Am Bolg Solair

The Pedlar's Pack

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AUTOLYCUS. * * * *

"Come to the pedlar;
Money's a medler,
That doth utter all men's ware-a."

AM BOLG SOLAIR

THE PEDLAR'S PACK

WITH CONTENTS COLLECTED FROM
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EDITOR'S NOTE.

The contents and illustrations of this little book are the contributions of many well-wishers of the Gaelic cause. For their generous kindness the grateful thanks of the Editor are due; and if the public will add its tangible appreciation by sampling the "provisions" contained in "The Pedlar's Pack," the coffers of "An Fheill" will benefit. Two titles have been bestowed on this venture—one for those "who have the Gaelic"—the other for the enlightenment of those who have it still to learn; both of them denoting somewhat the same idea though neither is a direct translation of the other.

The poem on Eriskay was given by Father Allan Macdonald to Dr. Henderson, with permission to use it wherever he thought it likely to be of interest. To Dr. Henderson the Editor is also indebted for much kind assistance with proofs.

ELMA STORY.

Glasgow, October, 1907.

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ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE EILDON HILLS. *D. Y. Cameron, A.R.S.A.*

THE FORDS OF THE OUTER ISLES.

THERE is no more remarkable feature of the Outer Hebrides than the fords that divide the Long Island, parting South Uist from Benbecula, and Benbecula from North Uist. There is nothing like them in any other part of the kingdom; they charm and they repel, and they are likely, for many generations more, to be the most formidable obstacle to the Long Island's having any share with the mainland, and, say, the more fortunate Isle of Skye, in the ameliorative agencies of continuous high roads or light railways. It is possible to ride, or drive, or walk, if you will, from the Sound of Eriskay to the Sound of Berneray, something more than fifty miles in a straight line, but whoever would do so must study the tides, and count upon the probability of a dreary stoppage at one or other of the gaps that make Benbecula that most pitiable thing—an island that is only so at high tide, and is at other times tacked on to its neighbours by unalluring and treacherous sands. Perhaps, in the distant future, the engineer may throw his viaducts across the shallows, and so terminate a state of matters that keeps the Long Island, in some respects, as primitive as Tartar steppes. Meanwhile, however, the cyclist is baffled here for once in his scorching career; the drover rushes for the ford as eagerly as the cateran five hundred years ago. The Atlantic, twice a day, reverses her relationship with Canute, and says, "Thus far shalt thou come, no further!"

THE FORDS OF THE OUTER ISLES.

You come up through South Uist by a road that not for a moment loses interest, so happily bordered is it by crofts and peat-mosses, corn-fields and pastures, where human life abounds in unusual forms, engaged on unfamiliar occupations ; by little lochs of the deepest blue, so numerous that they seem the remains of a recent universal inundation ; and having, in the higher part of it, passed three-quarters of a mile over a road that boldly but ridiculously wades the shallow Loch Bee, you come out upon the South Ford at Carnan. Behind, to the south-east, soar the heights of Hecla, Feavallach, and Beinn Mhor, beyond which Charles Edward skulked in Corodale ; before you lies Benbecula, its few low hills leading the eye to the more eminent Eavel ten miles further on in North Uist. Your road coolly goes on without a check till it apparently commits suicide by running right into an arm of the ocean ! "Felo-de-se" there can't be a doubt of it, for it has plunged incontinent under the waves that roll wild and free, swinging the gull and the fisher's skiff for a mile between you and Creagorry, and if you go to the water's edge you will see run under the rising tide the marks of wheels and horse hoofs. The ford is shut ; it will be hours before your progress can be resumed unless you are content to leave your horse here and take a boat.

It is difficult to believe at that moment that by-and-bye this almost turbulent strait will empty itself of water and leave the road open again across the sand ; but so it is. Meanwhile—to all but boats—Benbecula is cut off. The day passes ; silently the miracle begins ; an island of sand rises in the middle of the channel ; it grows ; the curlew ventures on it prying for its food, the sea-gull toddles humourously across it, blown by a tricky wind ; the sand spreads, a man on a pony, impatient

to get across to Creagorry, dashes through what remains of water—a half-hour-more and the ford is virtually dry. People cross on foot or horseback, in gigs or peat-carts. I doubt, however, if the passage can at any time be made absolutely dry; at all events at the lowest tides I see folks strip their boots and stockings off (sometimes a man in a hurry divests himself more thoroughly); they are prepared to wade the rivulets left by the retiring tide. If it is night-time, and they would leave Benbecula for the south, they have the guidance of a lighted ship's port over the door of the Carnan Inn, a friendly beacon, wanting which, in fog or darkness, the dangers of the crossing would be vastly increased.

But the South Ford is trivial compared with the North Ford that lies before you when you have got through Benbecula and would make for North Uist. South Uist is Roman Catholic; Benbecula is about half Protestant and half Roman Catholic; North Uist is wholly Protestant. It might seem as if the missionaries of the old faith had had some repugnance to taking off their boots; they lost a little heart in crossing from Carnan; they refused to cross at all when it came to the infinitely wider ford at Uachdar. Long Island horses, however fit and handsome they look, either have the indolence that many travellers ascribe to insulars, or are too much pampered by their owners, for it takes an hour to cross the North Ford, including a short detour on the sands to the north east of the island of Grimsay. The most direct route over the sands is, perhaps, about four miles—not bad for a British ford! It is uncomfortable enough to cross by day—how much worse must it be at night? Deep sea pools are in the sand, and numerous rocks and islets fringed with green water; there are—more appallingly—quicksands! The path which pedestrians and vehicles follow in crossing

is not direct from Benbecula to North Uist, but sharply angular, and lives have been lost on the North Ford, so that to guide the traveller the safe path is marked with beacons and stones.

These fords, as I have said, charm and yet repel. For hours of sentiment they are splendid; looking over them from Carnan or from Carinish you can indulge what taste you may have for things ancient, for primitive traffic, for unsophisticated survivals. The fords are the same barrier they were a thousand years ago when vikings, doubtless damned them; the same as they were when they put some hours' check upon a clan's reprisals, or tragically spoiled a masterly retreat with a neighbour's cattle. Angry men have fumed on the brink; lovers have ardently watched for the turn of the tide in the long Bagh Mhor, and the girls they were to meet no less impatiently counted the hours at Olavat. At sunset (when, perhaps, you do not need to cross them) there is much to please in their unfamiliar aspect. The peasant-woman, discreetly kilted, with her boots in her hand and her child on her back, tramps bravely to chapel on the other side; an island pony, with a flowing tail and a fallacious look of sprightly haste, dashes over the sand, bearing a rider who sits on a saddle with a rug of pleated straw below it and rope stirrups—a thousand years behind these times. Comes a long calvacade of peats, or a drove of fierce-looking cattle for the markets. Women wade in the pools mid-way spearing flounders; others search for lob or cockle. The sun declines on Eachkamish, making a world fantastic and unreal. But to cross the ford on a wet day is depressing beyond words; then it seems a place accursed, and you are in no way improved in your humour by the recollection of tales of poor Sharky's end, or the postman's night upon rocks mid-way in the passage.

THE FORDS OF THE OUTER ISLES.

Somewhere near one or other of the fords we met two Englishmen, who seemed as incongruous there as if they had been Bashi-bazouks. They had read in some Southern newspaper an article wherein the Outer Hebrides were set forth as a cheap and fairly accessible sort of Juan Fernandez, in which the adventurous soul with a gun and a fishing rod could live the life primeval and romantic. They had come with visions of solitude and unlimited sport; Crusoes with Cook's coupons as far as Oban, and intrepid spirits for anything else after that. They were disappointed. The sport was indifferent, the country—as they said—was as crowded (with crofters) as if it were Piccadilly; this they maintained, was very far from being the wilds. And, indeed, they had reason; the populated character of the Outer Isles is one of their most striking features. The appearance of its being a crowded community is helped considerably by the character of the land, whose flatness reveals townships as far as the eye can see—busy harvest fields of mingled barley and oats; peat-mosses, where men and women load the creels; moors with children herding cattle. The incense of peat rises everywhere. I cannot deny that to us, at least, these evidences of a thronged industrious community were very pleasant. There is a crushing melancholy in the solitudes of the Argyll or Inverness-shire mainland, where people have given place to sheep; in the deer forest in North Uist and in Harris we felt the world most singularly dolorous, but the crofter lands on either side the fords were, in this sunny weather, as cheerful as cities. If the Long Isle were ours, we would break it into crofts from end to end.

For the Outer Isles the people are the only flowers; no trees grow there; no hedges break the grim monotony of the landscape; no

gardens (as we consider gardens) flourish. But this wind-swept reef set in the Western Ocean has an incomparable beauty of its own, and the trees or flowers it might grow to the best perfection are men and women. It is good to know that the men who own it are of that opinion, too. Here at least there is hope—there are better times for the little agriculturist. Large holdings are being broken up for him at Griantot in North Uist and Obbe in South Harris. We saw large and thriving townships but a few months old where the crofters live in houses that, compared with the old "black house," are palaces. The old crofter's house cost at most £10 to build; the new one costs him £50. He can get the money from the Congested Districts Board if he cannot get it (as he often may) from sons across the sea. He is building dykes and raising fences; his cattle no longer share his dwelling. And the curious thing is that his landlord expects to make more rental from the small holdings than he did from the over-grown farms. These were the considerations that made (to us) the Long Island singularly cheerful as we crossed the fords, accompanied always by signs of human activity wholesomely exercised for the race. Hecla behind us, Eaval before, and, far away to the east, rising in sunshine from the sea, the opal hills of Skye, almost intangible, incredibly hung in the heavens.

NEIL MUNRO.

THOUGHTS IN AN OLD HOUSE IN THE HIGHLANDS, RE-VISITED.

By the DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND.

IME was when men found work and pleasure here,
And on thy pathways let their children roam,
And touching thy grey walls said, "This is Home."

Now for a while, old house, I'd draw so near
Thy broken life, that as one from the dead,
The hall, the stairs, the passages, I tread.

And pausing as I walk in wondering fear,
I sudden dream of dead men's joy and pain;
To go more softly as I turn again.

Still flowers the scabia, still the fuchsias rear
Their purple bells above the tangled grass,
And yield their fading glories as I pass.

From ancient trees the leaves are falling sere,
And golden creepers twine about the bower
Beside the dial that shadows every hour.

The hour, the day, must each one find a bier.
Must man still seeking life go far away?
Are things eternal but the things that stay?

The mystic sea whose moaning I can hear,
The setting sun beyond the falling tide,
The Hills and Straths that evermore abide.

No answer their's; the silent stars appear,
The moon's grey shadow falls athwart the door,
And I, too, pass as others passed before.

"AM FEARANN A THUG THU D' AR N-AITHRICHIBH."

I. Righ. Caib. viii. v. 34.

MA tha sinn mar Ghàidheil ri dol air ar n-agha dh gu buadhmhor, feumaidh sinn gluasad gu tuigseach, ciallach, mar shluagh beusail, urramach, 's cha 'n ann mar ghràisg. Biodhmaid aon-sgeulach, misneachail, gun a bhi 'n eismeil Ghall no Shassunnaich, a' gluasad mar shluagh air nach eil eagal, ach a tha cinnteach a buaidh. Ma bhitheas sinn dileas d' ar cànain is dileas d'a chéile seasaidh a' Ghàidhlig a làrach, is chì sinn fhathast a' Gaidhealtachd 'na dachaidh ghreadhnach aig na Gàidheil 's iad uile gu seasgair sonadh ag àiteach Tir nam Beann, nan Gleann 's nan Gaisgeach.

"FIONN."

CHRISTMAS EVE, 1886. *J. H. Lorimer, R.S.A.*

HOW DIARMUID GOT HIS LOVE-SPOT.

DIARMUID, Conan, Goll, and Oscar, went, of a day, all four of them, to hunt, and they went so far from home that they were not able to draw back towards it again that evening.

They spent the first part of the night within a wood. They were walking the wood and picking fruit and eating it.

When it lengthened out towards midnight they saw from them a light within the wood, and they made towards the light. They found a little house before them and the light was coming out of it. They went into the house then, and the old man who was in the corner bade them a hundred thousand welcomes in their name and surname.

There was no one at all in the house but the old man and a young girl and a cat.

The old man bade get dinner ready for the Fenians of Ireland, saying that they were very hungry, and to get it ready smartly. Supper was got ready, and when the table was laid and the food upon it there came a wether sheep that had been tied up at the east end, at the bottom of the house, and it rose up and stood on the table when they were eating their food. They looked at each other when they saw that. "Rise, Conan," said Goll, "and tie that wether in the place where he was before."

Conan rose up to tie the wether, and laid hold of it. The wether shook itself and threw down Conan under one of its feet.

The others looked at what the wether had done to Conan. "Rise, Diarmuid," said Goll, "and tie that wether in the place it was before.'

Diarmuid rose and laid hold of the wether, and if he did, the wether shook itself and threw down Diarmuid, and put him under another of its feet.

Goll and Oscar looked at one another, and shame came upon them, and they thought it disgraceful what the wether had done. "Rise up, Oscar, and tie that wether in the place he was before."

Oscar laid hold of the wether, and if he did, the wether put him down under its other foot. Now the three were under his feet and he had one foot empty. Goll rose up then and he himself seized it, and if he did, he took a fall out of the wether, but the wether arose in spite of him and put Goll under the other foot.

"It is a great shame," said the old man, "to give such usage to the Fenians of Ireland; rise up, Cat, and tie that wether in the place where he was."

