numbers who went off as indentured servants was brought forward as proof. Short leases were responsible for the emigration of the more prosperous. The extortions of tithe farmers and the oppressions of the ecclesiastical courts were other important causes. They mentioned the influence of letters sent home by those who had already emigrated to America. The ministers also thought it necessary to deny that they had given the people any encouragement to emigrate. It is clear from the language of the report how important a part racial jealousy played in emigration. Speaking of the practice of renting farms to the highest bidders, the reports says that “considerable numbers of Papists have of late come into the room of Protestants, offering such high rents as Protestants cannot pay, and themselves either never intend to pay, or are enabled to pay by such means as honest Protestants cannot use.” The Presbyterian objection to the sacramental test was that “thereby they are put on a level with the Papists.” The Irish administration pointed out when


\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Letters Written by His Excellency Hugh Boulter, D.D.}, 1:202, 210, 213, 224, 228 (Dublin, 1770).
forwarding the report that they had objected to the passages about religious grievances, but that, when the ministers insisted they had been given as reasons for emigration along with the others, they had allowed them to stand.13 Boulter was worried about their complaints about tithes and wrote to London to warn the government that the Irish landlords were trying to lay the chief responsibility for emigration on the burden of the tithe.

The position in the north was bad in the spring of 1729. Many of the people had eaten their seed oats, and none of the corn bought in Munster had found its way north as yet, while seven ships lay in Belfast harbor preparing to ship off a thousand emigrants. The Lord Primate Boulter wrote with some humanity that “if we knew how to stop them . . . it would be cruel to do it.”14

Meanwhile the government had instructed the justices of assize on the two Ulster circuits to report on the problem. Their reports came in in June and list the familiar causes of emigration—high rents, tithes, the test, the preference shown for Catholics as tenants, and the recent bad harvests. What is new is the denunciation of the emigrant trade. They give a picture of it which would be true for any time in the eighteenth century: “. . . masters and owners of ships in this kingdom, who for the profit of extraordinary freights which they get on this occasion, send agents to markets and fairs and public advertisements through the country to assemble the people together, where they assure them that in America they may get good land to them and their posterity for little or no rent, without either paying tithes or taxes, and amuse them with such accounts of these countries as they know will be most agreeable to them.”15 This marks the beginning of an official assault on the business which lasted right through the succeeding decade.

The Irish emigrant trade was a side line of the merchants and captains trading with American ports. Because of the fact that flax grown for the fiber has to be pulled before the seed ripens, Ireland imported large quantities of flaxseed from the Middle Colonies. Since most of

13 W. T. Latimer, “Ulster Emigration to America,” in Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 32:388-392. This very valuable article contains extracts from documents which have since been lost in the destruction of the Public Record Office, Dublin.


15 Public Record Office, Northern Ireland, Transcripts of State Papers, Ireland, T. 659, pp. 73-81.
the Irish woodlands had been cut away in the seventeenth century, the country depended heavily on North America for timber of all kinds, especially staves for barreling provisions. Undoubtedly, merchants had been quick to realize the profitable nature of the emigrant trade and their efforts to develop it were a very important cause of emigration. On the other hand, those in high places in Ireland were only too glad to make them responsible for the whole problem.

The case of the ship "George" of Dublin gave the Irish government an opportunity for an inquiry into the whole emigrant trade. In December, 1735, some passengers on the "George," then lying in Dublin harbor, petitioned the Irish Parliament. They claimed to have been inveigled on board where they had suffered great hardships. They feared they were going to be sold into slavery in the West Indies instead of being carried to North Carolina where they had intended to emigrate. Finally, they complained that they were illegally detained on board. The Irish House of Commons immediately asked the Lord Lieutenant to issue an order to hold the ship in Dublin, and the master of the ship was ordered to appear before the House the next day in the custody of the sergeant at arms.

The committee on the petition of the emigrants reported in the following March. The preamble to their lengthy report shows that they regarded themselves primarily as a committee of inquiry into the whole emigration problem: "It appears to your committee, that a traffick has for some time past obtained, and seems to gain ground in this kingdom, by means of which it is yearly drained of multitudes of its laborious protestant inhabitants to the great prejudice of the nation in general, and to the irretrievable disappointment and ruin of almost every person thus deluded to forsake it; that the foundation of this traffick is the considerable, though most wicked gain, which arises to the undertakers, from the credulity of those on whom they practise."

