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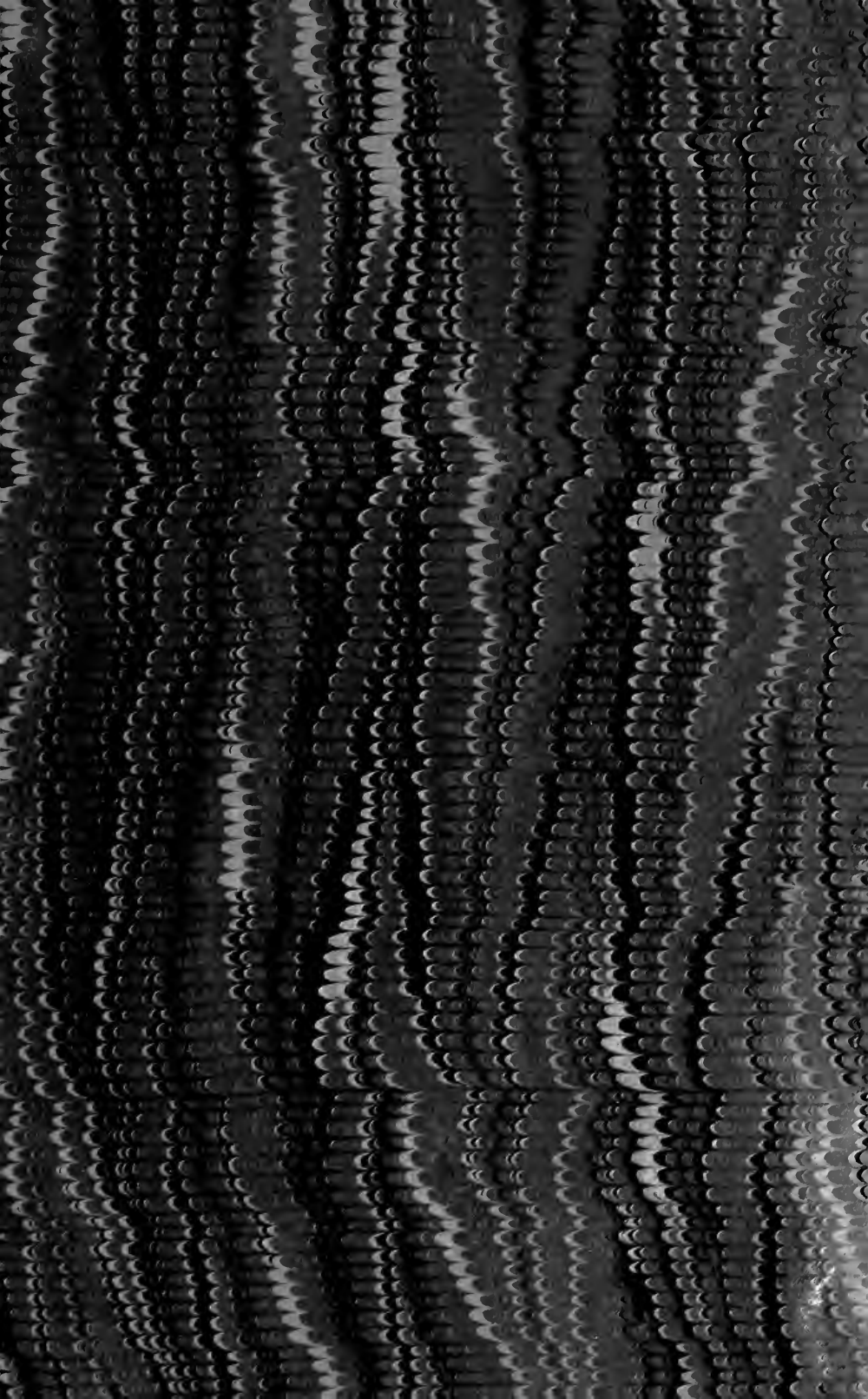
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PHILADELPHIA, PA., February 1, 1898.

To the Members of the Pennsylvania Scotch-Irish Society :

GENTLEMEN :

A copy of the report of the proceedings of your Society at their eighth annual meeting and banquet, held in Philadelphia, February 27, 1897, has just been sent to me. I notice in it a speech by Judge Stewart, in which he says that I have grossly defamed the Scotch-Irish, and he assails with the greatest violence, with "indignation and resentment," as he puts it, a book of mine, "Pennsylvania: Colony and Commonwealth," which was published a year or so ago.

I heard of the Judge's speech soon after it was delivered. Some friends of mine spoke to me of it as a joke, and I supposed it had been merely ordinary criticism or difference of opinion, and, as I did not know of its being published, gave myself no further thought about it. I never became aware of its full enormity and absurdity until I read it a few days ago. I am told that it was still worse as delivered, and has been toned down to go in print. But the toning did not go far enough. Unless I say something about it I shall be in the position of allowing the Judge to falsify Pennsylvania history; for his wild statements now stand approved by the whole Scotch-Irish Society, and are given out to the world as history in one of their regular publications.

I do not care to parade the matter in the newspapers because, so far as I know, Judge Stewart's speech was not in the newspapers. It was delivered to a private society, and is now printed in their regular proceedings. I therefore mail a copy of this letter to every member of the Society whose address is given in the report which I have.

The Judge seems to be a survival of those old-time cutting and slashing orators we read about; and his knowledge of history is, as might be expected, highly imaginative. Of course, I know that he labored under several serious disadvantages. The dinner and its accompaniments had been

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in progress for some time before he began. He was almost the last speaker, and he tells us in the beginning of his speech that he is brought in at the dregs. Under such circumstances a man is tempted to do something extravagant to arouse the jaded attention, and the best way is to assume that the dearest interests of his hearers are attacked or defamed, and then pose as defending them. This is a good after-dinner device, but it is not good for the truth of history.