The cat rose up and laid hold of the wether, and spread his paws round about it, and brought the wether with him in spite of itself, so that he tied it up again at the bottom of the house.

The men rose up, and after rising they were eating nothing. Shame was on them for the deed the wether had done.

"Eat ye your dinner," said the old man, "and when ye have it eaten I shall tell you that ye are the best heroes in the world." They ate their dinner then.

"Goll," said the old man, "you are the best hero in the world.

You knocked a stir out of the world. The strength of the world is in the wether, but Death has the upper hand of the World itself,'' said he, "and that is the Death he,'' looking at the cat.

They had their supper eaten then and were talking with one another, and the old man said to get beds ready for them, and for them to go to sleep.

They went to go to sleep, the four of them, in the one room ; and when they had gone to sleep the young woman came in to sleep in the one room with them, and the splendour that was in her was shining on the wall as it were the light of a candle.

Conan thought in his own mind, and he in his bed, that he would approach the young woman, and he went to her to the side of her couch.

Now it was Youth that was in the young woman.

"O Conan,'' said she, "go back to your bed, you had me already and you shall not have me again for ever.''

Conan went back to his own bed, and Oscar rose up then and desired o come to where she was. And she said to Oscar, "Where are you going? ''

"To pass a while where you yourself are,'' said Oscar.

"Go back, Oscar, you had me already, and you shall not have me again for ever.''

Oscar returned to his bed.

Diarmuid rose up then to go himself to where she was.

"Where will you go, Diarmuid?'' said she.

"It is to you I am going, to pass a while with you,'' said Diarmuid.

"Oh, Diarmuid,'' said she, "you cannot. You had me already, Diarmuid,'' said she, "and you shall not have me again for ever, but

turn over to me, Diarmuid,'' said she, " and I will give you a love-spot so that no woman will ever see you but you will beguile her.''

Diarmuid turned to her, and she touched her hand to his face, and she left the love-spot on him, and there was no woman who saw Diarmuid from that out that he could not beguile her.

CRIOCH.

I wrote down the foregoing story from the mouth of an old man named Martain Ruadh O Giollarnath, or "Forde," as the name is called in English. He lived in the Co. Galway, about four or five miles north of Monivea on the estate of Mr Reddington Roche, and spoke only Irish. Every Gael in the Highlands of Scotland knows the names of the four persons in the story as well as we do in Ireland, and the story itself may possibly still survive in Scotland. It bears an exceedingly close resemblance to a tale in Scandinavian mythology where Thor takes the place of Goll.

AN CRAOIBHIN.

(DOUGLAS HYDE, LL.D., D. Litt.)

WIND FROM THE WEST, EDINBURGH. *James Paterson, A.R.S.A.*

CEATHRAMHNAN,

A RINNEADH DO DH-ERISGEIDH.

By the late Father ALLAN MACDONALD, Eriskay

Air ruith—"Righle Coileach a Chinn mhoir."

GED a gheibhinnse mo thaghadh
B'e mo ragh' dhe 'n Eòrpa
Aite tuinidh 'n cois na tuinne
'N Eilein grinn na h-Oige,
Lom e 'dhuilleach, lom e 'mhuran,
Lom e 'churachd eòrna ;
Air a luimead gur a lurach
Leams' a 'h-uile fòd dheth.

2. 'S fhad' 'o thugadh dhuts' an t-urram
Aig a Phrionnsa Tearlach.
'S ann 'bha 'fuireachd an sàr-dhuine
'Chuir gu 'm fulang Leòdaich,
Is Iain Mùideartach an curaidh
'Dh 'iomair cluith air Lòchaidh
Thug iad uile greiseag unnad :—
Fir an diugh 'g a thòrachd.

3. Cha 'n 'eil ionad anns a' chruinne
'S inntinniche òigridh.
Sunndach cridheil fonn nan nighean
'S binne 'sheinneas òran.

CEATHRAMHNAN.

Ar cuid bhodach 's iad 'tha frogail—
Mòr tha thogail còmh 'riuth :
Sùrd na caileig 'air a' chaillich,
'S mear an aign' 'tha fòipe.

4. Fuaim nam feadan feadh nan creagan,
Leinibh bheaga 'dannsa ;
Luchd na mara a' sàr-tharruing
Canabhas ri cranntaibh,
Eubh nan gillean shios mu 'n linnidh
Iad ag iomairt trang ann :
Tràigh a's gile, cnuic a's grinne,
Ragha suidhe sàmhraidh.

5. Là na gaillinn gur a fallain
Gaoth na mara greanntaidh ;
Gasd an sealladh muir a 'stealladh
Sad mu mhullach bheanntabh ;
Marcan-sìne bharr na Sgrìne
Nuas 'n a mhill 's 'na dheann-ruith ;
Muir gach ama 'caochladh greana
Ris na meallan geamhraidh.

6. Gasd am farum aig a' bhannal
'Th'air an teanal thall ud ;
Luaghadh daingeann air na maidean
'Chuireas plaid 'an teanndachd ;
Trom am buille, treun an ruighe,
Trang a' bhuidhean bhaindidh ;

CEATHRAMHNAN.

'N clò 'n a shiubhal 'dol 'an tighead,
'Rann 'cur ruith gun taing air.

2. Thall mu 'n teallach faic a' chailleach
'Cur 'n a deannabh 'cuibhle.
Fear-an-taighe 's math a lamhan—
Dubhan cam 'g a rìghleadh.
Tigh a' bhealaich 's mòr an tathaich
'Th' 'ann de dh-fhearabh 's nìonag,
'S fear dha 'm b' aithne le sar-anail
'Gabhail rann na Feinne.

3. Piob 'g a spreigeadh, binn a fead leam,
'S cha b'e sgread na fìdhle ;
Cridh' 'toirt breab as 's e 'g a freagairt
Ann am beadradh inntinn.
Air an fheasgar bhiodh na fleasgaich
A' co-fhreagairt tìm dhith ;
Leam bu ghasda 'bhith 'n am faisge
'Dol an teas an rìghlidh.

9. Fir a' tarruing mach a cala
Gum b 'e 'n sealladh eibhinn ;
'Togail chrannabh, buill 'gan snaimeadh
Ann an grambh gleusta ;
Siuil a' crathadh, chluinnt 'am farum
Gus am faighte reidh iad ;
'S mach air chabhaig thun na mara,
'S cop ri 'darach, deudag.

10. Na lìn fhada 's na lin sgadain
Ann am badaibh réidh ac' ;
'H-uile h-ullachas 'dhìth culaidh
'Bhios a' ruith an eisg ac !
Dia na tuinne gur e 'm bun e :
'Dé 'ni duin' as eugais ?
Torradh mar' a cuile Mhoire—
'S e 'tha 'cumail éis bhuap'.

11. Gum bu laghach toiseach foghair
Corra thadhal dorghaich,
'Leigeil dhubhan thun a ghrunna
Muigh air iola eòlaich.
Bodaich bheaga 'g ich' 'an graide,
Mucan creige 'corbadh,
'S beadag cudaige 'tighinn h-ugainn
Dha 'n robh 'n criomadh seòlta.

12. 'Tòrachd cobhartaich ri reothart
Muigh air oitir treud dhiubh ;
Dh' aindeoin crosgag bhog na rosad
Gheibhte so-chur eisg ann.
Nuas 'nar fochair gun dad dochuinn
Thigeadh socair leabag;
'S bioraich mhosach, 'thoill an crochadh,
'S tric 'bha crios dhuibh fhein ann.

13. Feasgar foghair 'dradhadh mhaghar
Gum b' i 'n fhaghaid ghrinn i ;

CEATHRAMHNAN.

Iasg a' riobadh, gun fhois tiota,
'Togail diogal inntinn' ;
Sliopraich slapraich aig na slatan
'Cumail cath 'an teinn ruith' ;
Beairt 'g a bogadh 's beairt 'g a togail,
'S beairt 'g an sgobadh innte.

14. 'N àm na Calluinn' feadh nan carraig
Bhiodh na feara greòd dhiubh ;
La gun dad aca' gan ragach',
'S latha sgaid gu leoir ann.
Fear a' pronnadh, 's fear a' solladh
'Tional pobull ghòrag ;
Tàbh 'g a thomadh thun an tobhair,
'Sin 'g a thogail fòpa.

15. Fir 'nan deannabh 'tarruing eallach
Stigh 'o 'n chala Hanna
'Dh-iasg na mara 'reir an ama
'Cumail thall na teanndachd.
Smearaich thapaidh 'ruith 'n am feachdabh
Feadh nan leac' an traingead,
'Tireadh langa, dhaibh is aithne,
Air an sgalaidh 's t-samhradh.

16. Bharr gach bearraidh, stigh gach bealach
Chithear deannan nìonag,
Eallach connaidh 'cul an droma
Nuas 'o n mhonadh Sgrìne.

CEATHRAMHNAN.

Bodaich throma 'n cas air sgonnan
Chas-a-croma, 'sgios dhiubh ;
Struth de'n fhallus air am malaidh
'Toirt air talamh striochdadh.

17. Luingeas bhioran aig na giullain
Air gach linn' an snàmh iad ;
Fear 'gan ligeadh, fear 'gan tilleadh
Air gach iomall bàghain.
Sud an iorram nach dian ciorram,
'Chuireas mir' air àite ;—
Coimhling loinneil ud na cloinne,
Leam bu toil 'bhith 'm pàirt riuth.

18. 'H-uile h-eag am bonn nan creagan
Bothag bheag aig cloinn ann ;
Streathan shlige, blaighean phige,
Badan riobag, loinn leo :
'Buain nam bileagan 'bu ghrinne
Ann am mire soighneis,
'Togail luinneag air gach coileig
'Leigeil ruith le 'n aoibhneas.

19. Ogain gheala feadh nam bealach
Gur e 'n teanal grinn iad :
Sud iad agaibh feadh nan lagabh
Ann am baidean cruinn iad.
Nall am mullach thar an tulaich,
Dhaibh is ullamh sìnteag ;

CEATHRAMHNAN.

'Direadh chnoc, 'gearradh bhoc,
Saor 'o lochd 's o mhìghean.

20. Ron le 'chuilean air an t-siubhal,
Co nach ludhaig spéis dha,
'S e cho measail air an isean,
Mu' n dian elibisd beud air.
Ri am cunnairt, sud air 'mhuin e,
'Falbh an t-sruth gu réidh leis ;
Gum bu tubaisdeach dha' n duine
'Chaireadh gunn' air ghleus ris.

21. Sùlair amaiseach, a's t-earrach
Stigh 'an carabh tìr e,
'Tigh'nn 'an caise, sgiathan paisgte,
Fear nach caisgt' a chiocras.
Thall 's a bhos iad, cha 'n 'eil fois ac',
Sloistreadh crosd' gun sgìos ac';
'Cromadh, 'tomadh fo na tonnan,
'Lionadh bhronnan shios iad.

22. Corr chas fhada, stob 'bun cladaich,
'Riochd 'bhith ragaicht 'reòthta,
'N ann fo gheasaibh 'tha i 'seasamh ?
'M bi i 'feasd 's an t-seòl ud ?
Cailleach ghlic i, cha do chleachd i
Cluich 'an cuideachd ghòraich ;
'Ragha suthainn 'bhith gun duine
'N cuid rith' 'grunnach lònain.

CEATHRAMHNAN.

23. An sgarbh odhar, air tha fothail,
'Caradh fodha 'n clisgeadh.
Dh-eoin na mara cha 'n 'eil fear ann
'Fhuair a char 's an uisge.
Aghaidh Staca ris na leacaibh
Chithear feachd ri fois diubh :
Sud 's an uisg' iad, ma ni mosgaid
Losgadh clis 'n am faisge.

24. H-uile cinneadh muigh air linnidh
A ni imeachd tuinn deth ;
Bunabhuachaille a mhuineil,
Binn a bhurral ciùil leam ;
Crannlach, 's learga bhraghada dearga,
Annlag fairg', eoin-bhùchain,
Iall de lachabh 'm fiath a' chladaich,
Riagh de chearcaill umpa.

25. Ach b'e m' ulaidh-sa dhiubh uile
Té gun lurachd gann dhith—
Bòdhag chuimir cheuma grinne
'Sheasadh ionad baintighearn'.
'S i 'tha furachail m'a culaidh,
Mu 'n toir fliuchadh greann dith ;
Coltas silidh a' bhith tighinn
Tillidh i 'n a teann-ruith.

26. 'S tric a shuidh mí 'm barr na beinne
'G amharc luingeas Ghallda

ANIMAL STUDY.

Edwin Alexander, A.R.S.A.

CEATHRAMHNAN.

Le 'n cuid canabhas ri crannabh,
Gum b' e 'n sealladh greanmhor :
Sgoth a' tilleadh, 'n ealta 'mire,
'Cromadh 'sireadh annlainn :
Gum b 'e 'sonas a 'bhith fuireach
Anns an innis sheannsail.

27. 'S minig 'theireadh fear' an inisg
Gun roth 'n t-eilein stamhnte,
'H-uile duine, 'bh 'ann a thuineadh,
Ann an ionad fainge :
Ach 's e' chuir air barrachd lurachd—
Air gach tulach 's gleann deth,—
Dion na tuinne a 'bhith uime
'Cumail 'muigh na h' anntlachd.

THE LATE FARQUHAR D. MACDONELL,

THE LOCHALSH BARD.

