

HDB Launch Uist Project

The Highlands and Islands Development Board, in a positive move to develop the land resources of the Western Isles, are growing nearly six acres of bulbs in North Uist. The bulbs—varieties of daffodils and tulips—will be lifted next summer.

After an extensive survey and much consultation with trade and other experts in Britain and abroad, the Board are optimistic that, though risk is involved, this project could provide a means of stabilising the economy of the Uists.

The Board have leased the land as sub-tenant from several crofters and are considering the possibility of expanding the scheme next year.

A Skye contractor has improved and extended the drainage facilities on the land involved, and Dutch experts have carried out the planting of the bulb's on the Board's behalf during what was the wettest autumn in the islands since 1869.

The Board's earlier investigations showed that the soil and climate of the Uists made them an area suited to growing certain varieties of bulbs. This supported the evidence accumulated by Hebridean Bulb Growers, a crofters co-operative, over the ten years of their existence.

Mr Prophet Smith, the Board member responsible for this project, said yesterday in Inverness

that the crofters society had demonstrated that there was a demand in Britain for bulbs grown in the Western Isles. He added:

"It is far too early to be able to estimate accurately how many jobs there will be, but let us say that, at this stage, we are optimistic."

The Board will shortly be appointing a manager with the requisite experience and skill. They are also planning to provide a training course for people from the Uists.

BLIADHNA MHATH

UR DO AR

LUCHD-LEUGHAIÐH,

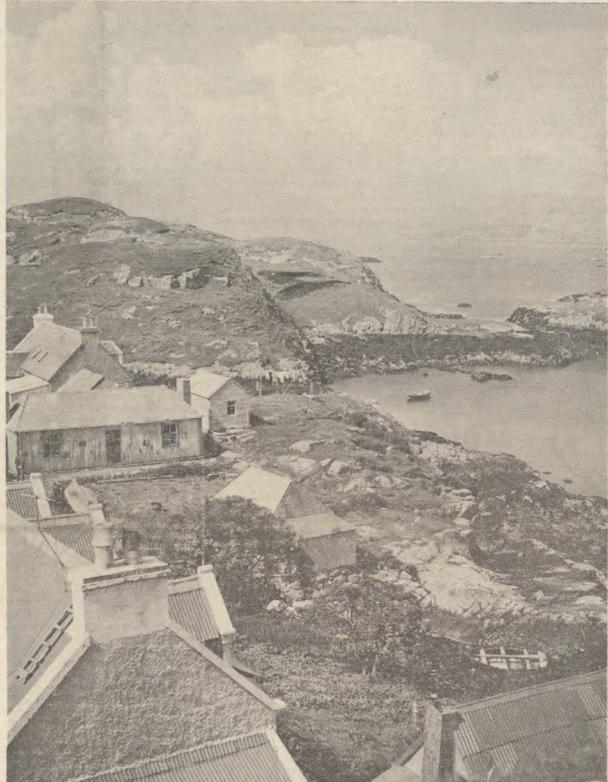
'S AR

LUCHD-CUIDEACHAIÐH

UILE

MENACE TO FISHERMEN

The "killer" whale, which attacked the lobster fishing boat of Alasdair and Donald Corbett off Kinlochberrie this week, has again been reported off the West Coast of Sutherland. It is thought that the whale, last seen in Loch Clash, has strayed from a school passing through the Minch.



The village of Plockopol, in South Harris. A typical community in the Western Isles made remote by successive decades of Government neglect. Those of us who live in large centres of population, with attendant amenities, cannot but admire the spirit of the Islesfolk who look to the Highlands Board for help to make their islands become economically important, as once they were. It is gratifying to see that two years after its birth the Development Board is elsewhere in the Islands, now taking positive action to give the Isles hope for the future.