He charges in the most extravagant and unjudicial language that I am a "perverter of the truth" of history and the author of "a studied and deliberate libel," and, as an instance, says that I have without foundation or authority accused the Scotch-Irish of cowardice when Colonel Bouquet was setting out from Carlisle in 1763 to save Fort Pitt, which had been taken by Pontiac.

"With equal recklessness of statement, and in a like spirit of unfairness he charges that in 1763 when Bouquet passed through the valley on his way to the Ohio and beyond to suppress the conspiracy of Pontiac, this people were too indifferent or cowardly to recruit his ranks, and too mean to supply him with transportation."

* * * * *

"I challenge Mr. Fisher again for his proofs that anybody but himself has ever made such complaint."

Now what I actually did say after describing how Bouquet arrived at Carlisle with the remains of two invalid regiments from the West Indies was as follows:

"Not a man of the Scotch-Irish frontiersmen joined him. They were slow at furnishing him with wagons and caused him many delays. They were indeed broken and demoralized and stayed at home, they said, to protect their families; and, moreover, they believed that the Colonel and his sick list were doomed." ("Pennsylvania: Colony and Commonwealth," 225.)

In the above passage I charge no one with cowardice. I do not say that they were too mean to furnish transportation; I say they were slow about it, and I give reasons for all their conduct which would satisfy any one in a reasonable frame of mind. I wrote the passage as it stands, not because I am a Quaker, as the Judge says; I am not a Quaker and

never was one; nor because I hate the Scotch-Irish or am prejudiced against them; nor for any of the other silly motives which were assigned at the banquet; but because the authorities, Bouquet's letters and the writings of men who lived at the time support such a statement and compel you to write it without regard to what your feelings may be.

Provost Smith, of the College of Philadelphia, lived at that time and was an earnest promoter of all warlike operations against the French and Indians. Judge Stewart says he was a Scotch-Irishman; but that is simply another of the Judge's blunders. The Provost wrote, however, a history of Bouquet's expedition which he knew all about and I will quote what he says on this point:

"Early orders had been given to prepare a convoy of provisions on the frontiers of Pennsylvania, but such were the universal terror and consternation of the inhabitants that when Colonel Bouquet arrived at Carlisle nothing had yet been done.

In the midst of that general confusion, the supplies necessary for the expedition became very precarious, nor was it less difficult to procure horses and carriages for the use of the troops.

* * * * *

Their march did not abate the fears of the dejected inhabitants. They knew the strength and ferocity of the enemy. They remembered the former defeats even of our best troops, and were full of diffidence and apprehensions on beholding the small number and sickly state of the regulars employed in this expedition. Without the least hopes, therefore, of success, they seemed only to wait for the fatal event, which they dreaded, to abandon all the country beyond the Susquehanna.

In such despondency of mind, it is not surprising that tho' their whole was at stake, and depended entirely upon the fate of this little army, none of them offered to assist in the defence of the country by joining the expedition; in which they would have been of infinite service, being, in general, well acquainted with the woods, and excellent marksmen ('History of Bouquet's Expedition,' pp. 10, 11, 12)''

Parkman, in his "Conspiracy of Pontiac," tells the same story. He used Provost Smith's book as his authority, and had also some manuscript letters of Bouquet, which, possibly, Provost Smith never saw.

“To return to Bouquet who lay encamped at Carlisle, urging on his preparations, but met by obstacles at every step. Wagons and horses had been promised, but promises were broken, and all was vexation and delay. The province of Pennsylvania from causes to be shown hereafter would do nothing to aid the troops who were defending it; and even the people of the frontier partly from the apathy and confusion of terror, and partly, it seems, from dislike and jealousy of the regulars were backward and sluggish in co-operating with them. ‘I hope,’ writes Bouquet to Sir Jeffrey Amherst, ‘that we shall be able to save that infatuated people from destruction notwithstanding all their endeavors to defeat your vigorous measures. I meet everywhere with the same backwardness even among the most exposed of the inhabitants which makes everything move on heavily, and is disgusting to the last degree.’ And, again, ‘I find myself utterly abandoned by the very people I am ordered to protect.’” (“Conspiracy of Pontiac,” Vol. II., pp. 48, 49.)

Judge Stewart takes great pains to tell us in his speech that he has studied with much care the history of the Scotch-Irish in Pennsylvania, but he seems to have overlooked the most obvious and ordinary authorities with which a single visit or inquiry at an historical society or library would have supplied him. If he had even taken the trouble to look in “Gordon’s History of Pennsylvania” (a dull book but a very accurate one), pages 399 and 400, he would have found the statements made in the above quotations substantially repeated.

I will ask the Judge’s conscience and Scotch-Irish integrity to say whether, in view of the above authorities, it was proper for a man in his position, to charge me, as he does in his speech, with “a studied and deliberate libel,” or to say that I am “a perverter of the truth” of history, and then afterwards print such assertions.

He goes on to say :

“Mr. Fisher knows, or ought to know, that Bouquet, a British officer in command of British troops, called for no recruits, and was without any authority to make such a call.”

But Parkman says: “He had attempted to engage a body of frontiersmen to join him on the march; but they

preferred to remain for the defence of their families" ("Conspiracy of Pontiac," Vol. II, p. 56); and I leave the Judge and Parkman to fight it out between them.

If the Judge was a real Scotch-Irishman, his sense of humor, which is usually characteristic of that race, would save him from such statements. Bouquet, of course, had no authority to compel the Scotch-Irish to serve. That is the very point. The Scotch-Irish would not go unless they were compelled by force. They would not be volunteers, and the Judge, without knowing it, is making an argument to show that his own people were cowards and would not fight for their own safety.

But I must rescue the Scotch-Irish from such an unskilful defender. They were not cowards. They had reasons for not going with Bouquet, and I have given those reasons in "Pennsylvania: Colony and Commonwealth." No one has ever suggested that they were cowards except the Judge.

In another part of his tirade he says: "The settlers in the Kittochtiny Valley seem to be the special objects of Mr. Fisher's antipathy." That is a pure assumption on the part of the Judge. I cannot find that I mention them specially anywhere in the book, and there was no reason why I should make any special mention of them separate from the rest of the Scotch-Irish of the Province. I have no antipathy to them. On the contrary, I think they were then, and most of them are to-day, among the very best of the Scotch-Irish people.