IT is thought that there is very little known concerning this Gaelic poet. Dr. Keith N. Macdonald, in his useful "Macdonald Bards from Mediæval Times," gives the reference to what is published of this poet's Gaelic productions, and concludes:—"We do not know enough about MacDonell's History to enable us to conclude to what family or to which locality he originally belonged, but the writer strongiy suspects that he must have belonged to some Lochaber family, and probably a scion of the house of Keppoch. At any rate, he was a very good poet, and one worthy of a niche in the temple of fame." A work by Mr. Macleod on "Modern Gaelic Bards," about to be published by Mr. MacKay, of Stirling, is to contain a portrait of MacDonell with one of his popular pieces. And, as I happen to possess further unpublished poems and letters in the poet's own finished caligraphy, which must have been the delight of compositors, and written ere he emigrated to New Zealand, where he died, I may give two or three of his letters and enable the curious to add to their information. Writing from Plockton, Lochalsh, 18th March, 1862, to "the Reverend, the Roman Catholic clergyman of Barra," he says:—"Rev. Sir,—Having heard of late that a considerable sum of money has been left by a M'Donell, from Knoydart or Glengarry, who had to leave his country for supporting the cause of the unfortunate Charles Edward, I beg leave most respectfully to address

you these few lines, being told that you can give much information on the subject, to ask you the favour to let me know his name—of what family was he,—where was the money left, and how much? Any additional intelligence you will be pleased to communicate will be also thankfully received. Hoping you will be kind enough to reply hereto at your very earliest convenience,—I am, Rev. Sir, your most obedient servant, F. D. M'Donell."

Again, from Plockton, on 14th March, 1864, he addressed himself to the same correspondent, the Rev. W. M'Donell, and makes the following interesting communication:—"Rev. and Dear Sir,—I was never more agreeably surprised than when the post handed me your favour of the 24th ulto., for I certainly thought that I was blotted our of your book of memory long ago. I was not aware of giving offence in thought, word or deed, so I could not understand what was the cause of your silence; but I was mortified thereby, because I was previously delighted in the thought of keeping up a correspondence with you till the heart strings of either of us ceased to vibrate. Many thanks for your letter, and many thanks for your good wishes towards me. I have been in health since I heard from you, and I trust you have been enjoying the same blessing.

"I do not personally know the MacRae you mention, but hear say has given me a favourable account of him.

"Regarding my creed I have nothing particular to say. Since my infant days I have lived in a place where I was surrounded with Protestants and Protestantism—a Roman Catholic, my mother excepted, not being within twelve miles of me,—so that I always imbibed Protestant doctrines, as I heard nothing but them. I certainly read some of the

best authors on both sides, and if their productions added somewhat to my knowledge I cannot boast that my wisdom is much greater. Each party endeavours to prove from Scripture that his opinion is the right one, so that they sink me deeper and deeper in the mire. I really like to hear a clever man of either side ; and I am at enmity with no person professing the existence of the All-in-All Triune. If a man differs from me in opinion, I also differ from him : so we are on a par.

" With respect to my poetry, I may say that I am much obliged for your advice. Whether I can or will adhere to it I will not say ; but it is a difficult task, for I deal sometimes with customers who are impervious to milder treatment than I apply to them, so I give them what they are able to understand, and only is fit to curb them. When I fire at such venomous reptiles I say with Byron :

> ' Prepare for rhyme—I'll publish right or wrong :
> Fools are my theme, let satire be my song.'

The other lines I apply to them you will find at the bottom of the accompanying song. Perhaps my productions are not worth being printed in a collected form : therefore, and as I think so, I am not so guarded as I otherwise would be.

" If I am possessed of any exemplary parts, I do not know whether I inherit them from the Ardnabies or not, but I pride in being descended of that good old family. Fear Aird-na-bidhe was my great great grandfather, so that you will not be surprised should I be claiming a share of the money left by Donald M'Donell. If the sum be so great as is reported, it would do good to us both, and I think we ought to go hand and heart about it.—I remain, Dear Sir, Yours most truly, F. D. M'Donell."

Once more, on 8th August, 1865 :—" Rev. and Dear Sir,—Will you call the accompanying song ' ribaldry ? ' If you will, I do not know what is eulogy. I am rather disposed to think that you will now call me the pink of panegyrists.

" You do not seem to be pleased with the manner in which I lash scoundrels ; but I cannot help it. There are some complaints which require the application of caustic, while others can be healed only by emollient medicines and unguents. So with men and women. Some cannot be brought to their senses but by the severest castigation, while for others mild language and gentleness is sufficient. I have shown some of my poetical productions to clergymen (whigs) of my acquaintance, and I always noticed that my loosest pieces would make them roar, and laugh, while my mildest would be passed with a few approving remarks : but after the ebullition of their risibilities subsided, they would pretend they were not pleased with the former, and advise me to discontinue them. I gave a small MS. of my composition to the Rev. Mr. Lamond (late R.C.C., Dornie) till he would read it, but he treated me most ungentlemanly, for he brought it with him to Staffordshire. He would laugh out-right at my ' ribaldry.' But, no doubt, I believe your advice is good and well intended.

" I am by no means satisfied with the manner in which you carry on your epistolary correspondence with respect to myself. It would do well enough in the days of Methusaleh and those other long-aged fellows ; but when our web of existence is so short, our powers of correspondence will soon end.

" There was a Dr. M'Gillivray, a cousin of mine, who lived sometime, I believe, in Barra. I do not know if he is there now. I am sorry

to inform you that my mother is confined to bed for the past ten months from the effects of a tumour on the neck, which broke on the tenth of October last, and is losing blood since. If I survive her, I may take a small farm ; perhaps I could get one in Barra. The difficulty of getting to market is really a great obstacle, but there may be other immunities to counterbalance that.

" I will expect to hear from you soon—a letter for a song."

Accompanying a long poem, entitled " Cnoc nan Dobhran agus na Tighearnan-fearainn beaga bha 'ga sheilbheachadh 'sa bhliadhna 1864," he adds a postcsript in English :—" Rev. Sir,—I trust you will be satisfied with the above dithyrambic—there is nothing so far as I am a judge of immorality in it, I hope there is more of the immortality. My mother is still clinical, and I am sorry to say rather facile. The Rev. Mr. X——— was seeing her once since he came to D———, but he neither read nor prayed over her. With respect to my consanguinity to Dr. MacGillivray it is, so far as I could learn, that Janet, his grandmother, and Christina, my grandmother, were sisters, the former married to a M'Gillivray, a merchant, and the latter to Dougald M'Donell, residing at Loch Horn, and afterwards in Kintail, where he died. We are, therefore, grandsons of two sisters, who are grand-daughters of Aird Na Bidh."

His well-known song, " Failte dhut, deagh shlainte leat, oran a rinneadh a dh' Iain Stiubhart iar dha seoladh gu ruig Astralia," I possess in the poet's own hand. It contains lines additional to the version I have seen in print, and variations here and there. MacDonell's compositions abound in idiom and terse phraseology, and entitle him to a high rank among the Gaelic Bards. His emigration to New Zealand,

and new interests in a new sphere, together with the deaths of friends at home, and the difficulty of publishing his poems together with his own depreciation of their merits, all this and more have combined to obscure his fame. He was an exceptionally fine looking man, and possessed of rare information as a Seanachie.

GEORGE HENDERSON,
Lecturer in Celtic Languages and Literature,
University of Glasgow.

April, 1907.

DALUA

(A FRAGMENT).

DALUA [slowly coming from the shadow].

By dim moon-glimmering coasts, and dim grey wastes
Of thistle-gathered shingle, and sea-murmuring woods
Trod once, but now untrod . . . . anon grey skies
That had the grey wave sighing in their sails,
And in their drooping sails the grey sea-ebb ;
And with the grey wind before me evermore
Blowing the dim leaf from the blackening trees,
I have travelled from one darkness to another.

VOICES IN THE WOOD.

Though you have travelled from one darkness to another,
Following the dim leaf from the blackening trees
That the grey wind harries, and have trodden the woods
Where the grey-hooded crows that once were men
Gather in multitude from the long grey wastes
Of thistled-shingle by sea-murmurous coasts,
Yet you have come no further than a rood,
A little rood of ground in a circle woven.

DALUA.—

Listen ! . . . I hear no more the long, dull roar,
My lips have lost the salt of the driven foam
Of the long grey beaches of the Hebrides.

DALUA

VOICES.—

Behind the little windless caves of the wood
The sea-wastes of the wind-worn Hebrides
With thundrous crashes falling wave on wave,
Are but the troubled sighs of a great silence.

DALUA.

You know not who I am, sombre and ancient voices.
[silence].
. . . . . .
I am old, more old, more ancient than the gods,
For I am Son of Shadow, eldest god,
Who dreamed the passionate and terrible dreams
We have called Fire and Light, Water and Wind,
Air, Darkness, Death, Change and Decay, and Birth,
And all the infinite bitter range that is.

A VOICE.—

Brother and kin to all the twilit gods,
Living, forgot, long dead : sad shadow of pale hopes,
Forgotten dreams, and madness of men's minds :
Outcast among the gods, and called the Fool,
Yet dreaded even by those immortal eyes
Because thy fateful touch can wreck the mind
Or lay a frost of silence on the heart :
Dalua, hail ! . . . . . .

DALUA.—

. . . . . I am but what I am.
[Loud laughter from the wood].
Laugh not, ye outcasts of the invisible world.

DALUA

For Lu and Œngus laugh not, nor the gods,
Safe set above the perishable stars.

[Silence].

They laugh not, nor any in the high celestial house.
Their proud immortal eyes grow dim and clouded
When as a morning shadow I am gathered
Into their holy light, for well they know
The dreadful finger of the Nameless One
That moves as a shadow falls. For I, Dalua,
Am yet the blown leaf of the unknown powers.

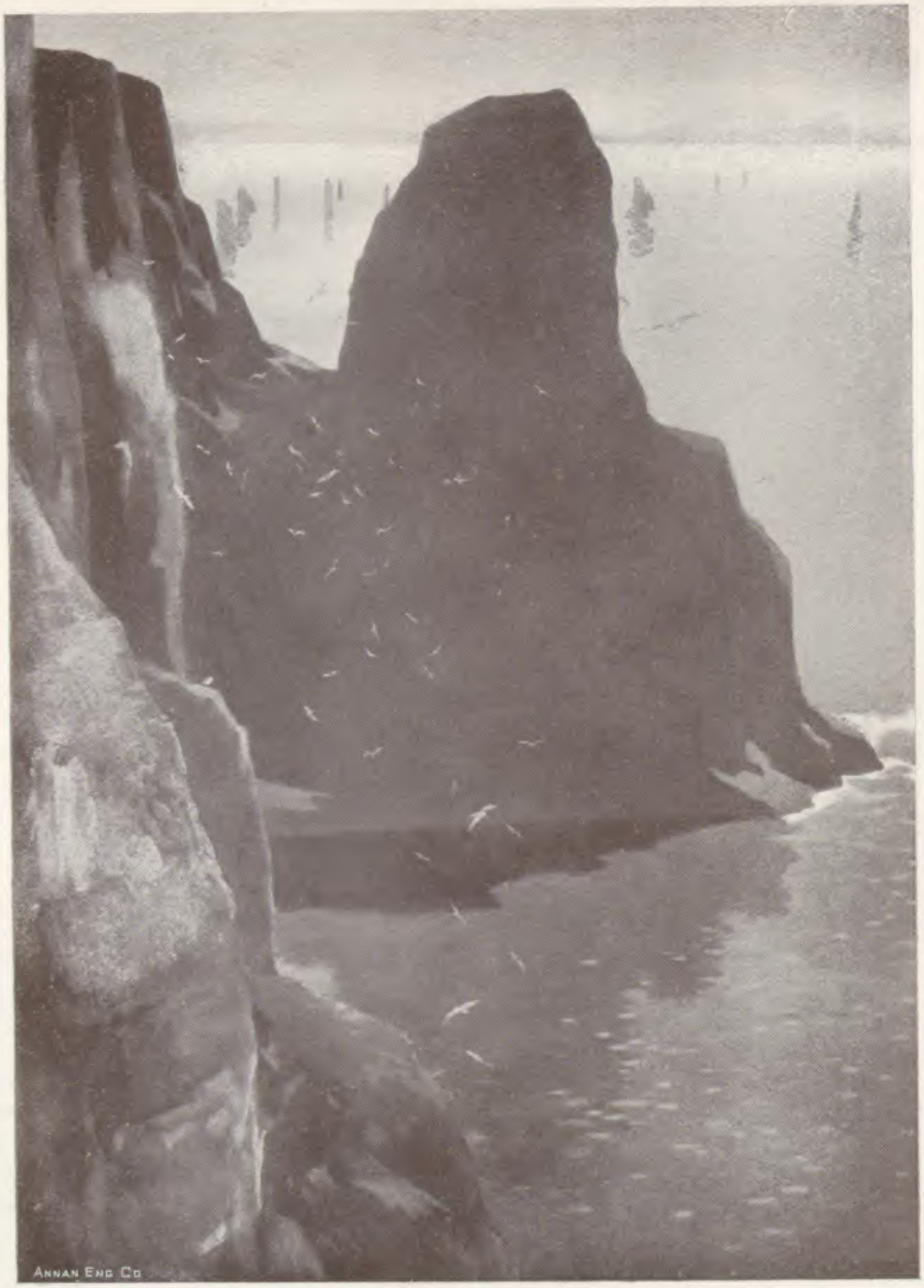
VOICES—[tumultuously]—

We, too, are the blown leaves of the unseen powers.