(Photo by A. MacArthur, Stornoway)

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CARAID SA CHUIRT

Ma dh'fhagas einseinair no scianteach Dun reidh gu dhol gu Westinghouse bitheadh deagh chàraid ga feitheamh. Dh'fhag an Dr P. Murràidhsair Fear Stiùirdh aig Harwell Sasunn 'san t-samhradh so chaidh. Bha e cosnadh £4,500 ach tha e cosnadh gu math a bharrachd an sin 'na Fear Stiùirdh ealanta is air Roinn an Advanced Gas Reactor. Tha e coltach gu bheil am Fear Stiùirdh air a dheagh dhorgh—chaithe e 18 bliadhna comhla ri na h-Atomach sa riochachd so—agus tha an nis tigh aige le acaire thalamh fosgailte mun cuairt. Sòoil an e cheo dhumbhal a bha e faighinn an Sasun bu choireach e fhagail? Se 29 duine a tharruing Westinghouse fhathast air feadh na Roinn Eòrpa.

Morrison's Get New Chief

After more than 30 years without a Chief, the Clan Morrison has now been told by the Lord Lyon that Dr John Morrison, of Ruchdi, North Uist, is confirmed as Clan Chief.

Dr Morrison, who is a brother of the late W. S. Morrison, Lord Dunrossil, was born near Oban, and was at one time an ophthalmologist with Lancashire County Council. Dr Morrison can trace his ancestry back over 13 generations.

He is descended from the

original Morrison's of Lewis. His ancestors were armourers to the clan and keepers of the Island of Pabbay. With the title, Dr Morrison receives from the Clan Society a portion of Duneistean, a barren rock off the Butt of Lewis, which was once the stronghold of the clan. On this portion of rock Dr Morrison can raise his standard. The island was bought by the Clan Morrison Society from a London property company for one pound Scots.

BIRTH

LAURIE — At Stobhill Hospital, Glasgow, on the 20th December 1967, to Marjorie and John Laurie, Drimard, Lochgilphead—a daughter (Jeanne Thomson)—a sister for Petra.

MARRIAGE

MCCORMACK—CAMPBELL — On December 9th, 1967, at Knox Free Church, by Rev. J. Heenan-Thomas, son of the late Mr. Thomas, Mrs. J. McCormack, Castleton, Auchterarder, to Torquill, youngest daughter of Mrs F. Campbell, 17 Park Place, Perth, and the late John Campbell of Stornoway.

DEATHS

MURPHY—At Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, on the 18th December 1967, Annie MacKenzie, wife of the late G. T. Murphy, and youngest daughter of the late Bailie and Mrs George MacKenzie, and sister of Louis and Katie, 13 Kenneth St., Inverness.

MACKAY — At Free Presbyterian Manse, Tarbert, Harris, on 5th December 1967, Cathie Mary Matheson, aged 45 years, dearly beloved wife of Rev. Angus Mackay, and dear mother of Donald, Norman, Sandra, James, Anna and Callum.

SEAN-FHACAL

An ruid is fhilach a ghabhail, 's fhilach e Iarraidh.

If it is worth talking, it is worth asking for.

Text for the Times

Agus, feuch, thàinig aingeal an Tighearna orra, agus d'healach glòir an Tighearna nu' n' tìmhchill; agus ghabh iad eagas mòr.

Lucas II, v. 9

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were none afraid.

Luke II, v. 9

BAHA' FAITH

"We testify that when He (Jesus) came into the world He shed the splendour of His glory upon all created things. Through Him the leper recovered from the leprosy of perversity and ignorance, through Him the unchaste and wayward were healed. Through His power, born of Almighty God, the eyes of the blind were opened, and the soul of the sinner sanctified." "He it is Who purified the world. Blessed is the man who, with a face beaming with light, hath turned towards Him."

From the Writings of Baha'ullah. Further information: 42 Island Bank Road, Inverness.

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THE DIRECTOR

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On the other hand . . .

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

"High-speed building at Inverness," read the headline. A new annexe for the Highlands and Islands Development Board, with a floor area of 4,500 sq. ft., built in 48 hours. We Highlands can show them, we thought and then we read "An English firm are building the annexe." Readers of 'Sruith' muttering "Ochone, Ochone," probably missed an earlier snippet to the effect that some of An Comunn's recent printing was done in France. It is all enough to make any self-respecting Scottish Nationalist turn in his button badge. Stamped made in Birmingham or so we believe.