But the Judge was making a speech at the close of a banquet and had to manufacture it out of nothing, and this assumption about my antipathy was dragged in to bolster up another assumption that I had in some way accused the Kittochtiny people of murdering Indians and cheating them out of their land. I never accused them of anything of the kind.

"I challenge Mr. Fisher," he says, "to show a murder or an outrage upon an Indian in that valley committed by the hand of a Scotch-Irish settler during all that period from 1730 to

1755. I challenge him to show a single complaint of unjust appropriation of land east of the Tuscarora Mountain in that time."

The first challenge is a very absurd one, because I never said that the settlers of the Kittochtiny Valley committed murder or outrages on Indians in that valley; nor have I said anywhere that any of the Scotch-Irish in any part of the Province committed murders or outrages on Indians between 1730 and 1755. That was a period of peace before the wars began, and there are pages and pages in my book showing that it was a period of peace all over the province. Such a challenge and such talk are totally irrelevant.

In the second challenge if the Judge had confined himself to the land east of the Kittochtiny range instead of east of the Tuscarora, I might have said that I knew of none that had been improperly appropriated. I never said there was any, although there may have been, for all I know. But as he has gone farther westward, and said land east of the Tuscarora range, I can say that, while I never made such an assertion in my book, there was, according to authority, some land improperly appropriated close to the Tuscarora range, and on the east side of it, in the Path Valley, as it was called, which lay between the Tuscarora and the Kittochtiny; and this I will show presently.

In "Pennsylvania: Colony and Commonwealth," I have nowhere said that there was any unjust appropriation of land in the Kittochtiny Valley. I do not even raise the question. What I do say, however, is that the Scotch-Irish and German frontiersmen were guilty, in numerous instances, of going upon land and settling there before it had been purchased from the Indians, and this caused a great deal of irritation. If the Judge means to deny this statement, he takes a great deal on himself; for it is vouched for by every one who has the slightest knowledge of our Colonial history.

The principal authority is a book called "The Alienation of the Indians," written by Charles Thomson, who lived in those times, was deeply and actively interested in the

Indian question and thoroughly familiar with it. He was afterwards Secretary of the Continental Congress, and a man very much respected. He was a Scotch-Irishman, it is said, and he reports the Indians as saying, in the treaty of 1742 :

“Your people,” say they to the Governor, “daily settle on these lands and spoil our hunting. We must insist on your removing them ; as you know, they have no right to settle to the northward of the Kittochtinny Hills. In particular we renew our complaints against some people who are settled at Juniata, a branch of the Susquehanna, and all along the banks of that river as far as Mahaniay ” (“Alienation of the Indians,” p. 49).

In another passage he describes how the intrusion by the frontiersmen on the Indian land in 1750 became so outrageous that it was feared there would be a massacre, unless these intruders were at once removed.

“After this Mr. Peters proceeded, and being accompanied with those Indians, broke up the settlements in Sherman’s Valley, on Juniata, at Aucquick (*alias* Anghwick), in the Path Valley and Big Cove, which all lie beyond the Kittochtinny Hills, everywhere dispossessing the people. * * * The people of the little cove which was a part of the unpurchased lands just on the borders of Maryland, presented him a petition, addressed to the Governor, praying that they might be allowed to remain there till the purchase was made of the lands from the Indians ” (p. 71).

It will be observed that he says that there was unlawful intrusion in the Path Valley, which lay between the Kittochtiny and the Tuscarora Mountains. Many of the places he mentions lay immediately to the westward and northward of the Kittochtiny Valley, and all the places were close to the Scotch-Irish settlements. If the Judge really thinks that the Scotch-Irish never intruded on Indian land, I cannot envy him his credulity.

Thomson goes on to tell how the intrusion grew worse and worse in spite of all efforts to prevent it.

“In short, so little effect had this that those who had been spared were spirited up to stay, and others went and settled by them, so that in a few years the settlements in the Indian country were more numerous and farther extended than ever ” (p. 73).

In another of his outbursts, the Judge says :

“From Mr. Fisher’s standpoint, it is a fact worthy of being recorded on the page of history that no Scotch-Irish of the settlement joined Bouquet’s ranks; but from his standpoint it is a fact too insignificant for mention that in the previous campaign this same settlement sent 2500 of its chosen men, under the lead of John Armstrong, to march in the van of Forbes’ army to the Ohio.”

The whole number of Pennsylvania troops that went with Forbes to the Ohio was 2700, and if I had known that all of them but two hundred came from the Kittochtiny Valley alone, I should certainly have been delighted to enrich my book with such a wonderful statement. But I did not know it and I do not know it yet. I cannot find anyone competent to judge of such things who ever heard of it. I have asked some of the gentlemen at the Historical Society, men who have spent their lives in studying the colonial history of Pennsylvania, and they laughed at it.

The Judge scarcely does justice to the other Scotch-Irish in Pennsylvania. Is it possible that if the 8000 people of the Kittochtiny Valley sent 2500, the other thousands of Scotch-Irish outside of the valley and scattered all over the State sent only two hundred?

And then what becomes of the Germans? They were far more numerous in Pennsylvania than the Scotch-Irish. And what becomes of the English Presbyterians, the Episcopalians and the plain Scotch, all of whom were very earnest against the French and Indians? If the Judge will take the trouble to look at the few broken and incomplete lists of companies that were enlisted in the year 1758 and are collected in Pennsylvania Archives, Volume II, second series, pages 549, etc., he will see, as he reads along, many German names, and in the few instances where the residences are given he will find that the troops came from all parts of the State.

In one of the companies the residences are given after quite a number of the names, and I have counted them— one from Virginia, one from New Jersey, two from Dela-

ware, two from Lancaster, four from Philadelphia, four from Maryland, eighteen from Chester, and one from Cumberland.