DALNA—

Demons and Dreams and Shadows, and all ye
Invisible folk who haunt the darkling ways,
I am grown weary, who have stooped and lain
Over the green edge o' the shaken world,
And seen beneath the whirling maze of stars
Infinite griefs of silence, and the obscure
Abysmal wastes where Time hath never trod.

FIONA MACLEOD.



THE JUDI STACK. *James Cadenhead, A.R.S.A.*

THE GAELIC OUTLOOK

WHAT to do with the Gaelic heritage in its modern survivals — language, dress, music, literature, customs, traditions—is a question that seems to be stirring in many minds. These distinctive elements of Highland life are now found lurking for the most part in the by-ways and recesses of their ancient domain, like shades of the departed, and ill at ease amid modern conditions. Only along the western seaboard, or in lonely glens among the hills, or in the rocky sea-girt islands of the Hebrides do they still find a precarious and somewhat attenuated existence. The very atmosphere in which they used to flourish is becoming so rarefied that sons of the heather are afraid that their language and customs must inevitably pass, and their dried remains continue solely as objects of curiosity in our museums and libraries.

As man moves ever on from fancy to the fact, between the anticipation and the realisation there may be far less distance than we care to imagine. Certain broad facts have to be recognised. Since the introduction of the steamboat and the railway, and more especially of education and the press, the Highlands have been gradually Anglicised. Gaelic is no longer in the main the language of business, of the home, of public life, or even of religion. Along the Highland line in particular, from Perth to Wick, it is not much in evidence in the ordinary thought and traffic of the people. Farmers dispense with it at the weekly sales, shopkeepers in their shops, teachers in the schools, railway officials at

the railway stations. People do not read the news of the day in Gaelic, or books, or advertisements or circulars, nor do they write letters in that language. Possibly not one in a hundred of the common people can read the native tongue, or one in a thousand write it. As for its grammar and spelling, they are as incomprehensible to the average Highlander as those of Welsh or Sanscrit.

What is more signficant is the rapid decline in the use of Gaelic in church services. A quarter of a century ago few churches in the Highlands were entirely devoid of its use in worship. Now to have regular Gaelic preaching is becoming in many places the exception rather than the rule. In the U.F. Church this year the Highland Committee report only one Gaelic-speaking student as having finished his curriculum. In the Glasgow College of that Church during last session there was not a single Gaelic speaker in the first, second, or fourth year of study (see College Report, 1906-07), and the Highland Summer Missions, as distinct from the stations, are manned almost or quite exclusively by English-speaking students—men who hail from Southern counties, such as Forfar, Dumbarton, and Dumfries, and who bear Lowland names.

From all these facts, and the increasing dearth of Gaelic books, magazines, newspapers, bards, teachers, and preachers, it is evident that the decline of the language as a spoken speech is proceeding more rapidly than ever, and that unless the process is delayed it is doomed very soon, like the Cornish, to go the way of the heroes.

Fortunately, however, outside the Highlands a remarkable interest is being evolved in the Gaelic. This is due to the researches of scholars both in Britain and on the Continent, and to the better knowledge which is being disseminated regarding the language and its literature. In

view of this revival of public interest some extravagant notions are being fostered, and some visionary schemes propounded for the resuscitation of the Gaelic as the one language of the North.

It has ever been the weakness or misfortune of the Celt, as Matthew Arnold pointed out, to rebel against the despotism of fact, and thus to court inevitable failure and defeat. And those who talk irresponsibly of restoring the Gaelic to its ancient sway over the life and thought of the people, are but affording another illustration of this harmful tendency. The trend of circumstances is against it, and will bear them down. It would be as easy to abolish English in the Highlands as to re-establish Gaelic, and either operation has only to be mentioned to any ordinary intelligence to be instantly recognised as futile. Gaelic was the fitting medium of expression of the old order which is passing away. It is utterly inadequate to the new.

Every matter will bear to be taken hold of by one or other of two handles—a right and a wrong—and friends of the Gaelic would be well advised, instead of aiming at the impracticable and impossible, to consider what really is wanted at the present stage, and what can be done with any hope of success.

Clearly then, the first requisite is to create a sound, healthy public opinion on the subject in the Highlands itself, and to enlist the sympathies of the people generally in favour of their native tongue. At present the majority of the Highlanders are amazingly ignorant of the great past of their race—of its language, history, and literature. In fact they are far more intimately acquainted with the history and literature of the Jews than with those of their own early ancestors. They do not know the high place Gaelic occupies in the Aryan group of languages, or the

value philologists and mythologists at home and abroad attach to its study. What they do most forcibly realise is that it is the language of the older, the more illiterate, and, consequently, the narrower and less informed section of the community who are usually to be found on the side of reaction, combating culture and progress. And so the more enlightened see no practical good in the language or beauty that they should greatly desire it. The young in their hearts despise it, and their parents are indifferent; many of them, believing that a knowledge of Gaelic will retard the English education and future prospects of their children, are openly hostile. Even when father and mother hold converse themselves in the mother tongue they discourage its use by their family, and seldom or never are known to address them except in English.

The interest evinced by Celtic scholars and Celtic enthusiasts outside the Highlands has not yet filtered down to the average man on the spot. And the first great need of the reformer is to awaken a more intelligent interest in the people themselves; to show them that their language is not only ancient and beautiful, but it also bears a close affinity with the time-honoured Latin and Greek, and can be a means of developing the mental faculties quite as valuable as these; that learned men value it for its rich stores of ancient lore, and that the cultured and intelligent generally no longer despise it as a barbarous tongue, but many of them would fain know it themselves as an additional linguistic accomplishment.

The recognition of the fact that it may be a powerful medium for developing the intelligence and promoting the education of Highland children has come tardily. But the Education Department now show that they are fully alive to the possibilities in this direction. They have

not only issued instructions for its more general use in eliciting the meanings of English words and passages, and thus drawing out the intelligence of Gaelic speaking pupils. They have backed their order with the offer of a grant of £10 to every school where a teacher, capable of so instructing the children, is provided for the purpose. They have also accorded to Gaelic a similar place in the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate Examinations as that held by other ancient and modern language ssuch as Latin, Greek, French, and Italian.

One other step, much to be desired, remains to be taken. And that is that provision be made for teaching elementary scholars in the Highlands to READ the native tongue. This instruction might be begun in the case of those desiring it before they left the junior division, and might be carried on for a year or two in the senior till they were proficient. After that it might be dropped as part of their curriculum, other facilities being provided for such as wished to continue it for the Intermediate and Leaving Certificates. The fact that it is valid now as a subject for the University Preliminary and the M.A. Degree should be an additional stimulus for its cultivation in the schools, since it might be vastly more easy and congenial for a Highland student to pass in Gaelic than in Greek, German, or other alternative.

Meanwhile much could be done by the Comunn Gaidhealach and other Gaelic agencies by instituting popular lectures in the winter evenings, supplying the libraries of the Highlands with readable books on the history and literature of the Gael, and preparing and giving as prizes in the various schools beautifully bound copies of the same. In this way a living interest would be fostered in the mother-tongue and its lore, and the Highlanders recognising their own features in the mirror

of the past would be less likely to go stumbling on, as so many of them do, in the footfalls of their ancestors, but would gradually acquire a more enlightened and nobler outlook upon life.

MAGNUS MACLEAN.

ANIMAL STUDY. *William Walls, A.R.S.A.*

FEILL A' CHOMUINN GHAIDHEALAICH.

THA na brataichean 'g an sgaoileadh
Ris na gaothan air na sleibhtean,
Gu bhi dearbhadh feadh an t-saoghail
Nach do chaochail siol nan treun-fhear.

Gu 'm bheil spiorad glan an sinnsear
Nach gabh striochdadh leis an eucoir,
Gu bhi taisbeanadh an disleachd
Ris na suinn a dhearbh an euchdan.

Seid an dùdach suas a dhùsgadh
As a dùsal Tir nam beanntan ;
Biodh a guth mar dhealan siùbhlach
A' cur surd air sluagh nan gleanntan.

Glaodh a mach, is sgaoil an sgeula
Gu 'm bheil Feill nan Gaidheal dlù oirnn ;
Biodh na pioban air an gleusadh
'S caithream éibhneis anns gach lùchairt.

Bho 'n tha Fiùghalaich na rioghachd
An co-bhainn air taobh na Gàidhlig ;
Theid a h-altrum suas gu riomhach
'S co ni dì-meas air ar cànain ?

Bidh guth binn nan dàn 's nan òran
Aig ar n-òigridh mar a b' àbhaist,
'S clann nan Gàidheal mar bu chòir dhaibh
Cosnadh glòir do Thìr nan àrd-bheann.

NIALL MACLEOID.

THE HERD OF FARAWA.

Who in an April hailstorm discoursed to the traveller on the present discontents.

Pastorum et solis exegit montibus aevum—Virgil.

EOSH, man! Did ever mortal see
Sic blasts o' snaw. Ye'll bide a wee,
Afore ye think to ford the Dee,
And cross the slack!
Kin'le your pipe, and straucht your knee,
And gie's your crack!

Hoo lang, ye speir! An unco while!
It's seeventy-sax 'ear come Aprile
That I cam here frae 'yont Glengyle—
A bairn o' nine;
And mony's the dreich and dreary mile
I've gaed sin' syne.

My folk were herds, sae round the fauld
Afore I was twae towmonts auld
They fand me snowkin', crouse and bauld
In snaw and seep—
As Dauvid was to kingdoms called,
Sae I to sheep.

THE HERD OF FARAWA.

I herdit first on Etterick side.
Dod, man, I mind the stound o' pride
Gaed through my hert, when near and wide
My dowgs I ran.
Though no seeventeen till Lammastide
I walked a man.

I got a wife frae Eskdalemuir,
O' dacent herdin' folk, and sair
We wrocht for lang, baith late and 'ear,
For weans cam fast,
And we were never aucht but puir
Frae first to last.

Tales I could tell wad gar ye grue
O' snawy lambin's warstled through,
O' drifty days, and win's that blew
Frae norlan' sky,
And spates that filled the haughlands fou
And drooned the kye.

But, still and on, the life was fine,
For yon were happier days langsyne ;
For gear to hain, and gear to tine
I had nae care—
Content I was wi' what was mine,
And blithe to share.

Sic flocks ye'll never see the day,
Nae fauncy ills to mak ye wae,

THE HERD OF FARAWA.

Nae fauncy dips wi' stawsome broo,
Wad fricht the French ;
We wrocht alang the auld guid way,
And fand it stench.

Nae mawkit kets, nae scabbit een,
But ilka yowe as trig's a preen ;
Sic massy tups as ne'er were seen
Sin' Job's allowance,
And lambs as thick on ilka green
As simmer gowans.

Whaur noo ae hirsel jimp can bide
Three hirsels were the kintry's pride,
And mony a yaird was wavin' wide,
And floo'ers were hingin',
Whaur noo is but the bare hillside,
And linties singin'.

And God ! the men ! Whaur could ye find
Sic hertsome lads, sae crouse and kind ;
Sic skeel o' sheep, sic sarious mind
At kirk and prayer—
Yet aiblins no to haud or bind
At Boswells fair ?

Frae Galloway to Aberdeen
(I mind the days as 'twere yestreen)
I've had my cantrips—Lord a wheen !

But through them a',
The fear o' God afore my een,
I keep't the law.

My nieves weel hoddit in my breeks,
The law I keep't, and turned baith cheeks
Until the smiter, saft and meek's
A bairn at schule;
Syne struck, and laid him bye for weeks
To learn the fule.

Frae Melrose Cauld to Linkumdoddie,
I'd fecht and drink wi' ony body;
Was there a couthy lad? Then, dod, he
Sune fand his fellow.
What time the tippenny or the toddy
Had garred us mellow.

Nae wark or ploy e'er saw me shirk;
I had a nieve wad fell a stirk;
I traivelled ten lang mile to kirk
In wind and snaw;
I tell 'e, sir, frae morn to mirk,
I keep't the law.

Weekly we gat, and never fail,
Screeds marrowy as a pat o' kail,
And awfu' as the grey Meer's Tail
In Lammas rain,

And stey and lang as Moffatdale,
And stieve's a stane.

Nae Gospel sowens fit for weans,
But doctrines teuch as channel-stanes ;
We heard the Word wi' anxious pains,
Sarious and happy.
And half the week we piked the banes,
And fand them sappy.

Lang years aneath a man o' God
I sat, my Bible on the brod ;
He wasna feared to lift the rod
And scaud the errin' ;
He walked whaur our great forbears trod,
And blest his farin'.

But noo we've got a bairnly breed,
Whase wee-bit shilpit greetin' screed
Soughs like a wast wind ower the heid,
Lichter than 'oo' ;
Lassies and weans, it suits their need,
No me and you !

My dochter's servin' in the toun.
She gangs to hear a glaikit loon,
Whae rows his een, and twirls him roun'
Like ane dementit.
Nae word o' Hell, nae sicht or soun'
O' sin repentit.

But juist a weary, yammerin' phrase
O' "Saunts" and "Heaven" and "love" and "praise"
Words that a grown man sudna üse,
God! sic a scunner!
I had to rise and gang my ways
To haud my denner.

At halesome fauts they lift their han',
Henceforth, they cry, this new comman',
Bide quate and doucely in the lan'
And love your brither—
This is the total end o' man,
This and nae ither.

And that's their creed! An owercome braw
For folks that kenna fear or fa',
Crouse birds that on their midden craw
Nor think o' scaith,
That keep the trimmin' o' the law
And scorn the pith.