★ ★ ★

With Gaelic Top of the Pops records on the market and a new swinging image, Abertarf House has still to get around to button badges. We intend pushing the idea and would anticipate massive sales for "All the way with D.J." Loyal support from the Western Isles Temperance Movement for "Ban the Bothans" and good sales for "Flora Power."

★ ★ ★

A new booklet on the Brahan Seal appeared on the book-stalls last month. We have been pondering the idea of doing some articles

on the same subject for 'Sruith,' a regular cereal. "The All-Brahan Seal."

★ ★ ★

The December "Scottish Field" had an interesting reader's letter about a plaque at Dingwall Station "This railway station was used as a tea-stall for soldiers and sailors from 20th September 1915 until 12th April 1919 in connection with the Ross and Cromarty County Red Cross Society. During which time 134,864 men were supplied with tea." One must acknowledge the public-spiritedness of the Ross-shire ladies and boggle at the statistic "134,864 cups of tea." We feel there must have been many dramatic moments at the tea stall in its forty-three months' existence. What tales and events remain untold? What happened when a member of the Royal Flying Corps asked for tea? What happened when a soldier or sailor asked for coffee or cocoa? We can picture also scenes of emotion with a distraught Mrs McKenzie saying "I've lost count, I don't know if that was the 70,060th cup or just the 60,070th."

Excitement doubtlessly mounted as the pouring of the 100,000th cup drew

near — imagine the Navy troop-train, the Jellicoe, in Dingwall Station on a cold frosty January night in 1918, the sailors warm, asleep and tired. Mrs Williamson throws open the carriage door and yells "Everybody out, we've only 400 cups to go, Mrs McLeod is lying in front of the engine and nobody leaves here till we reach the 100,000th."

★ ★ ★

It was a nice touch adding an "E" to Concord for England. A trifle parochial perhaps but what can one expect? We personally feel it would have been more apt to add a D for St David of Wales, an I for Ireland, an S for Scotland and to have called the plane Discord.

"One shouldn't believe everything one reads in the papers" goes the old saying, but we always do. We were cheered to read earlier this month in an Investors Chronicle article that "the

AN "CHIEF" UR



Cha robh dhi air na Moireas-dannich achi a'it fhaighinn air Bord na Gàidhealtachd.

Highlands have surprisingly good roads." In the same issue a Highlands and Islands Development Board advert stated "Roads — The network of main roads permits fast transport routes." This would seem to give Barbara Castle grounds to slash the Highland Road Fund and spend the money on necessities rather than on projects like the Mallaig road. The article must also have been reassuring to coach tour operators, fish hauliers and timber transporters. It must, however, have been missed by at least one industrialist: We quote from last week's Press and Journal "Highland roads are not good enough to encourage development of industry in the area — says pulp mill chief."

★ ★ ★

Surely the most incredible advert of the year appeared in a Highland newspaper last week-end, it read "First Footing: take a 5/- Gift Pack of 4 Elite Lamps from the Hydro Board." Imagine the dialogue some time after twelve on the First: "Will you have another? Oh, no thanks I'm light-headed already. Go on have just a small one. Oh well then just a 40 watt, I'm driving and if I don't watch I'll go out like a light. Good then I'll join you, amp blazing masel."

R.M.M.

1971 CENSUS

Ten Test Areas

Tests designed to try out organisation and procedures will be held in Scotland as a preliminary to the next full census of the population in 1971.

The areas selected range from densely-populated burghal areas to remote rural areas, so that the enumeration procedures can be tested under widely differing conditions. The number of householders involved in Scotland will be about 3,500, and parts of Ross and Cromarty will be included.

Every householder in the areas involved will be invited to complete a test questionnaire. The householder's part in the test will be entirely voluntary, and there will be no compulsion on anyone to answer questions in the form. Householders who do provide information will have the assurance that it will be treated as confidential.

RATHAD UR AN I-STROM

Se Duncan Logan a choisinn an cumhann-cosgair luchd £490,000 airson rathad ur taobh a deas Loch Carain. Bithidh an rathad ur ag gabhail aite an aiseag that a' dol choch. Tha Comhann na siorrachd a faighinn 75 per cent. den chosgais agus nuair a bhios an rathad deiseil bithidh droicheadan that Ath Phidruis, Caolad agus abhainn Atadail. Bithidh an rathad deiseil an ceann da bliadhna.