As I have said, these records are not perfect. They do not give all the troops, and those that are given are incomplete. But they were all that could be found. If that careful study of which he tells us has brought into the Judge's possession the missing records showing exactly where all the soldiers of that year came from, the Historical Society or the Department at Harrisburg will be very glad to receive them, or to be allowed to copy them. They will be the most important information that has been received for many a year, and the genealogists will be delighted.

The Judge's 2500 is too large a proportion, even for the population of his valley, which he says was 8000. Supposing that he is right for once in something and that 8000 was the correct population of the valley, 2500 would be more than a fourth of the people and almost a third. A fifth is as large a proportion of military men as any community is supposed to furnish. But a fifth is merely the theoretical estimate of political economists, gives the voting element more accurately than the military element, and is seldom obtained in practice. Moreover the Judge says that the 2500 were "chosen men," and therefore they could not have included the boys and old men who would of necessity have "marched in the van" with Forbes if more than a fourth of the population left their homes.

The whole population of Pennsylvania, at that time, was 200,000. So the Judge would have us believe that the 8000 people of his happy valley furnished 2500 of the 2700 men, and the remaining 192,000 of the people of the province furnished only two hundred.

The scenes of many of Trollope's novels are laid in an imaginary county, of which he had drawn a map for himself with the residences of all his characters on it; and he boasts in his autobiography that he had added a new county to England. The Judge has added a new valley to Pennsylvania.

By the way, what does he mean by saying that his 2500 "marched in the van of Forbes' army"? Besides the Pennsylvania troops, that army of about 7000 men was composed of British regulars, Virginia troops, Maryland troops and North Carolina troops. If the Judge has any information about the order of march in that scramble through the woods and mountains which Parkman so vividly describes, his Scotch-Irish generosity should furnish us with it, for it would be extremely interesting.

Does he mean that his 2500 were alone given the honor of the van because their valley had broken all the records of history, and that the remaining two hundred Pennsylvanians were in the rear? Or did all the Pennsylvanians always march in the van? Proud honor for our State it would be; and if it is true, let us have the authority. Parkman, relying on a description by one of the officers, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (Vol. 29, p. 171), says that when the army was approaching Fort Pitt the provincials were on one of the wings, apparently the left wing.

I have already said that the Judge claims Provost Smith as a Scotch-Irishman. But he was not. He was a Scotchman, born in Scotland and educated at the University of Aberdeen, and never lived in Ireland. It might also possibly be inferred from what he says that James Wilson was Scotch-Irish. But he also, like Smith, was a Scotchman who had never lived in Ireland.

He says, however, that Wilson's "casting vote placed Pennsylvania on the side of the Revolution." I suppose he must refer to the vote taken in the Continental Congress in adopting the Declaration of Independence. But Wilson's biographers do not claim this honor for him.

According to the account of Wilson, given in the "Biography of the Signers" (Vol. VI, p. 133), the first vote of the Pennsylvania delegation was: Franklin, Wilson and Morton, yes; Humphreys, Willing, Robert Morris and Dickinson, no; so Pennsylvania, on that vote, stood opposed to the adoption of a Declaration of Independence. On the final

vote, however, Dickinson and Robert Morris were absent and not voting, so it stood Franklin, Wilson and Morton, yes; Humphreys and Willing, no. Wilson's vote was no more a casting vote than Franklin's or Morton's, and the vote was carried in the affirmative by the absence of Morris and Dickinson, who had previously voted no.

I must also protest against Dr. Robert Ellis Thompson, who said in his speech that I describe the Scotch-Irish as scattering in the mountains and going nowhere else in the State. I will quote what I said :

“ They did not, however, all seek the frontier, as has been supposed; many of them, especially in Pennsylvania, remained in the East. In modern times many of them have settled in the southwestern section of Philadelphia. * * * They scattered themselves to some extent all over the State, and members of the race can now be found in almost every part of it. A large number of them went up on the Lehigh. Some of the first arrivals went into Bucks County and Lancaster County. They also occupied Octorara Creek, Pequea, Donegal and Paxton” (“ Making of Pennsylvania,” p. 163).

Several of the speakers at the banquet said that the New England people had been allowed to write the history of the country long enough, and had written it too much in their own way, and that it was now time for the Scotch-Irish to write it in their way. Well, if the report of Judge Stewart's speech is a sample of the way the Scotch-Irish will write history, our fate is a sad one. I think an apology is due from the Society to the whole country for allowing such ridiculous statements to masquerade under the name of history in the printed report of their proceedings.

The reason that the New Englanders have been able to write the history of the country, and that the others have not, is because that, while taking care of their own point of view, they have written on the whole with reasonable accuracy, while the others have usually produced miserable trash for which no one has any respect and which few care to read.