In August, 1735, Thomas Cumming, master of the "George," had sent his brother and brother-in-law into Ulster to recruit passengers for North Carolina. Later, Cumming joined the other two men, and they succeeded in recruiting seventy-two emigrants, who were promised free land without tithe or rent and were told that a laborer could earn £20 and a weaver over £100 a year in North Carolina. Cumming promised to carry them free to North Carolina where he said that they could borrow money on very easy terms to pay for their passages.
When they arrived in Dublin, the emigrants were kept waiting five or six weeks, during which time they spent all the money they had brought with them and after that fared very badly on the scanty provisions Cumming provided. Once they had left port, some of the passengers overheard the captain tell his brother that if the wind was not favorable for North Carolina, it would do equally well for the West Indies, where they could get as good a price for their passengers. The emigrants had many harrowing experiences such as:

"... when some of the unhappy wretches were at prayers to be relieved from the miseries they laboured under, Joseph Cumming cursed them, and asked, if they thought God would be troubled with their presbyterian prayers, and in a high wind made use of this expression, blow devil, blow all these presbyterians to hell."

Contrary winds, however, forced the "George" back into Dublin harbor where four of the passengers got ashore and laid their complaint before the Admiralty court. Cumming, with the connivance of a port official, had two of the complainants arrested and so blocked the hearing.

The report next proceeds to give a depressing account of conditions in colonial North Carolina, based largely on the evidence of Dr. John Brickell, who published a Natural History of North Carolina in Dublin in 1737. He told how white servants were less cared for than negro slaves and of the uselessness of the fifty acres of unreclaimed land out in Indian country which they were given at the end of their term of servitude. Cumming testified that the usual payment which he received for an indentured servant was about thirty-five barrels of pitch or turpentine.

The committee found that Cumming had insufficient provisions on board for other than a very quick passage. Several indentures had blanks where the number of years should have been entered, and the same port official, who had had two of the emigrants arrested, had also obliged by providing printed city of Dublin indenture forms.

They conclude their report with a resolution "that all persons who shall be any ways instrumental in promoting and carrying on such practices, are enemies to his Majesty's government, and the protestant interest of this kingdom." They further resolved that it was the duty of
magistrates and all other officials to try in every way to put down the emigrant trade.¹⁶

A letter from a ship's captain to John Penn, written in May, 1736, shows the various ways in which officials were trying to harass the emigrant trade. First, the authorities at Belfast had tried to prosecute the captains of emigrant ships on a charge of encouraging His Majesty's subjects from one plantation to another. When this charge failed, the Collector of Belfast, under strength of an act of the reign of William III, had forbidden the emigrants even to carry bedclothes on board. In this way, the sailing of ten ships and seventeen or eighteen hundred emigrants had been delayed nearly three weeks.¹⁷

Emigration was fairly heavy again in 1735 and 1736. There was a report from Londonderry in June, 1735, that eighteen hundred people had emigrated from the port that season.¹⁸ It is worth noting that South Carolina had embarked on a program of assisted immigration in 1730, in order to create a better balance between the white population and the slaves. Their scheme aimed at a ring of settlements on the rivers about fifty miles inland from Charleston. Between 1732 and 1736, several shiploads of emigrants from Belfast came to settle the Williamsburg township. The colony continued the policy of assisted immigration for nearly forty years with the result that Charleston became a point of disembarkation for the Scotch-Irish, often second in importance only to Philadelphia.¹⁹

Despite government hostility, there was never any legislation against emigration. Bills of 1730, to prevent emigration in order to defraud creditors, and of 1752, to control the abuses of the indentured servants trade, were never enacted.²⁰ None of the various suggestions made in pamphlets—that emigrants should be given free passages home if they so desired, or that emigration should be diverted to the south and west of Ireland where it would convey the twin benefits of the linen


¹⁷ Quoted in Myers, op. cit., 90-92.

¹⁸ Dunaway, op. cit., 37-38.


industry and the Protestant religion—were ever acted upon. \(^{21}\)

Between 1736 and the great emigration after 1770, there is very little comment in Ireland on emigration. There is no doubt that the two wars which took place between these dates interfered with shipping and reduced the flow of emigration. The chief reason is that there was no social or economic crisis to increase the number of emigrants suddenly to a point where it attracted public attention. By now people were accustomed to the annual emigration of two or three thousand people.

