

served than in Scotland. The Scottish Highlands, sharply defined against the Lowland plains, and washed around their other sides by the stormy Atlantic Ocean, offered in rude times a wild and almost inaccessible asylum against invasion. There the original Gaelic population has been able to maintain itself, while wave after wave of hostile immigrants has broken against the bases of the hills. The Cymri, who came after the Gaels, possessed themselves of the southern part of the country ; but they do not seem ever to have advanced beyond the limits of their Strathclyde territories. The Romans carried their conquests up to the borders of the Highlands, but there was nothing among those dark mountains to invite them farther. They marched into the northern wilds, indeed, but it was rather for vainglory and to punish their savage assailants than with the view of permanent occupation. And so tracing their wall and planting their forts across the narrowest part of the island, they were content to let the Highlanders keep their fastnesses.

When the next wave of conquest brought successive hordes of Norsemen and Danes from beyond the sea to our shores, the same physical features, which had guided and limited the march of the southern invaders, once more set bounds to the progress of the Vikings from the north.

The lowlands of the northern counties and of the Midland Valley lay open to the war-boats of the pirates, and there, driving out or absorbing the Celtic population, the Teutons firmly planted themselves. But they never pushed their way into the mountains. Down to this day, in spite of the slow, but unceasing diffusion and amalgamation of the races, the geological boundary between the rough ground of the crystalline schists on the one hand, and the drift-covered plains of Old Red Sandstone on the other, is still in great measure the boundary of the Gaelic-speaking and English-