It's no for men that nicht and day
See the Almichty's awesome way,
And ken themselves but ripps o' strae
Afore His wind,
And dark or licht, maun watch and pray
His grace to find.

My forbear, hunkerin' in a hag;
Was martyred by the laird o' Lagg,

THE HERD OF FARAWA.

He dee'd afore his heid wad wag
In God's denial.
D'ye think the lads that rant and brag
Wad thole yon trial ?

Man, whiles I'd like to gang mysel
And wile auld Claverse back frae Hell ;
Claverse, or maybe Tam Dalziel,
Wad stop their havers ;
I wager yon's the lads to mell,
And mend their clavers.

I'd tak' each saft and fosy loon
And set him in his sark and shoon
Wi' twae 'oors stert, syne hunt them doun,
Nor heed their screechin.'
Certes, they'd sing a different tüne
At their next preachin'.

Whaure'er I look I find the same,
The warld's nae gumption in its wame ;
E'en sin' I mind the human frame
Grows scrimp and shauchled,
O' a' man's warks ye canna name
Ane that's no bauchled.

There's maukit sheep and feckless herds,
And poopits fou o' senseless words ;

THE HERD OF FARAWA.

Instead o' kail we sup on curds,
And wersh the taste o't;
To parritch-sticks we've turned our swirds,
Sae mak' the maist o't.

And poalitics! I've seen the day
I'd walk ten mile ower burn and brae
To hear some billie hae his say
About the nation.
Tories and a' their daft-like play
Fand quick damnation.

I thocht—for I was young—that folk
Were a' the same; I scorned the yoke
O' cless or gear; wi' pigs in poke
I took nae han'.
I daured the hale wide warld to choke
The richts o' man.

It's still my creed, but hech! sin' then
We've got the richts and lost the men;
We've got a walth o' gear to spen'
And nane to spend it;
The warld is waitin' ripe to men',
And nane to mend it.

Our maisters are a flock o' daws,
Led on by twae-three hoodie-craws;
They weir our siller, mak' our laws,
And Lord! sic makin'!

THE HERD OF FARAWA.

And we sit roun' wi' lood applause,
And cheer their crakin'.

We're great; but daur we lift a nieve
Wi'oot our neebors grant their leave?
We're free, folk say, to speak, believe,
Dae what we wull—
And what's oor gain? A din to deave
A yearlin' bull!

A dwaibly warld! I'll no deny
There's orra blessin's. I can buy
My baccy cheap, and feed as high
For half the siller;
For sixpence ony man can lie
As fou's the miller.

A bawbee buys a walth o' prent,
And every gowk's in Parliament;
The warld's reformed—but sir, tak tent,
For a' their threip,
There's twae things noo that arena kent—
That's *Men* and *Sheep*.

JOHN BUCHAN.

R. B. Cunninghame Graham, Esq. *William Strang, A.R.A.*

THE OLD SONG AND THE NEW.

By GWYNETH VAUGHAN.

IT hath been told that on a bright, spring morning—in one of the years that are lost in the past, and when the world was young—the strong sons and fair daughters of the people that dwelt in the Isle of the Mighty came together to feast and make merry under the shadow of the sacred oak trees, nigh a broad river of clear water, which drew its strength from the running mountain streams, and for all the ages ever paused on its journey to the sea.

And so happy and glad of heart were those strong sons and fair daughters, that they fell a singing joyously; meanwhile there were amongst them some that played sweet melodies on many various kinds of harps and pipes, and others that could not but dance gaily in their mirth. For the seeds of corn had all been laid in the meadows, and the grass of the fields was becoming once more green. The leaves of the trees were springing forth anew, and flowers were appearing upon the earth. In truth it was a time of joy for youth and maiden, this spring-time of the year. And the songs which they chanted so blithely in chorus were all in praise of their own land. They sang of their snow-capped mountains, those peaks whereon the eagles made their dwelling-places, and the purple-hued hills of the heather, the home of the lark. Nor was it in them to forget the woods and dales where the thrush and the blackbird led the choir in a great out-burst of melody to welcome

the King of the day. Then they sang the praises of their sea, the never-ending blue waters of which won the love of their hearts one day, and the next became their terror in the mighty greatness of its storms. Yet was it their delight, that wilderness of waters so strong, and so silent, the ever restless sea, illimitable in its vastness to those children of the mountains and forests that daily looked upon the deep from the heights. They saw and loved the beauty of their God's great temple—those isle men and isle women of long ago.

While they were singing and making merry in the spring sunshine, they beheld drawing near unto them a goodly company of men, and they were clad in long white robes reaching to their feet; and he that was chief among them had a circlet of gold round his brow, and a wreath of the sacred oak leaves were set upon the gold, which, when the sun cast its beams thereon, became so brilliant that the light therefrom gladdened the hearts of men. Around the waist of the chief was a girdle of finely wrought silken cord of deepest blood-red hue; and upon his breast was the bow-shaped broad gold band, hanging from the neck, which was the band of justice, and gave to the owner thereof power over his fellowmen. In his hand he held a drawn sword, which glittered in the sunshine; but, upon approaching the young men and maidens, he sheathed his sword within its scabbard, and cried in a loud voice: "Peace be to you, and game in plenty: Ye shall find not amongst the sheaves ears empty of corn; for the sun by day, and the moon by night keep guard over the land. When the foeman cometh to ravage and defile, ye may become conquerers in more ways than one Be ye, therefore, of good cheer, and make merry this day, ye children of the Isle of the Mighty."

When the youths and the maidens beheld the company of white robed men drawing nigh, he that was their chieftain took up his horn and blew a loud blast ; and all of his folk of one accord—women as well as men—gave an answering shout, until the hills resounded with their voices, for right happy were they in their glee—those strong sons and fair daughters—because it had pleased the servants of their great God to come forth and bestow upon them their blessings on that, their feast day.

After the shout there was silence, for the fair daughters bethought themselves it was meet they should place before their guests food and drink, and some of them filled the horns with the mead, while others busied them with the meat. When they had broken their fast, and drunk their fill of the mead, and were refreshed thereby, they departed thence, leaving the youths and the maidens to their merry-making.

Then the harpers smote their harps, and the pipers blew their pipes, until the heavens rang with the great noise, yet was every note in tune, and the melody as sweet as that of the spring choir in the woods. Thus they continued to hold high revelry until the day was far spent. Then did he who was their chieftain cry out, saying :

" What is it that I see drawing nigh to us on the bosom of yonder broad river ? Methinks it is a ship that hath no sails, yet it is exceeding trim. What hindereth you men to run to the bank, for I would fain know whether the craft carries friend or foe ! "

And they sped thither ; but though they bestirred themselves, yet the ship that came up the broad river so swiftly—with neither flapping of sails nor the sound of oars—had cast anchor before they had reached

the place of landing, and a fair damsel had leapt ashore, and was coming forth to greet the youths of the Isle of the Mighty.

Then the young chieftain spake to her, saying :

" Whither goest thou ? What seekest thou ? "

And he saw that the damsel was very fair, and was richly clad in a robe of divers colours that glittered in the sunset, as a rainbow shineth upon the cloud after rain.

Quoth the damsel, drawing near to him, and smiling :

" Chieftain, my name is Sunder, and I have come forth to tell thee and thine of other lands, and fair isles, where ye may fear no foeman from the land of the cold north, neither him that cometh from the hot south, to enslave strong men and capture fair women ! "

And, lo ! as the damsel thus spake, the hearts of the strong men became over-burdened with sorrows ; and the faces of the fair maidens of the Isle of the Mighty were sad to look upon ; and the land was covered with a gloom, for a thick mist rose from the river, and the night-dew fell upon them.

Then spake the damsel—whose name was Sunder—once more, and said :

" Strong sons, and fair daughters of the Isle of the Mighty, not for ong will this isle be for you all. Alas ! a great army cometh, and they will count your white-robed Druids for naught. They are those that understand not justice, and they will fight you with weapons that ye wot not of. They will speak you fair, and play you foul, those robbers of the sea, and the ravishers of those that dwell in fair Isles."

And while the damsel thus spake, the mountains became dark like unto thunderclouds, and there was a wailing of the wind among the oak

trees, and the sun departed unto the unknown region where the sea and the sky met. Then he who was the chieftain hid his face with his hands, as a man sore burdened with grief; but he spake not, for his sorrow was too great for words.

Then came forward a fair daughter of the Isle of the Mighty, and said she:

"Damsel, I will follow thee to the isle of beauty, which thou wilt ead me to. My harp I will take in my hand; and those of my kindred that desire a safe keeping may bear me company. The isle I will call by my own name, for, methinks, I shall but seldom again see the Isle of the Mighty."

And one of the strong sons lifted up his voice, and quoth he:

"Shall it be said that a fair daughter of the Isle of the Mighty dared that which a strong son may not venture? I will also be led by thee, damsel, into a new island where the sea robbers may not come, where those that are of my house and kin may learn to sail ships; and we will take of our merchandise to other lands."

Then another strong son spake, saying:

"If I enter thy ship, thou damsel, whose name is Sunder, thou wilt take me not to another isle, but to a corner of a far off country, among mountains such as thine eye beholds, where the sea waters wash their feet, and where there may be green meadows to grow food thereon, and vineyards for the wine, for alas! we may not drink elsewhere of the mead of the Isle of the Mighty."

And once again a maiden spake, and said she:

"I will enter not thy ship, thou damsel, in the many coloured raiment; but I will seek refuge in the uttermost part of this Isle of the

Mighty, and the rocky cliffs of its sea shall be my safe haven, and my castle shall be the birth-place of the greatest of kings, of him who shall be the chief of warriors and the flower of knighthood."

"Nor will I leave my mountains to the ravisher," spake another fair daughter, "nor the inheritance of the princes of the Isle of the Mighty to be the dwelling place of a sea-robber. And when in other days ye will come back to greet me, ye shall hear my voice, and that of my kindred, answering to the call of you all in the language that is spoken this day, here, and now. The foeman may kill and plunder, but he may not steal my tongue."

Then he who was their chieftain spake; his face shone, and was exceeding beauteous, and they all hearkened to his voice, for he was well-loved by his kindred, this tall, strong son of the Isle of the Mighty:

"Here also will be my abiding place. My home will be amidst the snow-clad mountains of the north, and the fair islets of the sea; nor shall the lochs of my land belong to another. My great rivers will carry greatness to me and mine, and no stranger shall cross them to possess my country. The foeman may array himself for battle against me, but he will not conquer my people; and in the days to come I shall reign over him."

When they had all spoken, the damsel, whose name was Sunder, murmured within herself, saying:

"Their parting is not for all time, they will come back, and I may sunder them no more, for they shall be as one kindred again as heretofore, these strong sons and fair daughters of the Isle of the Mighty."

While she thus mused, the darkness of the night gave place to the grey dawn, and the chieftain spake:

THE OLD SONG AND THE NEW.

"I would fain hear once more before we part the old song."

And the strong sons and fair daughters of the Isle of the Mighty took up their harps, and their pipes, and fell to singing an old song of their people to the morning light—the song that was so like the glad carolling of the lark. But, alas! the old-time melody was no longer jubilant, for the eyes of the singers were wet with unshed tears, and the cadence of sorrow entered into their song; and there was a note the less at the end of their music which finished in a sob.

And thus they parted, leaving with each other but the memory of a lost note and the echo of a song into which sorrow had entered.

* * * * * * * *

The ages came, and the ages went; great battles were fought, and great kings reigned; yet, in the days that are gone, and in the other days that have come in their stead, did the strong sons and fair daughters of the Isle of the Mighty make good their words. The foeman came, but they infused into him of their own blood, and their sons reigned over him. Yet withal their song never lost its cadence of sorrow, and the notes of their music held the memory of a parting pain—the lament for the days of old.

Then it fell upon a day that a strong son of the north became of one heart with a fair daughter of the west, whose name was Hope, she who dwelt in the beauteous Isle of Avallon, beside the cave where slept, in a long sleep, he who was chief among warriors, the flower of Knighthood—Arthur, the greatest of all Kings.

And the son of the north sought the daughter of the west to wife. But the maiden answered "Nay." "For," quoth she, "I may wed no man until the days of my waiting are over, and the King awakes

from his sleep, and I shall speed me with his royal commands to all those of his kindred nigh and afar."

Then spake the youth: "So will I be with thee, wheresoever thou goest; I am thy Knight of Union, and without me, fair maiden Hope, thou canst achieve naught."

While he was yet speaking, a light, as of the noon-day sun, shone upon them, and there was a sound of the clinking of armour, and the maiden's beauty became wonderful to behold. Then was brought to them on the wings of the wind words of great moment: "Go thou, my Knight of Union, with my faithful maiden Hope, and call my kindred from all lands, for it is my pleasure to see them united once more—the strong sons and the fair daughters of the Isle of the Mighty." And the voice was like unto the sound of silver bells at a distance.

Then the maiden spake: "It is the King. Arthur is awake. Let us carry the glad tidings to our kinsmen and kinswomen."

And they sped them into the Emerald Isle, where dwelt the fair daughter Erin, and from thence to the Isle that was Man's, and to the land which had become his "Mam Vro" to the Breton. Then they hied them to the West, the birthplace of their King, and to the Highlands of the North, the home of chieftains; and last of all they betook themselves to the Kymric mountains, where dwelt a people that for all the ages had spoken to their God and to each other in the language of the strong sons and fair daughters of the Isle of the Mighty.