During these years, the linen industry had attained a very important place in the Irish economy, especially in the north. A depression in the industry in 1771 was the cause of an acute agrarian crisis. The result was emigration on the heaviest scale which the country had so far seen.

The linen industry was still a domestic one, except for the last stages of bleaching and finishing, which were in the hands of the linen drapers. Despite a complex division of labor and an elaborate commercial system, the linen industry had not even begun to move into the towns. Therefore, any failure in the industry caused immediate and widespread hardship throughout the country. The great growth of the linen industry during the eighteenth century is clearly shown by the widespread social effects of a depression in the trade. During the boom which preceded this depression, the landlords were attempting to force up rents, and the result was a serious outbreak of agrarian violence and a mass emigration from the north of Ireland. The size of this migration to America shows both the extent to which the northern Protestant had become accustomed to emigration and the elaborate emigrant trade which had grown up during the eighteenth century.

There was a variety of reasons for the industrial depression, the most important being the too rapid recovery from the depression after the Seven Years War. In 1771, the London market became overstocked, and goods had to be sold at a loss. When foreign linens, especially from Germany, appeared in the market, there was a collapse. In 1773, the exports of linen from Dublin, the commercial center of the trade, were only half what they had been in 1771. \(^{22}\) In November, 1773, the Irish

\(^{21}\) [Samuel Madden], *Reflections and Resolutions Proper for the Gentlemen of Ireland*, 29 (Dublin, 1738).

House of Commons, alarmed at the emigration of linen manufacturers, set up a committee on the linen industry. Those who gave evidence before this committee were in general agreement that the industry had contracted about a third from the previous peak years with resultant unemployment. They recognized the chief reasons for the depression to be decreased American imports and the competition of foreign linens. Emigration was causing great alarm, because of the loss of skilled workers and the drain on credit represented by the money which they took with them. Thirty thousand people were said to have emigrated within two or three years, among them at least ten thousand weavers.23

In November, 1773, the committee of trade of the Irish House of Lords was also instructed to inquire into the linen manufacture and the emigration problem, but if any report was made, it was never published.24 In December, the Irish Commons set up a committee to inquire into the causes of emigration, and in the same year a committee of the British House of Commons inquired into the state of the linen trade in Great Britain and Ireland. The Irish committee never published any results of its inquiry, but the English report is a full and valuable one.25

The north of Ireland had been comparatively free from agrarian trouble until about 1764, when the Oakboy movement broke out in Armagh in protest against excessive county taxes and forced labor on the roads. In the south of Ireland during these years, the Whiteboy conspiracy had at times attained the dimensions of a full-scale rebellion, and its leaders had enforced their authority, almost unchallenged, over whole sections of the country. Their chief aims were to prevent the

24 Journals of the House of Lords of Ireland, v. 4, November 16, 30, 1773, and February 18, 1774, pp. 694, 698, 721 (Dublin, 1782).
25 There was some anxiety that the emigration of skilled linen workers might lead to the growth of a linen manufacture in North America and so deprive Ireland of her most important export market. A witness before the Irish Commons' committee asserted that many emigrants had taken the reeds and gears of their looms with them.—Commons' Jne. Ire., 16:394. The Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, sounded the alarm about the transference of the linen industry to America in his book, and went on to say of emigration in general that it "will give strength to that part of the empire on which Great Britain can least, and take it from that on which at present she may most securely depend."—The Commercial Restraints of Ireland Considered, 216 (Dublin, 1779).
enclosure of open lands and the extension of grazing at the expense of tillage, and to regulate tithes.26

In Ulster, serious trouble began on the estates of the Marquis of Donegal near Belfast in 1770. He had leased large tracts of land to some Belfast merchants in return for a guaranteed payment. As the leases fell in, these middlemen racked the rent, in most cases from 2s. 6d. to 8s. per acre. The tenants retaliated by burning ricks, breaking down fences, and houghing cattle. In November, they were strong enough to march against Belfast jail to rescue one of their number who had been arrested. The march on Belfast developed into a serious riot in which the house of one of the middlemen was wrecked.27