MY DEAR I: I sent my old fur coat to Ferguson's and got a most marvellous renovation. You simply wouldn't know it from a new one, and the price was really moderate. I am certainly going back to them. Why not take her advice? D. A. Ferguson, Ltd., 90/94 Easter Road, Edinburgh, 7. Tel. AB 4055. Estab. 1897.

7.—Songs of the Gael

Taladh Chriosta

Lento

The following verses are taken from a selection of hymns compiled by the late Father Allan MacDonald, of Eriskay. The music is quoted here from that of Marjory Kennedy-Fraser. The strength of this song lies in its extreme simplicity and indicates that however ill the Gaelic folk were in the matter of writing, the oral tradition of learning produced a degree of education in the relevant fields of human experience which far surpassed that associated with the folk of other parts of the country to whom formal education was an aspect of life taken for granted.

(Noted in Eriskay from the singing of Mrs John MacInnes. Words from Fr. Allan MacDonald.)

Mo ghaol, mo ghradh, is m'eadail
thù, mo ghaol, mo ghradh, is m'eadail thù,
M'iontas ur is m' eibhnes thù,
Mo mhacan alainn ceutach thù,
Cha'n fhu mi fein bhith dhail.

Haleluia, Haleluia, Haleluia,
Haleluia.

Tha mi 'g altrun Rìgh na Morachd!
'S mise mathair Dhe na Glorach!
Nach buidh, nach dona dhomhsa!
Tha mo chridhe lan de sholas.

Mo ghaol an t-suil a sheallas thu,
Mo ghaol an cridh' thà liont' le
gradh.
Ged is leannbh thu gun chail is
is lionnbor buaidh thà o' fias.

'S tu Rìgh nan Rìgh, 's tu Naomh
nan Naomh,
Dia an Mac thu's siorruidh t' aois.
'S tu mo Dhia 's mo leannbh caomh,
'S tu ar Cheann-feadhna chinne-
daonda.

'S tusa grian gheal an dochais
Chuireas dorchaas air fogair,
Bheir thu clann-daoin' buò b' stad
bhronnach.

Gu naomhachd, sollaireachd, is
eolas.

Hosanna do Mhac Dhaibhidh,
Mo Rìgh, mo Thighearna, 's mo
Shian'tear!
'S moor mo sholas bh' gad thaladh,
'S beannaichte measg nan mnaì mi.

Lochaber To-day

To Strike Or Not To Strike

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Following on last week's article where we had a look at the condition in industry, known as "Working to Rule" this week we will look at the "Strike." This is the most serious action the worker can take, it is also the very last in the industrial relationship set-up that the workers will use. It is widely assumed that every trade union member on strike receives "Strike Benefit" from his Union. This is a wrong assumption.

Firstly, the trade union Executive must recognise the strike and approve of the action being taken, and secondly, the member must not be in arrears with his contributions, before "Strike Benefit" is payable. As most trade unions today have a vast amount of capital lying out in arrears, a large percentage of members are not eligible for "Strike Benefit." From this you will understand that for a trade unionist to go on strike is something that must be given a lot of serious consideration, and never at any time is it treated lightly, or in the delinquent manner you may have been led to believe. The right to withdraw his labour is the worker's, just as the employer has the right to shut down his works, or sell out to a competitor.

Every week you read of factories and mines closing down with all sorts of plausible excuses as to the need for this action, and to many this is perfectly acceptable. Irresponsible shareholders demanding an acceptance of a takeover, knowing that it will eventually mean an end to the continuity of employment for the employees of this company, seldom encourages a public outcry, but let half-a-dozen men strike in an effort to force an eighteenth century management to improve their working conditions, and everyone who can put pen to paper decries their action as irresponsible. Miners have gone on strike when they have been forced to work waist deep in filthy water, without extra remuneration, engineers have gone on strike when they were being forced to work machinery that was unsafe when their fathers were apprentices, and the 'Bonus rate' had not improved from that date either, building trade workers have gone on

strike when they were forced to work on staging that had long since depreciated to firewood, and would certainly result in the death of a fellow craftsman, or mate.