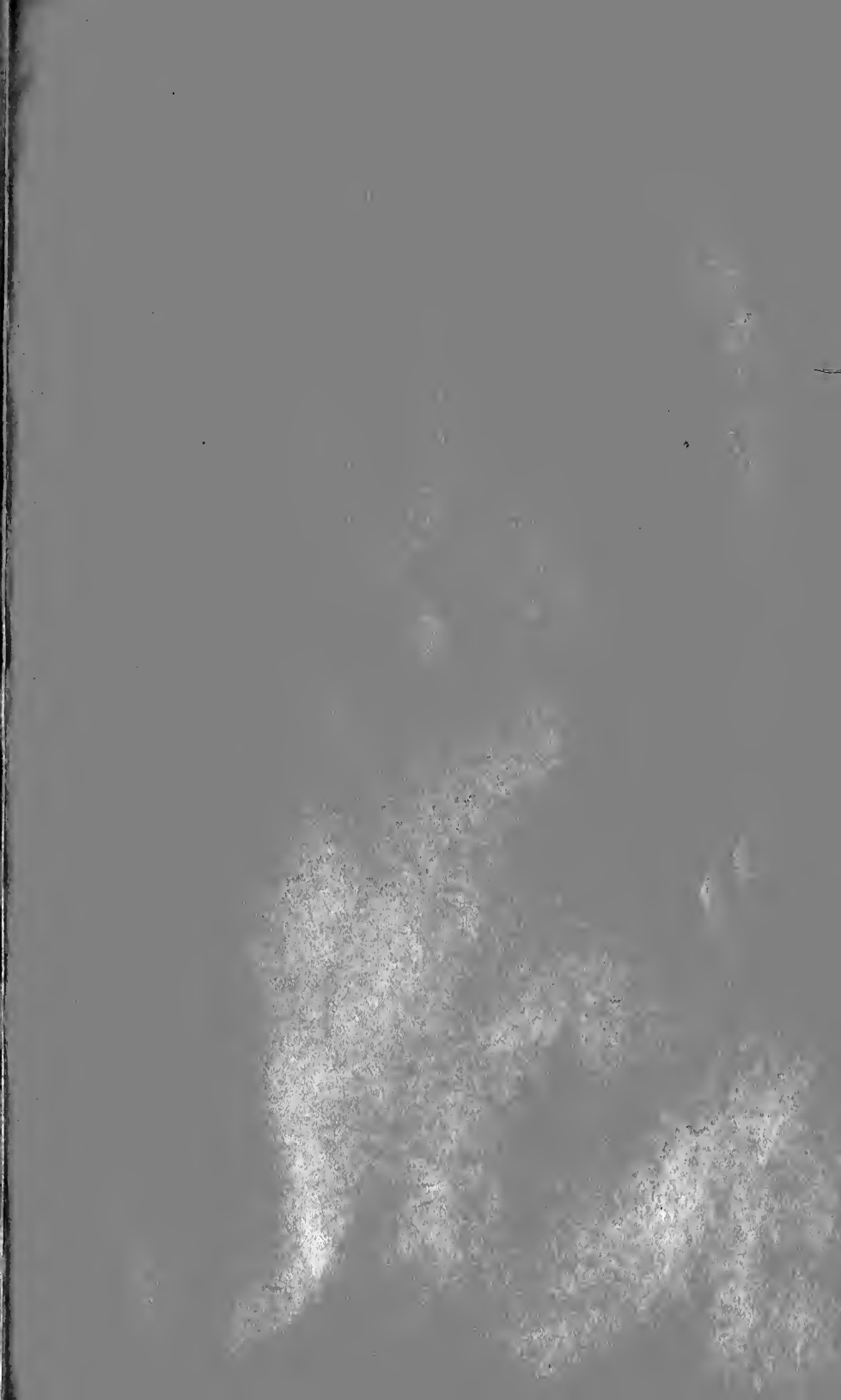
I have no dislike for or antipathy to the Scotch-Irish. On the contrary, I admire them when they behave

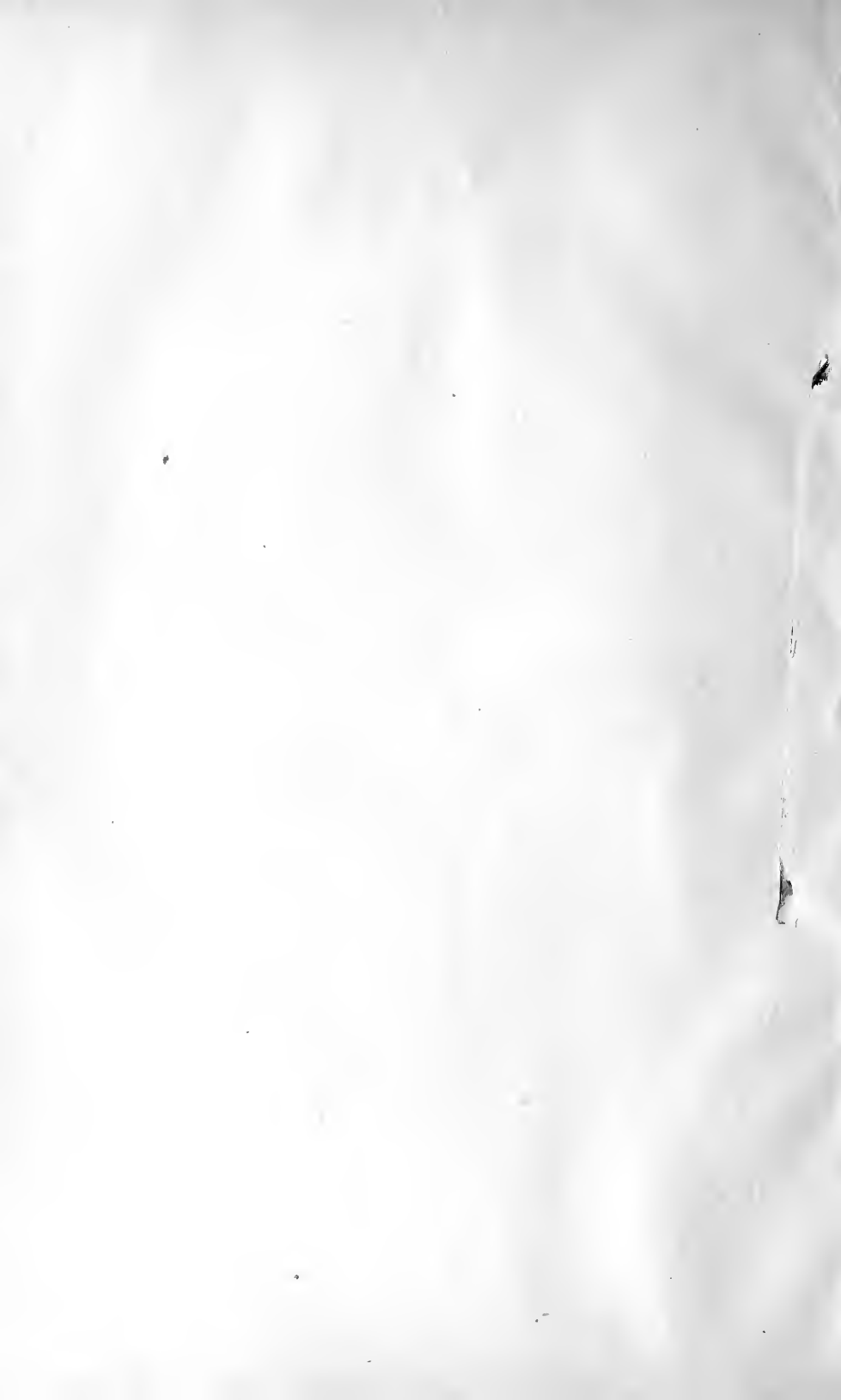
themselves ; especially the old type who were usually right with their facts, and I believe most people admire them. In my two books on Pennsylvania, I have given them full credit for all their merits, and as I was writing history, and not making after-dinner speeches, I have set down likewise their defects and mistakes ; and I have treated the Germans, the Welsh, the Episcopalians, the Quakers, and the Connecticut element in the same way. If I have done injustice to any of these elements of our population, either in too much praise or too much blame, I should be glad to know it.

