

the other hand, the race occupying the eastern tracts should be of later origin. We ought to judge of the spread of the human population as we do of that of the flora and fauna. Had England been already occupied by the Welsh, Cymric or British branch, it is inconceivable that the Irish or Gaelic branch could have marched through the territory so occupied, and have established itself in Scotland and Ireland. The Gaels were, no doubt, the first to arrive. Finding the country inhabited by the little Neolithic folk they dispossessed them, and spread by degrees over the whole of the islands. At a later time the Cymry arose. We are not here concerned with the question whether these originated by a gradual bifurcation in the development of the Celtic race after its settlement within Britain, or came as a later Celtic wave of migration from the continent. It is enough to notice that they are found at the beginning of the historical period to be in possession of England, Wales, and the south of Scotland up to the estuary of the Clyde. It is improbable that the Gaels, who no doubt once occupied the same attractive region, would have willingly quitted it for the more inhospitable moors of Scotland and the distant bogs and fenlands of Ireland. It is much more likely that they were driven forcibly out of it. Possibly the traditions they carried with them of the greater fertility of England may have instigated the numerous inroads which from early Roman times downwards they made to recover the lands of their forefathers. Crossing from Ireland they repossessed themselves of the west of Wales, and sweeping down from the Scottish Highlands they repeatedly burst across the Roman wall, carrying pillage and rapine far into the province where their Cymric cousins had begun to learn some of the arts and effeminacy of Roman civilisation.