The Scottish worker in industry has taken chances, and is taking them every day, to keep industries wheels turning, and very little thanks they have for it, when you consider that a top paid craftsman in Scotland earns considerably less than £20 per week, without this new incentive that was abolished by act of a Scottish Parliament over 300 years ago — "week-end working."

Strike is the last resort of the worker, and when he has taken that decision you can depend on it, something very wrong

has taken place in the establishment he is employed in. The incident that brought on the strike may be only a culminating factor, one of a series, sometimes even a deliberate action by a management, that may have found itself in some kind of difficulty. "Sorry we cannot complete that order Sir, as you will have read, we have one of those unofficial strikes on our hands at the moment, trust you will allow us time to get over this little difficulty," a good story, a little difficulty, men, women and children on the bread line because some junior manager was too taken up with his secretary, to attend to the starting of an operation, on time, to complete the order.

Of course the men are wrong to go on strike, nobody knows this better than they do, but a just settlement of a grievance in industry takes time, and time is something we are all short of. Industrial intrigue is as corrupt today as it was a hundred years ago, almost every improvement in every trade has come about AFTER A STRIKE OR AFTER THE THREAT OF A STRIKE

A strike free industry will come about, in time, when the demarcations and differentials, between management staff (non-productive) and the "on-the-clock" (productive) employees, have been demolished, and if it takes strikes to demolish them, before the commercial side of industry wakens up in 1968, then strikes there will be.

OIDHCHE CHIUIN

(Silent Night)
*Oidhe Chiuin,
 Oidhe Naomh,
 Sith o neamh a' tann gach taobh,
 Og-bhean chaomh 'is a ceile coir
 A faire os cionn a Naoinne Oig,
 A tha 'na chadal cho seimh —
 A tha 'na chadal cho seimh.*

*Oidhe Chiuin,
 Oidhe Naomh,
 Ciobair a' chual' an ceol os a' chionn,
 Chumnaic e rionnag a' dearsadh 's na speur,
 Binn-chòl a' leanadh an t-saoghal gu lair,
 Bho choisir nan aingeal air aird —
 Bho choisir nan aingeal air aird.*

*Oidhe Chiuin,
 Oidhe Naomh,
 Caidil cho seimh, a Rìgh nan Dùl,
 A thainig thoiri solas 'is dochas do'n n-sluagh,
 A shabhaladh ainm nan peachdaidhean truagh,
 Failt' Ort, a Shlanaighear nan gras —
 Failt' Ort, a Shlanaighear nan gras.*

Gaelic words by D. J. MacMillan, London, December 1967.

ARTS COUNCIL EXHIBITION

An exhibition of Glasgow Portraits by Craig Annan (1864-1946), is being shown in the Scottish Arts Council Gallery in Blythswood Square, Glasgow, until January 27, 1968.

Admission is free and the gallery is open daily from 10 a.m. till 6 p.m., and on Sunday afternoons.

The photographs on show are a magnificent sample of the work undertaken by Craig 'Annan.

Plans for the new modern Fort William took a leap forward on Monday night when the Town Council formally agreed to accept an offer of £51,750 for the freehold site at Tweeddale Place.

The offer was made by Vestnio Ltd., a London firm, whose plans for developments on the site include the construction of ground floor shops and stores, and possibly refreshment and entertainment facilities above.

Treasurer W. G. MacPherson formally moved that this offer be accepted, and Councillor J. H. Rodger seconded the motion.

Mr MacPherson said there had been a lot of speculation in the town as to future developments at Tweeddale, and he felt that the very satisfactory offer by the London firm would put many minds at ease. It was decided to seek a meeting with the developers at the earliest opportunity, to hear exactly what the new proposals would be.