The Hearts of Steel, as they called themselves, originally aimed at preventing rents from being raised by competitive letting of lands. Later they tried to force a reduction of tithes and even to reduce existing rents.28 They spread all over the counties of Antrim and Down, and in one case a large body of men attacked the house of an unpopular landlord and killed a Presbyterian clergyman who had come to take part in the defense. Despite all this violence, it is clear from official correspondence that the Irish administration felt that the landlords had caused the trouble by their own selfishness and greed. Nevertheless, the possibility that landlord and tenant alike had been caught by the linen boom should be considered. For instance, a letter laid before the committee of the Irish Commons on the linen manufacture pointed out that in the enthusiasm of the linen boom, the weavers had offered higher rents than they could hope to pay.29

From this outline of the course of Scotch-Irish migration within the old empire it is possible to draw certain conclusions. The religious divisions among the Protestant settlers in Ireland had given the original impulse to emigration. Already, indentured servants were an important part of seventeenth century trade between Ireland and North America. The basic cause of emigration, however, was the land system. Fluctuations in the linen industry had an important effect on emigration, but

26 George O'Brien, The Economic History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century, 50-85 (Dublin, 1918).
28 Commons' Jn. Ire., v. 15, December 20, 1771, pp. 196-197 (Dublin, 1772).
that was chiefly because of the close connection between that industry and agriculture.

Emigration was heaviest from Ulster, and a peculiarity in the land system of the province went far to explain this. There, the landlords gave a customary recognition to the right of a tenant to sell his interest in his holding if he wished to give it up, or if he could no longer pay the rent. It was this freedom to sell his farm which, in the last analysis, made it possible for the Ulster tenant farmer to emigrate. The justices on assize in Ulster in 1729 said that “many families who had comfortable settlements were induced to sell their leases and effects in hopes of great fortunes abroad.” It was reported from County Down in 1773 that “many of our rich yeomen, when their old leases expired, have gone to America with their families, and have carried with them in money from 100 to 500 guineas each.” A Belfast newspaper estimated from the sailing-notices of emigrant ships in its columns that £60,000 had been taken out of the north of Ireland in 1771-72. It is impossible to tell how many well-to-do farmers emigrated, or what proportion of the emigrants went out as indentured servants. The fact that two-thirds of the eighteenth century immigrants in Pennsylvania were indentured servants would seem to indicate that a majority of Scotch-Irish emigrants did go out as servants.

It has always been assumed that the Irish Catholic was more closely tied to the soil than the Protestant settler, for as an Irish writer said in 1738, “they are fond of living in their own country and averse to our American rambles.” However, the greater mobility of the Ulster settler, who could always realize the investment he had made in his holding by the sale of the tenant right, should not be overlooked. The desire of the colonies to keep America Protestant made it more difficult for Catholics to emigrate. The South Carolina bounty, for example, was given only to foreign Protestants. The same colony also tried to keep

30 It was estimated at different times in the eighteenth century that on an average each emigrant carried about £30 out of the country, realized by the sale of his tenant-right.

31 Public Record Office, Northern Ireland, T. 659, p. 76.
32 Commons' Jn. Ire., v. 16, February 11, 1774, p. 413.
33 Quoted in The Annual Register, 16:96 (1773).
35 Madden, op. cit., 99.
out Irish Catholic indentured servants, and Maryland levied a special tax on them.

Throughout the eighteenth century, the government and ruling classes in Ireland never rejected the theory that Ireland's security and prosperity depended on a numerous Protestant population. Right down to Lecky's day, historians continued to share this belief. Robert Wodrow, the Scottish church historian, wrote to Cotton Mather in 1720, lamenting that "the wild Irishes are coming down, and taking the leases our countrymen had, and swarming out in such numbers, as very much threatens the British interest in that kingdom." A memorial of the Irish nobility and gentry, presented to the Irish government in 1729, expresses this viewpoint in stronger terms. After pointing out the disastrous effect of emigration on credit and trade and its possible influence on the linen industry, they go on: "... and what is most terrible to us, a dangerous superiority of our inveterate enemies the Papists, who openly and avowedly rejoice at this impending calamity, use all means and artifices to encourage and persuade Protestants to leave the nation; and cannot refrain boasting, that they shall by this means have again the lands of this kingdom in their possession." Froude had a frankly racialist approach to Irish history, so he naturally regarded the Protestant emigrants as "the bravest defenders of English interests." But even Lecky wrote regretfully of emigration to America as having ended forever the hope of balancing Catholic Ireland with a large Protestant population.