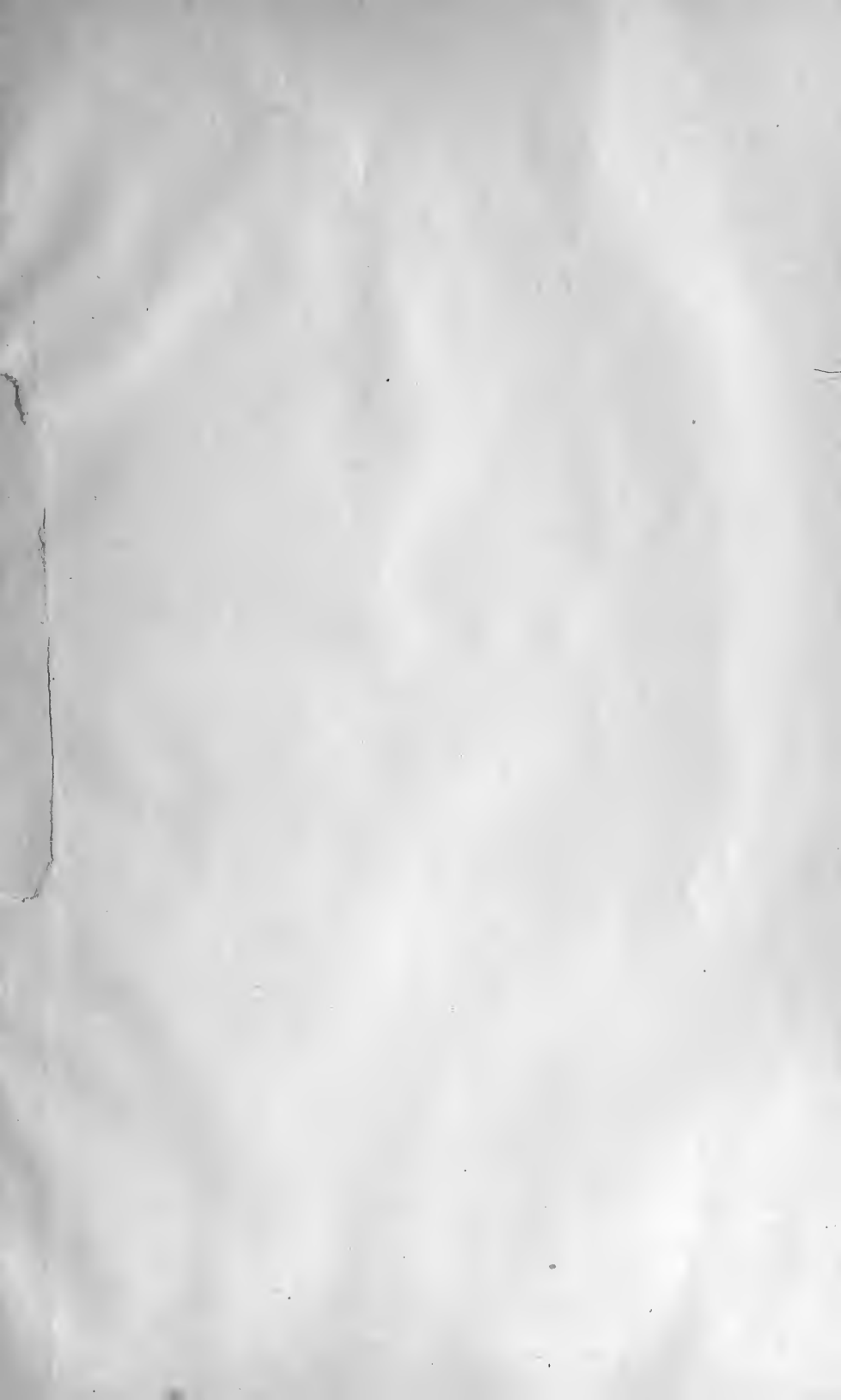
The complaint the Scotch-Irish are continually making, that their merits are not appreciated by the world, I cannot understand. I have never seen any signs of it. Their merit was recognized one hundred years ago and is to-day. They played their part well, and we all know what it was. What people object to is, their claim that they did everything. They did not make the Revolution and the Constitution. Washington, John Adams, Samuel Adams, Jefferson, Henry, Madison, Hamilton, the Lees, the Rutledges, Generals Greene, Gates, Lafayette, Knox, Putnam, Schuyler, Mifflin and Mublenberg, were not Scotch-Irishmen, although Armstrong, Stark, Reed and some others, of good service but minor fame, were Scotch-Irish, and Wayne was descended from an English Episcopalian family who had lived among the Scotch-Irish in Ireland. The Scotch-Irish had no Tories among them. They were always willing to enlist in the Continental Army, and no one has ever denied it.