Provost Canon G. K. B. Henderson disclosed that immediately the offer had been received, the Town Council had met to look into the possibilities of finding alternative car-parking facilities to replace the Tweeddale car park

It had been decided to ask the Burgh Surveyor to prepare a plan of the ground running from Ardlinnhe to Nevis Cottages, which it was thought would be most suitable for this purpose. Mr McLaren said they hoped to provide parking space for about 120 cars on this area, with two entries and one exit.

Bearing in mind the ur-

gent need throughout the town for car parking, the Council decided that they were unable to accede to a request from the County Architect for permission to take over part of the vacant ground at Ardlinnhe for use as a temporary library site.

They recommended that urgent steps be taken to transfer the burgh yard to the former B.A. hostel site at Inverloch, and that the site of the burgh yard be offered to the County Council for use as a temporary library site.

Historic Buildings Grants

1966/67 REPORT PUBLISHED

Grants paid out by the Historic Buildings Council for Scotland reached more than £120,000, a record total — during the financial year 1966/67.

This is stated in the Council's report for the 15 months up to March 31 this year. The report (published by H.M.S.O., price 1s 9d), says the Council received 77 applications for grants during the period of the report and recommended grants to be made in 27 instances.

Grants ranged between £300 and £10,000. Among them was one for Kilkerran, by Maybole, Ayrshire, erected by Sir John Ferguson of Kilkerran, 1st Baronet in 1695-1700, which contains an interesting collection of pictures.

Culzean Castle, one of Robert Adam's finest works, a popular tourist attraction, now looked after by the National Trust for Scotland, was a third two grants. Armliston House, Midlothian, the work of William Adam, also received help. This house contains many valuable works of art and is notable for two things — its long family connection with the Scottish Bar, and as a centre of Scottish life and letters.

Three 15th/16th century castles received grants — Ballinluich in Aberdeenshire, Cessnock in Ayrshire, and Brodick in the Isle of Arran (a National Trust property).

The "little houses," which contribute much to the character of Scottish towns also benefited. Several small houses in Culross — the "museum of the 17th century" — received grants as did some in the Old Harbour area of Freetown, Banffshire.

The Council are now working to a three-year allocation of about £85,000 a year, the report states. This is larger than the amount provided under previous arrangements and gives an assured programme over the next three years.

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POPULATION — GAINS AND LOSSES

The Secretary of State for Scotland, Mr William Ross, said in the House of Commons recently that estimates of the losses or gains in the population of the individual counties in 1966/67 should be available round about the middle of January.

The corresponding estimates for each of the previous five years are set out in the table below. It should be noted that the annual figures for individual counties are unreliable as year-by-year indication of population change, since they include in some cases corrections to reconcile the estimates with the censuses. The totals for the five-year period are more reliable.

	1961-62	1962-63	1963-64	1964-65	1965-66	over 5 yrs.	Total change
Argyll	-183	+159	-739	-119	-697	-1,579	
Caithness	+488	+439	+46	-105	-131	+637	
Inverness	574	-331	-768	+524	+2,782	+1,633	
Orkney	-105	-40	-67	-179	-143	-534	
Ross & Cro-marty	-26	+18	+162	-128	-312	-286	
Sutherland	-47	+49	+119	-73	-65	-115	
Zetland	-153	-12	+194	-205	-143	-319	

Faicinn Bhuam SGEUL AOIBHNIS

SRUTH

Diardaoin, 28mh An Dohhlachd 1967
Thursday, 28th December 1967

Politics and An Comunn

Am bu choir gnóthach a bhith aig A' Chomunn Ghaidhealach ri nitean poiliticeach? Tha a' cheist seo a' toirt te eile 'nar cuimhne. Am bu choir gnóthach a bhith aig an Eaglais ri nitean poiliticeach? Tha mi smointeachadh gur a in fhearraig cheart do no ceistean sin nach eil dol as aca — cho fad agus a tha buaidh aig nitean poiliticeach air an obair aca. (Chan eil sinn a' ciallachadh le seo gum bu choir An Comunn Ghaidhealach a chòtlachadh ris an Eaglais ann an doigh sam bith eile, ged a dh' fhaodadh cuid a bhith smaointeachadh gur e seorsa de chreideamh a thanns A' Chomunn le ardsghargat agus teampall ann an Inbhir Nis!)