Then the kindred of Arthur the King gathered together from all lands, and stood once more under the shadow of the oak trees. And they smote their harps, and blew their pipes, and their song knew not the cadence of sorrow, for their eyes held no unshed tears, and, instead

THE FLOWERY PATH. *Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, R.S.W.*

there came a triumphal paean from thousands of voices. Nor had their music a note the less because it had become a sob, but clarion notes of joy filled the Isle of the Mighty from one end to the other, like unto the carolling of an innumerable company of larks to the morning light. And the new song was jubilant, as was the old song in the days that are gone, for the earth no longer held a foeman to them who had made all countries their own, and darkness could not cast over them a gloom, for the sun never sets in the lands of the Celts.

AN OSSIANIC POEM OF THE NINTH CENTURY.

ALL students of Gaelic literature will be interested to hear of the discovery of an old Gaelic poem belonging to the so-called Ossianic or Fenian cycle. I came across it not long ago when turning over the leaves of one of the many uncatalogued MSS. in the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin It is a copy made in 1628 by the Franciscan friar Michael O'Clery, to whose indefatigable zeal and industry we owe the preservation of a large portion of old Irish literature. It will be printed, with a translation, in the Todd Lecture Series published by the Royal Irish-Academy. Meanwhile, a short account of its contents will be welcome to many.

The poem has no title, but it might be called Siabhurchobhra Fothaid Canainne, as it is addressed by the ghost or spectre of Fothaid Canainne, a well-known warrior king of the third century, to the wife of Ailill mac Eogain, with whom he had made a tryst. He had eloped with her. The outraged husband had challenged him to battle, and both had fallen in mutual combat at Feic, a pool on the Boyne, near Slane. Faithful to the tryst made before the battle, Fothaid, or rather his spirit, meets his paramour and thus addresses her:—

"Woman, do not speak to me! Not with thee is my mind; my mind is still upon the slaughter at Feic. My blood-stained corpse lies by the side of Lettir da mbruach, my unwashed head

among the Fianna amid the fierce slaughter. It is folly for anyone making a tryst to leave out of consideration the tryst with death. My last resting place had been marked out at Feic, my destiny was to fall by foreign warriors."

He then deplores the fall of his faithful warrior-band. Had they been alive they would have avenged his death, as he would have avenged theirs if he had not been slain. He enumerates the chief heroes among them, Domhnall of the red draught, whom he calls the Lugh of the Fianna, Cu Domhna, Falbe the Red, and his two cup-bearers, whose death caused the exhausted warriors to perish with thirst. Lastly he mentions his own fall by the hands of Ailill mac Eogain, and then advises the woman :

" Do not await the terror of night on the field among the slain warriors ! Return to thy house ; take with thee my arms ! my crimson tunic and my white shirt, my silver belt, my five-pronged spear, my shield with the bronze rim, by which they used to swear true oaths—thou wilt find them all on the battlefield ; the white cup of my cup-bearer ; my golden arm ring, which Nia Nar brought across the sea ; Cailte's brooch, with its two heads of silver round a head of gold ; and the most precious jewel of all, my chess-board (fithchell), with its set of figures, half of them of yellow gold, the other of white bronze, and with its four candlesticks. Lastly, the four-cornered casket (criol), made in the time of King Art by Turbe, the father of Gobban Saer, out of a bar of gold which Dinoll, the smith, had brought across the sea. Many battles have been fought by the King of Rome in Latium to get possession of

it; it was revealed to Find after a drinking-bout. Many other jewels and spoils thou wilt find scattered here and there on the battlefield, among the dreadful entrails of the slain, whom the Morrighan washes, her hair flung over her back: horrible is the hateful smile she smiles."

Finally, he enjoins her to raise a conspicuous tomb to him, as it will be frequented by many. And then the poem ends with a Christian touch:—

"My perforated body must part from thee for awhile, my soul to be tortured by the black Demon. Save worship of the King of Heaven, love of this world is folly. Let every believer beware of the dusky Demon that laughs! My speech, my figure are but spectral: do not speak to me, woman."

The poem contains forty-nine stanzas in the metre debhidhe, the rude form of which testifies to its great antiquity. From its language, which has been well preserved by the scribes, it may be safely assigned to the ninth century. It is thus, together with the Mongan-legend and some of the Fenian stories preserved by Cormac, one of the oldest, if not the oldest, record we possess of the cycle of Finn mac Cumhaill.

KUNO MEYER.

Liverpool, October, 1907.

A HIGHLAND LAMENT.

By the DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND.

IT is the poor man's harvest; he turns him from the sea
The old boat, the small boat, the boat that sails so free.

There's yellow in the storm-cloud, there's yellow in the moon,
But there's no yellow in the ear he must be reaping soon.

It's green oats and black oats, and oats a-drip with rain,
A-drip upon the marshland no man may fence or drain.

It is the poor man's harvest: and rank the weeds and grass;
He cuts and lays them lightly—the autumn winds will pass.

The hard wind, the wet wind, the winds that pipe and mourn;
And beat the boat upon the rock, yet dry no poor man's corn.

There's white bread in the bakehouse, there's white sand in the bay;
God's mercy on the poor man whose harvest rots to-day.

[Local bakehouses in the far North and West are on the increase; the white loaf is rapidly replacing the oatmeal and the barley scone of home-baking in the consumption of the Highland people].

A PICTISH PRINCESS.

MOVING among the dark mists of ancient Gaelic story, the figure of Nar, daughter of Lotan of the Pict-folk, fitfully appears and disappears. Our earliest record of her is in the Book of the Dun Cow (Leabhar na h-Uidhre), a vellum manuscript preserved in the Royal Irish Academy. As its transcriber died in the year 1106, no passage in it can be less than eight centuries old. Of that portion in which Nar is mentioned, Dr. Petrie decides that "judging from its language, its age must be referred to a period several centuries earlier than that in which its transcriber flourished." Then we read of her again in the Book of Ballymote, a Gaelic compilation of the latter part of the fourteenth century, the accounts in which seem to be partly drawn from pre-existing manuscripts. The original of this is also in the Royal Irish Academy. Lastly, we find her referred to in a Gaelic manuscript now in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh, but formerly belonging to the Argyllshire family of the M'Lauchlans of Kilbride; whence its modern designation of "The Kilbride MS."

From the various references we may reasonably guess that her home was in the territory of Meath, that she lived about the sixth century of our era, and that her father, Lotan, ruled over the Picts of Meath, and perhaps also over the Ulster branch of the same confederacy. The term Pictland, or Cruithentuath, appears to have been applicable to

THE MOUND DWELLINGS OF PICTLAND. *Ann Macbeth.*

any Pictish territory in Ireland or Great Britain. The Kilbride MS. calls her "the daughter of Lotan of Pictland;" and the Book of Ballymote also speaks of her as "of Pictland." But a fuller description is given in the second of these instances; for there she is alternatively described as having come "out of the mound-dwellings (*a sidaib no do Chruithentuaith*)." By this is meant that she and her kindred lived in the rude stone "bee-hive" houses, covered over with earth and turf, which even to-day are known in Orkney as "Picts' Houses." Outwardly they look exactly like green hillocks. "All that meets the eye at first," says one writer, in describing one of these structures in Orkney, "is a green, conical mound, resting silently amid the moorland solitude. On closer inspection we discover an entrance passage, about eighteen inches high and two feet broad, leading from the lower side into the interior of the pre-historic dwelling." The Eskimos and other Arctic races have used such dwellings for countless centuries, and our princess Nar presumably crawled in and out of the low passage of her dwelling after the manner of an Eskimo woman. But the home of a princess must be assumed to have been of much larger dimensions than those of her subjects; and, indeed, we find Nar associated with "the best earth-house-in Ireland, the white-topped 'brugh' of the Boyne (*brugh Barraghead na Boinne*)." It may be added that Nar is not the only Pictish princess associated with such places. "In an ancient genealogy," observes the late Mr. Herbert Hore, "we read of a wife who was obtained from the mound-dwellings of the son of Scal Balbh, King of Pictland."

By her marriage Nar added greatly to her influence, her husband being a certain Crimthann, the son of Lughaidh of the Red Stripes, of the royal race of Tara. Nar, however, was evidently "the better horse;"

for her husband became known by the surname of Nar's Champion (*Niadh-Náir*), rather than by his patronymic. A somewhat weak explanation of his new title is that it was given to him "because his wife Nar out of the mound-dwellings, she it was that took him off on an adventure." Of the nature of that adventure the chronicler provokingly says nothing. Her influence over her husband extended even to the selection of his burial-place. It had been the custom of the Kings of Tara to bury at Cruachan, because that was the chief seat in their special principality of Connaught. But this goodly custom came to an end when Crimthann, to please his wife, agreed to be buried in the Cemetery of the Brugh (*Relec in Broga*) in the Boyne valley, where all her forefathers had been buried. For Nar was one of the Tuatha Dea, or followers of the goddess Danu (as Sir John Rhys explains), and the Cemetery of the Brugh was dotted over with the pillar-stones, cairns mounds, cashels, cumots, and fulachts, in which the many nobles of her race reposed. Nar's "Champion" therefore, consented that he and his descendants should be buried in the Boyne cemetery, beside the illustrious dead of her own people. And so, in due time, he was laid to rest there; and over his body was raised a great heap of stones, known in the Gaelic as a barp or barc. And "the Barc of Crimthann Niadh-Náir, in which he was interred," is mentioned in the Dinnsenchus as one of the many notable mounments in the Cemetery of the Brugh. But as to the last resting-place of Nar herself, tradition and history are alike silent.

DAVID MacRITCHIE.

INISHAIL.

(Green Inishail, where the graves are, in Loch Awe

will go and leave the streetways,
And the world's wild dinsome places,
With the hurrying, weary feetways,
And the folks of frenzied faces ;
I will go through darkened spaces.
Morning glad or starlight pale,
Through the river and the passes,
Till I find among the grasses
Long, sweet sleep among the grasses
Of the graves of Inishail.

Ah, ye daunt me with your wonder,
And your toils about your lying ;
O ye cities, with your thunder,
And your children in you dying,
And I weary, ever sighing,
For the whisper of the West,
Where the glow and glamour meeting,
And the waves on long shores beating,
Are but echoes of the beating
Of the life's blood in my breast.

INISHAIL.

I will platt a roof of rashes
  For the low place of my sleeping,
Where the wistful water plashes,
  Crooning, croodling, laughing, weeping,
  And the winds from Cruachan sweeping,
Join their gladness and their wail ;
  Till the angels' glory blinds me,
  And the long sleep comes and finds me,
  In the tangled grasses finds me,
By the graves of Inishail.

LAUCHLAN MACLEAN WATT,

ON A GAELIC VERSION OF AULD ROBIN GRAY.

LADY ANNE LINDSAY, the authoress of possibly the choicest song in the world's literature, flourished from 1750-1825. Her beautiful lyric was translated into Gaelic ere the authoress was twenty-nine years of age. This I infer from a letter, written by a member of the Gaelic Society of London, dated Claybrook, Feb. 15th, 1779. The writer is Mr. Donald MacKinnon, and among other things he states: "I have lived much with Macpherson while in town." The letter is to the Reverend Donald MacNicol, then minister of Lismore and Appin. Mr. MacKinnon requests:

"Pray give my best compliments to Mr. Stewart when you see him or write to him. I should be extremely obliged to him for a copy of the Galic translation of Robin Grey, for which I shall send him something in return, as I shall do for every "duanag" which he shall send me in score. If he could find time and patience, as I know he has taste and abilities for collecting the best original airs in our language, I have great reason to believe his labour would be handsomely rewarded. Lord Kaim told me he would answer for many subscriptions. He mentioned a sum which I don't choose to repeat, as his Lordship was rather gay at the time. But such a thing would certainly meet with encouragement, and it is one of the debts lying upon us to record our

country's taste in music, vocal and instrumental, as well as their knowledge in other points."

The letter is otherwise interesting as touching on Mr. Shaw's attendance upon the Gaelic Society of London, at a meeting when General Fraser was in the chair, and refused to subscribe for copies of Shaw's Gaelic Dictionary in the name of the Society.

I do not enter at present further on this subject, but annex the Gaelic rendering, which probably is by the Mr. Stewart referred to.

GEORGE HENDERSON.

SEANN ROB.

Nuair bhà eòin bheag' nan geug
Is gach spréidh air dol gu tàmh
Is gach aon neach fuidh 'n ghréin
Ach mi-féin 'nan cadal sèimh :
An sac bha trom air m'inntinn
Gun d'lion e mi le deòir
'S 'na laighe sìnte làmh rium
Atà fàth mo bhròin.

'S a chridhe orm an tòir
Dh'iarr Seumas Og mo làmh
Ach air aona chrùn de stòras
Cha robh òr aige no tàin :

ON A GAELIC VERSION OF AULD ROBIN GRAY.

Is gus an crùn a dhùbladh
Gun d'fhalbh mo rùn thar chuan
'S ged bhuainicheadh e stòras
Is ann dòmh-sa bha' bhuaidh.

An t-sìathamh cuid de'n ràithe
Cha robh mo ghràdh air chuairt
Nar laigh gu tinn mo mhàthair
'S a ghoid iad Blàrag* uainn :
Bha m'athair fuidh throm chréichdinn
Is Seumas air a' chuan,
Nar b'àill le Rob mo phòsadh
'S i Seònaid bha truagh.