On no point has there been more confusion than the connection between the mercantile system and Scotch-Irish emigration. To a liberal historian like Lecky the mercantile system was the chief cause of Protestant emigration from Ireland: "England by her commercial laws, deliberately crushed their prosperity, drove them by thousands into exile, arrested the influx of a considerable Protestant population from Great Britain, prevented the formation of those industrial habits and feelings

36 Thomas Cooper, ed., The Statutes at Large of South Carolina, 2:146 (Columbia, S. C., 1838).
37 Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, August, 1714—December, 1715, p. 249 (London, 1928).
which are the most powerful support of a Government, and inspired the Presbyterians of the North with a bitter hatred of their rule."\textsuperscript{41}

If the relation of Ireland to the old empire is carefully examined, a rather different state of affairs will be found. The chief restrictions on Irish trade were: the Cattle Act of 1668, which closed the English market to Irish cattle; the Navigation Acts, which severely limited direct trade between Ireland and the colonies; and the act of 1699, which absolutely prohibited the export of woolen goods from Ireland. However, the export of servants, horses, and provisions from Ireland directly to the colonies was permitted. Combined with the effects of the Cattle Act, this enabled the country to build up a great provision trade with the West Indies and Newfoundland. Except between 1696 and 1731, non-enumerated commodities could always be freely imported into Ireland. As compensation for the destruction of the Irish woolen trade, the British government undertook to develop and encourage the linen industry in Ireland. In 1705, the direct export of Irish linen to the colonies was permitted; in 1707, a bounty on the export of sailcloth from Ireland was paid; and after 1743, bounties were regularly paid on the export of British and Irish linens.\textsuperscript{42}

It has always been maintained that the suppression of the Irish woolen trade was followed by a heavy emigration, mainly Protestants, although the subject has never been properly investigated. Most historians have tended to confuse the emigration of the woolen workers with Scotch-Irish emigration, but there is no evidence to show either that there was any woolen industry in Ulster, or that there was much emigration from the north at that time. In fact, the woolen industry was suppressed at a time when the Scots were still coming over to Ulster in fairly considerable numbers. In short, the mercantile system can only be regarded as a cause of Scotch-Irish emigration in so far as it contributed generally to the depression of the Irish economy.

During the emigration of the 1770's, Ireland was deeply involved in the crisis which was overtaking the old British Empire. Conservative opinion was only too glad to identify Presbyterian emigration with the drift towards revolution in the American colonies where they had settled. Frederick Hervey, Earl of Bristol and Bishop of Derry, wrote to

\textsuperscript{41} Lecky, \textit{op. cit.}, 1:190.

the Earl of Dartmouth in 1775 that "the rebellious spirit in the central provinces of America" was due "to the exportation of nearly 33,000 fanatical & hungry republicans from Ireland in the course of a few years." Statements of this kind happen to coincide with the inclinations of patriotic American historians of the Scotch-Irish who have insisted on the unanimity of the stock in the Whig cause. In fact, the attitude of the Scotch-Irish frontier population was determined by the political conditions of the colonies in which they settled.

The numbers involved in the emigration of the Scotch-Irish were not large. It is impossible to determine at all accurately the number of emigrants between 1700 and 1776, but a quarter of a million is a safe figure for the total. The annual rate of emigration works out at an average of four thousand a year. It has been estimated that when the first United States census was taken in 1790 about ten per cent of the population was of Irish origin, three-fifths of them from Ulster. This migration was clearly a failure in British imperial policy, but whether it constitutes the indictment of the rulers of Ireland which has been so strongly asserted in the past is not so certain. It may be that they had already developed a frontier mentality in Ulster, and if that is so, the Irish landlords and the Episcopalian clergy were no more responsible for this emigration than was Lord North for the American Revolution.

43 W. S. Childe-Pemberton, The Earl Bishop, 1:145 (London, 1924). Arthur Young visited Ulster in 1774, and collected some very useful information about emigration. His contacts were mostly among the gentry and he tended to accept their version of the agrarian crisis. In his view, emigration resulted simply from the instability of an industry which worked mainly for export.—A Tour in Ireland, 2:30-31 (London, 1780).

44 Thomas Newenham, A Statistical and Historical Inquiry into the Progress and Magnitude of the Population of Ireland, 57-60 (London, 1805).