Tha a h-uile bliadhna 'a cur ris na rudan ris a bheil an Rìghalths a' gabhail gnóthaiche. Nach d' thuir Anerin Bevan gun d' thainig e gu bhith tuigsinn, agus e 'na duine og 'a' fiachainn ri leasachadh a dheanamh air beatha nan daoine bochda anns a' Chumrigh, gu feumadh e dhòla dh' n' aite far an robh cumhadh an leasachadh seo a thoirt gu buil — "the source of power" — mar a thuir e fhèin. Agus tha gnóthach aig an Rìghalths ri cor na Gàidhlig agus na Ghaidhealtachd.

Chan eil seo ri radh gum bu choir dha 'n Chomunn tuibh buidhinn seach buidheann a gabhail. Feumaidh aoidheachadh gu bheil mi smaointeachadh gum bithedaim na b' fhearr dheth le parlamaid ann an Alba — ach chan eil an sin ach mo bharail fhèin, agus tha cusean ann a Eirinn far a bheil aig a' Ghaidhlig ri iomadh sabaid a dheanamh fhastast a' foillseachadh dhùinn nach leig sinn a leas smaointeachadh gun tigeadh Linn an Aigh ged a bhitheadh parlamaid againn fhèin.

'S e neart agus laige na doigh-riaghlaidh agoinne gu feum an luchd-riaghlaidh a bhith sìreadh bhoitheachan airson cumhadh a chumail 'nan lamhan fhèin. 'S e seo a tha 'gar deanamh 'nar slughas saor ach, aig an aon am, tha an luchd-riaghlaidh agus a fheadhainn a tha ag iarraidh a bhith 'nan luchd-riaghlaidh, mar a chunnacainn sinn iomadh uair, buailteach air geallaidhean mora a dheanamh agus cuideachd, air fiachainn ri feum a dheanamh de dhaoine agus de chomunn airson nan innleachdan aca fhèin a thoirt gu buil.

Fhad 's a tha sinn a' tuigsinn seo fhaodadh sinn an aire thoirt gur e sinne tha deanamh feum dhiubh-san agus nach e iad-san a tha deanamh feum dhinne.

A New Philosophy

This is the time of year when we tend to look back and look forward. As we look back and consider the momentous world happenings which have taken place during the past twelve months, it becomes quite difficult not to become cynics, pessimists and fatalists. Certainly, many of the most recent events do not appear to augur well for the future. And we wonder whether the world will ever get itself straightened out.

In all probability the feelings of trembling now being experienced by the present generation were the same as those experienced by the peoples of earlier times. Each century has seen its share of new and terrible happenings which caused dread and consternation: nuclear plague, pestilence, the bow and arrow replaced by the sword, the sword outmoded by the gun, and the gun made obsolete by atomic weapons which can wipe out nations in the twinkling of an eye.

It is at this time when we suddenly realise the value of faith and hope. Despite the over-commercialisation of Christmas, the goodwill associated with the Season seems to get behind the facade of cynicism and break it open to extend its influence into many strange places. It is a fact that churches behind the Iron Curtain are packed full to capacity as each great festival in the Christian calendar comes round.

It seems to us that the time has come for a new moral philosophy to be promoted among the nations of the world, to fill the vacuum produced by people in high places who presume to know better than those they lead. This new philosophy must be integrated into our present scale of values, if our existence is to have any meaning at all. Presumably the lead should come from religious leaders. But their inability so far to influence the politicians of the world immediately puts them at a disadvantage. So to whom must be look for guidance and encouragement, to promote the philosophy of new morals?

The answer, we think, lies in the proven ability of the ordinary folk of this world to show that they have the will to live and create a better place for themselves, however painful the cost. The human mind is surely able to operate at a level where instinct fuses with external reality to produce the antidote for the present deadly corrosion of despair.

Those of us with children and grand-children must often wonder into what future we are pitching them, quite unprepared for the unexpected, and ourselves completely without the necessary modicum of experience and wisdom to which we ourselves had access from our parents. This is the time for new thoughts. Let us all think hard — and fruitfully.