'T'athair bhrist e a làmh
Is chaidh mo mhàthair o'n t-snìomh
Ach ged shaothraich mi gun tàmh
Bha iàd-san gun bhìadh :
Chum seann Rob iad o'n bhàs
Is labhair e le deur :—
'A Sheònaid air an sgàth-sà
Thoir dhomh do làmh o'n chléir,
Gun d'rinn mo chridhe 'dhiùltadh—
Bha mo shùil ri Seumas Og
Ach bha'n soirbheas aig catha shéideadh
'S an long an déidh a leòn :

* A common name for a cow in Gaelic.

ON A GAELIC VERSION OF AULD ROBIN GRAY.

Bha'n long an déidh a call
'Righ ! nach mise bh'anns an ròd
Ca uime thà mi a' làthair
A dh'àireamh an sgeòil ?

Mo mhàthair bha i sàmhach
Bha m'athair orm ro chruaidh
Ach nar chunnaic mi a deòir
Bha mi deònach bhith 'san uaigh :
Fhuair seann Rob mo làmh
'S mo chridh' air bharr nan tonn
Tha e nis 'na laigh làmh rium
Ge cràiteach sid leam.

Mios cha robh mi pòsda
'S mi'n còmhnuidh fuidh bhròn
'S mi 'm' shuidh a' m' dhorus féin
Chunncas taibhse Sheumais Oig :
" Is ann thàinig mi gu d' phosadh,"
Is e thuirt an t-òigfhear rium,
Is chreid mi 'n sin air éiginn
Gur breug rinn mo shùil.

Is ann trom a shil ar deòir
Ar brìathra beòil bu ghann
Cha do ghabh sinn ach aon phòg
Mu'n d'fhògradh e o m'chainnt

SPRING PASTORAL. *Charles Mackie, A.R.S.A.*

ON A GAELIC VERSION OF AULD ROBIN GRAY.

Is truagh naoh d'fhuair mi'm bàs
  Ach thig e tràth'ni's leòir
'S ca uime thà mi an làthair
  'S mi ga m' shàrachadh le bròn.

Ta mi mar thaibhs' 's gach àite
  Bonn stà cha chinn e leam
Cha toir mi sùil air Seumas
  Bhiodh sud 'na éucoir thruim :
Ach o'n is ann ri seann Rob
  a cheangladh mi mar mhnaoi,
Gun dian mi mar mo dhìchill
  Bhith dileas is caomh.

THE MUSE OF OSSIAN:

A DRAMATIC POEM IN THREE ACTS.

(As performed at the Theatre in Edinburgh, 1763),

THE warm, keen Celtic revival, kindled half-a-century ago by Professar Blackie, the beloved enthusiast of a cause not strictly his own by blood or racial interest, has done much of late to sift and sort out the neglected waifs and strays of Gaelic literature. The "Gael," the "Celtic Magazine," the "Celtic Monthly," and the "Highlander" have done each its own good share of this patriotic work. But the unearthing of this very interesting relic of the Ossian-Macpherson literary hurricane we owe less to research than to good luck. I chanced upon the book all unawares in Mr. Dowell's sale-rooms some years ago; and when the lot came to the hammer my bid was unopposed and seemingly unnoticed. My copy, now with the rest of my Celtic books in the library of Alma Mater at Aberdeen, is up till now unique. The book is unknown in any library in Edinburgh, nor is its exemplar in the British Museum. Neither, so far as my research has gone, is it as much as named in contemporary literature, save in two instances which I particularise. It is noticed at length in the "Edinburgh Evening Courant" of April 16th, 1763; but this is really more in the way of advertisement than independent criticism. And the book has a place in that monumental Cyclopædia of the English Drama, whose joint-editor, David Erskine-Baker, was also the author of my Ossianic Drama.

The Drama is in three acts. It has a preface, a prologue, an epilogue, and a list of the "dramatis personæ."

The leading parts were filled by Mr. and Mrs. Bellamy—the Irving

and Ellen Terry of the day—whose history is a touching romance, never yet revealed, though dimly and sadly shrouded and mystified in two bulky volumes of autobiography,

The play is founded on Macpherson's "Comala," itself already in dramatic form, and not without passages of pathos and impressive eloquence. The scope of "Comala" Mr. Baker aims at "enlarging;" and to its character and incidents he seeks to bring variety and new interest by weaving into the original dramatic story select passages from the other poems of Ossian. In this curious work of dramatic patch-work Mr. Baker has prisoned his own dramatic instinct, for he was an actor, within an iron cage of stern self-suppression. Not one word of his own was to be allowed. All his additions must be, even verbally, in the fine gold of Ossian. Need one wonder if the result is sometimes stiff, stilted and unspontaneous?

The story is the old but ever rejuvinating story of love, jealousy, treachery and madness. Fingal is away in battle with "Caracul, King of the World." On the bank of "Carun of the Streams," its waters rolling in blood, Comala, beloved of Fingal, awaits the hero's return. A strange misgiving seizes her soul. "Why do I behold thy waters rolling in blood? Has the noise of battle been on thy banks, and sleeps the King of Morven?" To Comala, thus alarmed, enters Hidalian, Fingal's rival for her love. He cometh with the ready lie on his lips. Fingal has fallen. The distraction of Comala is intensely tragic; but the scene is drawn out in prolonged and unnatural agony. Comala at last rushes into the darkness, and is lost to view over the precipice. Hidalian's remorse and Fingal's despair close the second act. In the third act the tragedy is renewed in Hidalian's disgrace at his father's

court, and in the brave old father's broken-hearted despair over the treachery of his son : treachery a thousand times worse than death.

These notes will give an idea of the little work it has been my good fortune to retrieve. The notes are written away from home. Somewhere among my papers there is a good deal of MS. in tentative form, prepared from time to time with a view to an exhaustive paper, which, some day, I hope, may see the light of publication. But of such labour the art is long, as life is brief and passing fast away.

DONALD T. MASSON.

The Limes, Louth, Lincoln,
23/9/07.

VERSES.

"ROME'S ancient garb ! Rome's ancient speech !
It wass ta kilt—it wass ta Gaelic : ''
You'll see it, hear it with the screech
Of trains, and boats, from Rhu to Mallaig.

To English 'tis superior far,
Its idioms all are far more splendid :
You know the Dublin street names are
Now writ in Erse, with English blended.

And soon we'll see a Parliament
Itself show forth our erudition,
And Gaelic speeches shall be blent
With poor, inferior Saxon diction.

Two languages like these, once " got,''
Makes possible all lingual action ;
So learn the Celtic first : your lot
Will know pure Celtic satisfaction.

If you on weather would discourse,
Believing in a Highland seer,
'Twill rain all day without remorse
Because he's only said " Vla Bria.''

VERSES.

If angered you may say " Vla-Fluch,''
Lo ! Saxons think in Dutch you said it,
And though you swear Dutch " Trúg and Trúg ''
Their banks, with joy, will give you credit.

Celts have an honour grander far
Than Cross or Order (Celts did lack 'em) :
Give me the Gaelic for " Bazaar,"
And you'll be known as " The Macklackum."

Our names began with " O," for sure,
Before the Scottish " Mac " was fashion ;
" O " " Mac " all sure, that both endure,
Or Erse may prove a passing passion !

The best Home Rule's the simple tool
Of industry, with taste, and knowledge—
Your parish discipline your rule
For conquest, through the school, and college !

E'en though you don't talk Erse at all,
Just say, in sympathy, " 'Tis splendid ! ''
Don't turn your back on any stall,
And buy, till the Bazaar be ended !

ARGYLL.

THE LAST FERRY.

By AMY MURRAY.

THE sail-boat that was to carry me away from Father Allan's Island lay alongside Rudha Ban[1]; my little harp, boxed for the road, was already set down in the bottom, and Eoghann, the skipper, with one foot on the gunwale and one on the rocks, was holding out his hand to steady me across the slippery sea-ware. And now, I thought, I must be bidding Father Allan good-bye; when he said, "I'll see you on your way."

So there were four of us for the ferry—Father Allan, John Duncan the painter, the girl that was going away to Sasunn[2] for the fish-curing, and I—besides Eoghann himself and the lads that were to help him with the sail. They were in the bow, the stern-seat was for Father Allan, and the thwarts for the rest of us.

We were well on towards the last of September, and the high winds had already set in; but this was what the Islesmen call "a day between two weathers," with nothing to fear, so far as might be seen, from north nor south. For Father Allan's Island (which is Eriskay on the map) lies between Niall and Allan—that is to say, between Barra and Uist—and "when Niall puts on his cap and Ailein his bonnet," she looks for rain. But now we saw clear sky over Barra hills, that the south-westerly showers and mists must first be wetting before they can pass over to Eriskay; while Ben Mor in Uist had put off his bonnet—or maybe had

(1) White Point—the headland that carries the Chapel and the Chapel house on its back.

(2) England.

played the trick of Iain Math[3] with it. It was a day of such light airs that our great swarthy sail could hardly make out to bring us over ; the dumb stream[4] was lying and spreading far out astern, so sleek was the water ; and the seals, sunning themselves on the ledges laid bare by the ebb, were fairly lost in the dazzle round them, so plainly as we heard them barking.

The water that we were to cross lies west of Eriskay ; Uist overlies it to the north and Eriskay as well, and the Kyles are between them. Now these are not so wide but that in Maytime you may hear the cuckoo from the one shore to the other, yet on the True Edge of the Great World[5] there needs no more than this for enchantment. Rough-hewn as Uist hills are from rock of the greyest, with never a tree from end to end,[6] you will not find them out so long as you keep to the other side of the Kyles. For now it is the mist that will not let you see them fairly ; now it is the rain, that will scour the air out all round them indeed, but how they will glitter, laced in every seam with silver, when the sun breaks through ; while only give the sun and the milky haze their way with them for a little, and you shall see them spread with more colours than I dare mention, and a bloom like a ripe plum. And withal they are ready to darken over in a minute. When Father Allan would see them in that humour, he would always be saying, " There's ' Celtic Gloom ' for you."

---

(3) The first Lord of the Isles, who threw away his bonnet that he might not have to uncover to the King.

(4) *Balbh sruthan*—the wake of the boat in those waters.

(5) *Fior Iomall an Domhain Mhoir*—the Western Isles.

(6) Nor indeed in all the island, excepting the poor monkey puzzler with one limb (is it alive yet, I wonder?) in the factor's garden.

Well, and if it were, what wonder? Uist has seen plenty in her days to gloom her, were she Celt or Sassennach ; nor has she any need to be calling up old tales of fire and sword, nor yet of lads who were born to be kings. For granting that Lochlanners'[7] harryings and clan brawls, nameless and numberless, were alike too far gone by for fretting over, and that the matter of Prince Charlie were no affair of hers, there would still be what Islesmen speak of as the putting-away of the People—her own people, mind you, and the putting-away of them not so long since but that old Mairead, over in Eriskay, can call it to mind. Nor is there wanting at Uist's own doorland what would be keeping green her own memories ; so that the wonder is not so much that she should be remembering as that she should sometimes be forgetting. And in truth it is more or less her humour on most days to be scowling and purple-blackening as I say, so that anyone looking for Celtic Gloom might think himself at the end of his quest whenever he had set eyes on her. Yet by times she lies so lapped in sunshine, so smiling, that for all her bygones she might be untrodden as a cloud ; and so it was on the day between two weathers when Father Allan saw me on my way from his island.

Our course was first to the north-west across the little inland sea, then westward, coasting Uist ; and little by little, as we stood over towards her, I marked how she was greying, and how the glamour fell on Eriskay as she dropped astern. Little by little now, I saw the kindliest spot in all the Isles growing strange ; the black houses edging in amongst the roots of the hills and losing themselves ; Ben Sgrithean

(7) The Norsemen.

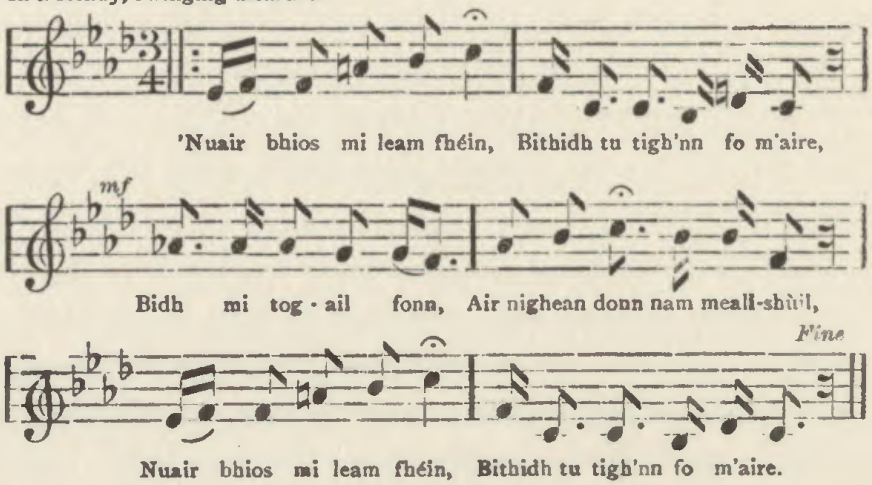
and Ben Stae laying their two heads together; Ruaha Ban holding her own for a little, by reason of white crotal on the stones and white mortar in the joints of the walls, but always the rich purplish blueness gathering about them, blotting them, drowning them deeper and deeper. So that by the time the bones of Uist were showing themselves, patched with dark heather and bracken turned rusty-brown, Father Allan's Island was low in the water, like a hill gone down, and Ruaha Ban only a pale blur at the water's edge.

But it was long before this, you may be sure, that Father Allan was saying, "Gabh oran," [1] and Eoghann raising the song he was singing the night before in Father Allan's kitchen.