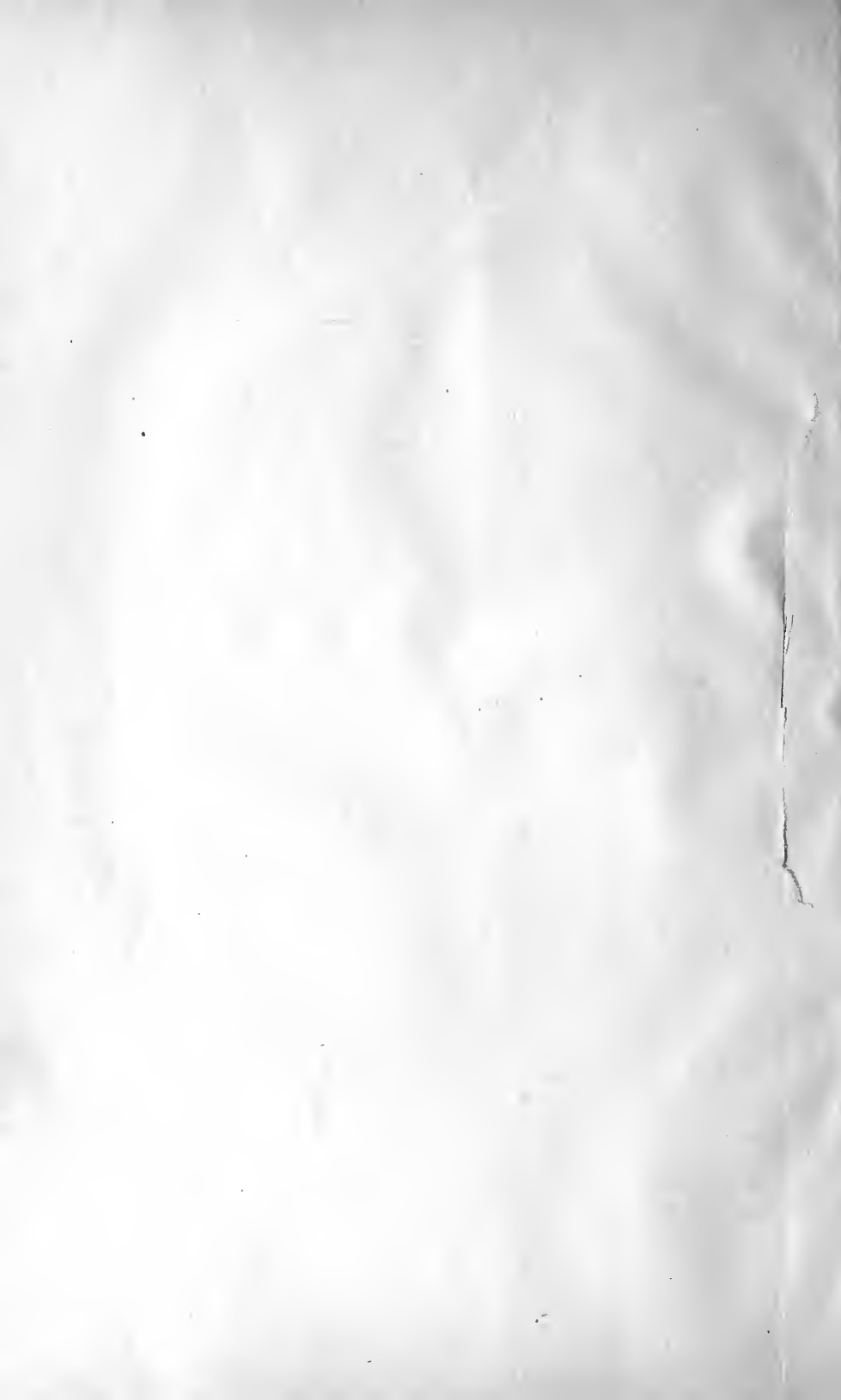
People also object to their claiming as their own, men who are not Scotch-Irish at all, and to their claiming distinguished men, who have only a small portion of Scotch-Irish blood in them. On the other hand, I have never heard any one deny the service of the rank and file of the race as frontiersmen in Colonial times, from Pennsylvania to Georgia, afterwards in Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee, and in still later times in the religious, industrial, agricultural and political interests of those same regions.

SYDNEY G. FISHER.