'NUAIR BHIOS MI LEAM FHÉIN. (8)

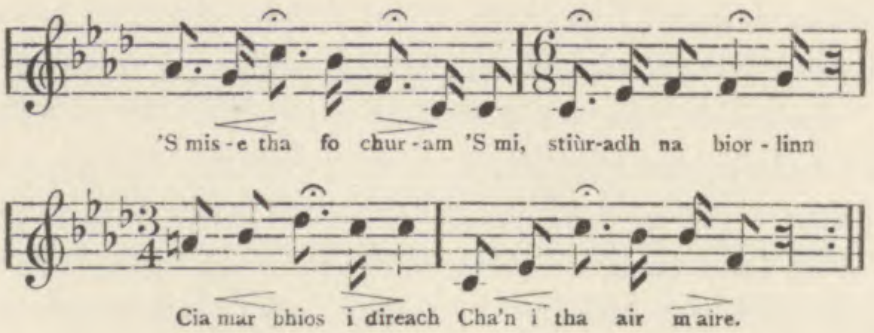
(SAILOR'S SONG).

In a steady, swinging measure.



(1) "Give us a song"—or, literally, "Take a song."

THE LAST FERRY.



—sang Eoghann—a handsome fellow, his cheek ruddy-brown as his own sail, from sun and wind and spindrift, and his grey eyes fringed all round like the lochans on Uist. His voice was deep as the bochaan's (*) that I used to hear humming in my chimney in the night-time when the wind was coming up out of the south-west ; and you might no more surely be telling whether that wind were blowing from the hills or off salt water than that Eoghann's was no landward voice, yet the sound the wind made in my harp-strings was no sweeter. And always he had another verse, and whenever the chorus came round, we all lifted under ;

---

(8) When I am with myself,
You will be coming into my mind,
I will be raising the tune
To the brown hair'd maid
With the soft eyes.

Full of care am I,
And I steering the birlinn ;
How will she be straight (the boat's course),
I have nought but her in mind (the maiden).

(9) Goblins.

while as we floated under the lee of Uist, and the light breeze failed us, the lads got out the long oars and fell to pulling slowly, so we came over.

Seumas the piper was at the landing-place with the two-wheeled cart, waiting to carry the harp in its box to Dalibrog. They lifted it in, I climbed in and sat down upon it, and Seumas started the pony; and until we jolted round the corner of M'Askill's great peat-stack, that stands at the turn of the road, I saw Father Allan standing bare-headed and swinging his cap to me, while I swung mine to him.

"And what will you be doing all winter?" I asked him before I came away.

"Och, I suppose I'll be making songs" he answered lightly

But already he was done alike with songs and winter weather. Already it stood in the offing, the sail that was to carry Father Allan across the Edge of the World.

From "Father Allan's Island."

ORA NAM BUADH.

From "CARMINA GADELICA," by ALEXANDER CARMICHAEL.

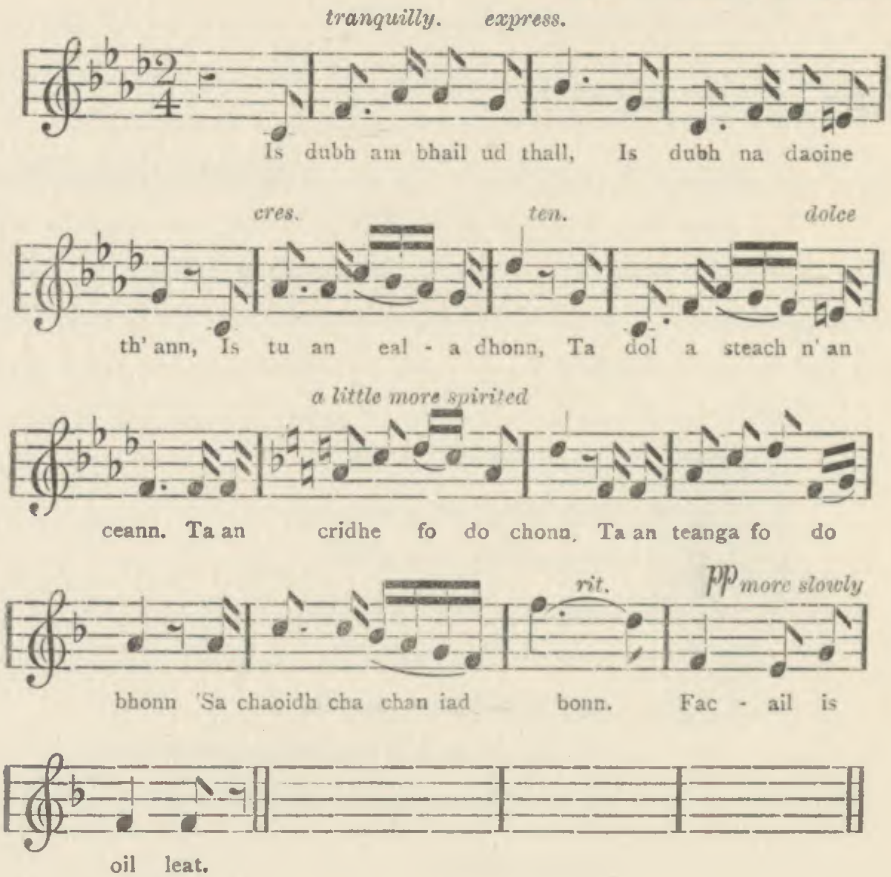
The following is part of a poem taken down in South Uist. It was evidently widely known at one time, and seems to have been addressed to a girl on her marriage.

ONNLAIME do bhasa,
Ann am frasa fiona,
Ann an liu nan lasa,
Ann an seachda siona,
Ann an subh craobh,
Ann am bainne meala,
'S cuirime na naoi buaidhean glana caon,
Ann do ghruaidhean caomha geala,

Buaidh cruth,
Buaidh guth,
Buaidh rath,
Buaidh math,
Buaidh chnoc,
Buaidh bhochd,
Buaidh na rogha finne,
Buaidh na fioir eireachdais,
Buaidh an deagh labhaidh.

ORA NAM BUADH.

Music by WILLIAM B. MOONIE.



Is dubh am bail ud thall,
Is dubh na daoine th'ann,
Is tu an eala dhonn,
Ta dol a steach n'an ceann.
Ta an cridhe fo do chonn,
Ta an teanga fo do bhonn,
'S a chaoidh cha chan iad bonn,
Facail is oil leat.

ORA NAM BUADH.

Is dubhar thu ri teas,
Is seasgair thu ri fuachd,
Is suilean thu dha'n dall,
Is crann dha'n deorai thruagh,
Is eilean thu air muir,
Is cuisil thu air tir,
Is fuaran thu am fasach,
Is slaint dha'n ti tha tinn.

Is tu gleus na Mnatha Sithe,
Is tu beus na Bride bithe,
Is tu creud na Moire mine,
Is tu gniomh na mnatha Greuig,
Is tu sgeimh na h-Eimir aluinn,
Is tu mein na Dearshul agha,
Is tu meanm na Meabha laidir,
Is tu taladh Binne-bheul.

Is tu sonas gach ni eibhinn,
Is tu solus gath na greine,
Is tu dorus flath na feile,
Is tu corra reul an iuil,
Is tu ceum feidh nan ardu,
Is tu ceum steud nam blaru,
Is tu seimh eal an t-snamhu,
Is tu ailleagan gach run.

ORA NAM BUADH.

Cruth aluinn an Domhnuich
Ann do ghnuis ghlain,
An cruth is ailinde
Bha air talamh.

An trath is fearr 's an latha duit,
An la is fearr 's an t-seachdain duit,
An t-seachdain is fearr 's a bhliadhna duit,
A bhliadhn is fearr an domhan Mhic De duit.

A Study. *Hugh Cameron, R.S.A.*

THE MERMAID'S LULLABY.

Scene in the Hebrides. Having carried off her loved one she casts a last look on the abode of men, here called the Land of the Barley. Some ruins, the scenes of former happiness, in the distance; the sun's rays are by degrees coming round. It is geas or taboo for her that the sun shine on him whom she has carried off.

IN the Kyles of Ot Otrim the seals there are sleeping,
Far away o'er the islands the sun's on the bay;
And no voice is heard, but the wavelets are meeting
The wild geese greeting the coming of day.

Heavy moans in far ocean the storms may betoken,—
Comes the swan's note at morning here calling for me:
Oh, hearken! oh, hear it! its free voice hath spoken
Clearly, and near me my home is the sea.

In the Land of the Barley men's sorrows may waken,
The world's woes may ripen, the world's woes stay—
But me and my loved one ever roam 'neath the breakers,
Deathless and ageless our home's far away.

GEORGE HENDERSON.

The Manse of Edrachilis,
Scourie, Sutherland.

A WIND FROM THE WEST.

TO-DAY a wind from the West, out over the hills, came blowing,
Ah, how it made dim dreams and memories start ;
And I thought that I smelt in my room the wild thyme growing,
And the scent of the sweet bog-myrtle filled my heart.

Go back, O breath of the hills ! Would that we went together !
Tell how their lost child fares ;
Whisper among the bracken, and say to the broom and the heather,
That still my heart is theirs.

Steal quietly, as a dream, along the glens that we know,
The glens that shall fade from me only when I lie dying ;
Sink into peace in the quiet place silent and low,
Where the dust men know not is lying.

Say still my heart is theirs,
Tell them I never forget
That they never are drowned in my joys, nor crushed in my cares,
That I love them yet.

Yet ! Ah, there's never a heart like them now,
Nor ever can be again ;
None, living or dying, like those dead hearts that are lying
Away in the West in the rain !

LAUCHLAN MACLEAN WATT,

TEARS, TEARS.

(Deòr', deòr', O dheòra shearbh.)

Air : Theme of a Piobroch.

I.

TEARS, tears ! O bitter tears,
Sorrows welling in my heart.
Long, lone, forsaken years,
I delay that should depart.
Dark the hours that know no dreaming—
Darker far the eyes once gleaming—
Shadows now where day was beaming :
Come, O night, I wait for thee !

II.

Ochoin, ochoin, O chridh !
Golden day in splendour bright—
Green wood and fairy lea—
O the love that gave the light !
Now no more the things of pleasure—
Death has broken fortune's measure—
Dark the dream my heart did treasure :
Come, O night, my shelter be !

PITTENDRIGH MACGILLIVRAY.

SCOTLAND.

I.

SCOTLAND we think of thee,
Happy and proud to be
Born to thy fame.
Glory to thee and thine—
Long live thy hero line—
Honour with love entwine
To guard thy name.

II.

Land of our birth and home
Far tho' our way may roam
Love clings to thee:
Mountain and purple glen—
Green strath and bosky den—
Dear to the hearts of men
God save thee free.

III.

Hail, then, O mother land,
Strength of our heart and hand—
Thine to decree.
Altar with sacred fire—
Shrine of our heart's desire—
Ever shall we aspire
To honour thee.

PITTENDRIGH MACGILLIVRAY.

ALTACHADH AN T-SHEANN GHAIDHEIL.

From the Collection of the late Rev. J. GREGORSON CAMPBELL, of Tiree.

O Athair na firinn !
Saor aig an am so, 's aig gach am sinn ;
Mhic Dhé ! thoir maithanas duinn,
'Nar mionnan bréige 's 'nar cainnt dhìomhair;
Seachuinn oirnn buaireadh an aibhisteir,
Teum sìth no saoghalta ;
Mar bha thu air thùs ar codach,
Bi mu dheireadh ar saoghail ;
Na leig 'nar corp no 'nar collainn,
Nì ni lochd do'r n-anam.

ORAN, LE BEAN SHITH.

From the Collection of the late Rev. J. GREGORSON CAMPBELL, of Tiree.

! 's tha mo làmh air a gearradh,
Horuinn o, o hì o,
Hi-ri-ri eíle,
Horuinn o, o hì o.

Tha mo làmh air a gearradh
'S bha i fallain ag eíridh
Horuinn, &c.

Bha i fallain ag éiridh.
Am faca sibhse long eutrom
Tighinn o reubadh na mara
Bha mo leannan ga stiùireadh,
Og ùr a chùil chlannaich,
Sgioba oirre dh' fhir fhuara,
Chuireadh cluain air muir ghreannach.

EOLAS AN T-SIOCHAIDH.

From the Collection of the late Rev. J. GREGORSON CAMPBELL, of Tiree.

ESPAG a beachd.
An eipa chuir Callum Cille
Ri glùn gille
'Sa bheinn,
Air iodha, air at,
Air lian, air lot,
Air fruthadh, air shiòchadh
Air ghreimeannan, air earrannun,
Air sgeth-féithe, air snuim cnàimhe.
Chaidh Criosd amach,
Anns' a ghealbhin ud mhoich,
Fhuir e casan nan each
Briste mu seach ;
Nuair thùirling e air làr
Gun shlànuich e cas eich ;
Chuir e smior ri smior,
'S chuir e cnàmh ri cnàimh,
Chuir e fuil ri fuil
Smuais ri smuais
Feòil ri feòil, a 's féith ri féith,
Mar a shlànuich e sin,

EOLAS AN T-SIOCHAIDH.

Gun slanuich e so,
As leth Chriosd's a chumhachdan còmhla ;
Aon trian an diugh,
Dà-thrian a màireach,
'S e uile gu léir an earar.
Ortsa, Mhoire gheal,
Bh'aig sgàth na craoibhe,
Mar a h-euslainteach an diugh
Gum a slàn a màireach.

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