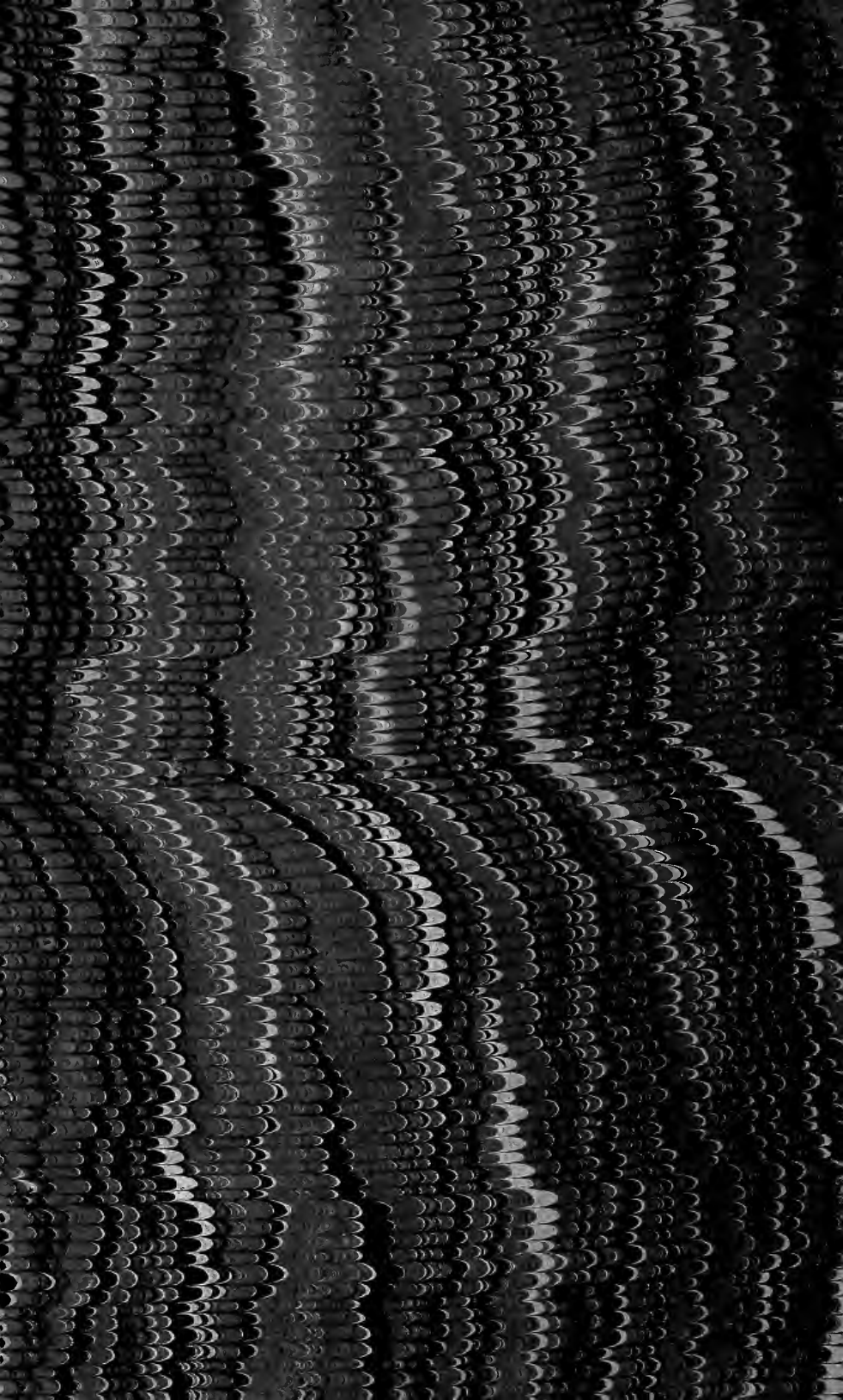


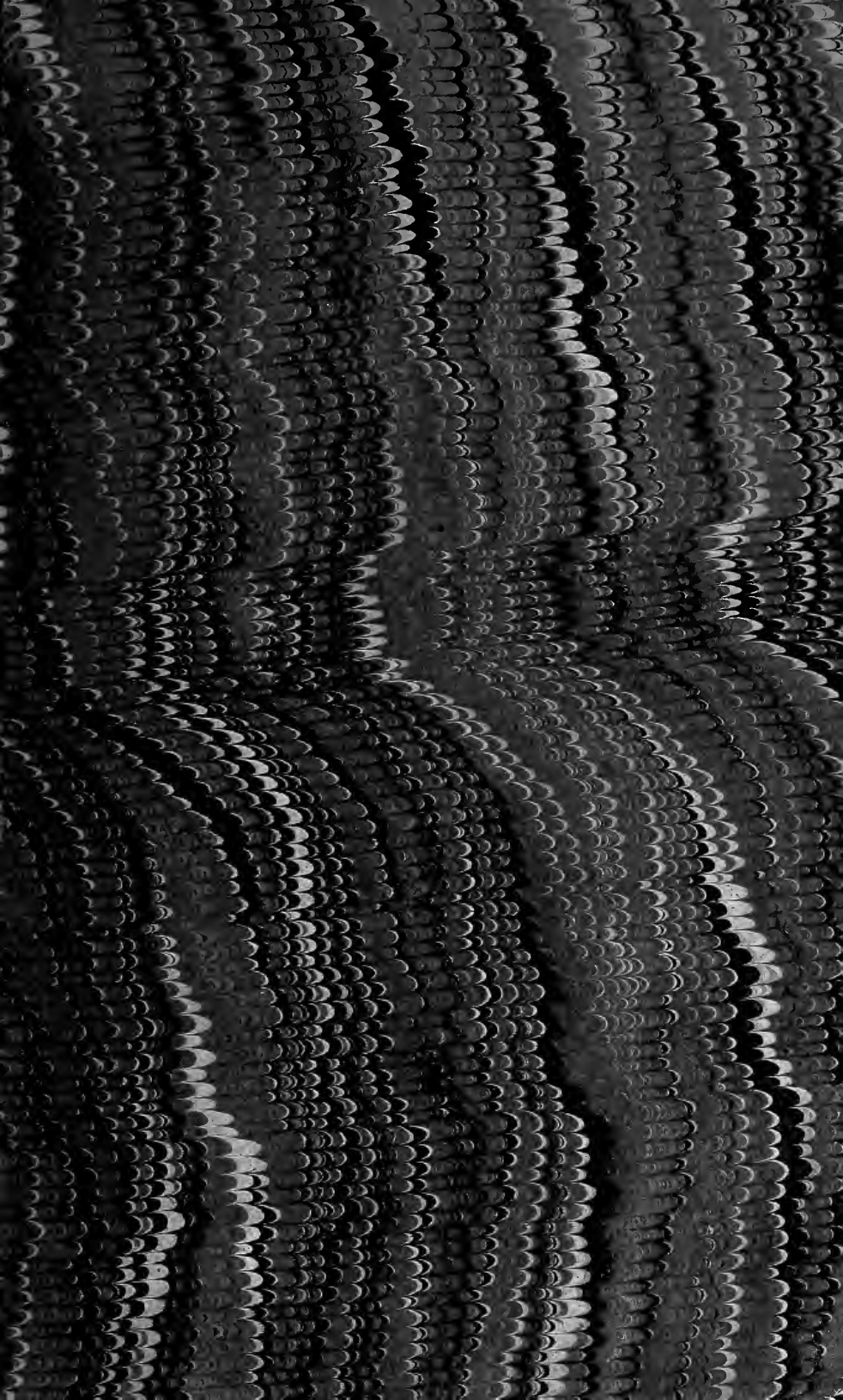


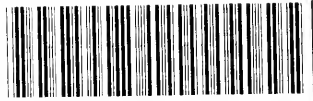












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