Tha mi cinnteach gum b' fhearr le daoine cràbhach nach robh Latha na Biadhann Uire cho faisg air Latha Nollaig. Oir tha e na cileachdadh aig daoine a bhith a' deanamh gairdeachais aig fogsadh biadhna eile agus fadaidh e bhith gur e toisich na bliadhna a bhith cho faisg air latha breith an t-Slanaigh air d' che na n-obharan gu bheil am na Nollaig a nise air a mheas cuideachd mar am fregarraich airson crumichidhean is toil-intinn.

Tha aobhar àraidh aig daoine a bhith subhach aig am na Nollaig, an t-obhar a thugadh leis na h-aingean aig a' chiad Nollaig o shean. Ach s' fheudar do lean cuid d'le 'n t-seann shaobh-chràbhaidh ri doighen an lath an diugh. Mar sin chìthear buaidh trì-fille air na Nollaig — naidheachd ùral na slàinte, beagan dha na fhuair sinn o na linntean dorcha, mar a threacar, comhla ris na chaic a cur riutha sin nar linn fhèin.

S' tric pearsachan eaglais a' gearan, is feadhainn dha 'n aon intinn riutha, (chan ann, ma dh' fhaoidte, gun aobhar) gu bheil an treas buaidh, se sin, fìdhachas is greadhnachas eile, air àite ro làidir a ghabhail an cur-seachad na Nollaig. S' iomadh rabhadh a tha sinn a' faotainn mu bhith a' dioc-huimhneachadh fìor-theachdaireachd na Nollaig agus a' deanamh lethsgul dh'era gu bhith ri spòrs is sibhachas.

Tha cuid dha na h-eaglaisean gu dicheallach a nise ag ullachadh airson na Nollag le bhith ag ainmeachadh nan laith-

hean sònraichte a tha gar treòrachadh a dh'ionnsaidh an latha àraidh, latha-breith Chrìosd. Cuid eile nach gabh gnòthach ris an deasachadh seo, ag ràdh nacheil ann ach fasas ùr a fhuair sinn bho na Sasanaich agus an seòl-cràbhaidh aca-san.

Tha an slughal gun teagamh buailteach, dìreach mar a' th' air a chur as an leth, a bhith a' gabhail lethsgul sa bith a gheibh iad gu bhith ri cur-seachad intinneach. Tha am beatha air an talamh goirid, a rèir cuid, agus feumar a bhith subhach nuair a gheibhear an còthrom. Chan eil an sin ach mealladh, their an searmoitiche. Is còir dhùinn cur suas le d'fheilidh aig an t-saoghail. Chan e seo baid a mhaireas. Denamaid s' trith gu bhith intneach s' ósan buan san t-saoghail ri teachd.

Ge b' e dé n' thusa no mise, tha mòran aig an àm seo dhe 'n bhliadhna 'a' fiachainn ri comhairle Chrìosd a' thugainn agus a leanntainn. Tha feadhainn mar seo a' deanamh an d'chill mar seo a' deanamh de thoil-intinn na beatha a sgapadh am messg dhaoine eile. 'Their cuid gu dearbh nach urrainn do ghnoimharan matha sa bhith 'ighn ach mar thoradh air teagasg Chrìosd. Cuid eile a lorgas an t-iartras caomh seo annta fèin agus nach aontaich gur ann e' an fhuaran seo a thuinge idir.

A dh'aindeoin gach oidhirp a tha air a dianamh, tha mòran gainne agus tioblaid air feadh an t-saoghail fhastast agus chaneil crìoch ri fhaicinn

air an t-suidheachadh sin an cathaig.

San dùthaich seo fhéin bitidh daoine a' cnàmhan mu iomadh rud agus ag èigheach gu bheil sinn gu bheil ullamh. Tha iomadh rud nach 'd'ruitadh còrteil cois-làidh, mòran ri mèirle is bruisealachd, gach sòs, prìsean a' dol suas, agus iomadh cruaidh-chas. A dh'aindeoin sin, s gu léir, tha, na mo bheachd-sa, nas lugha de fhuar-ghainne, bochd-vinn is acras ri fhaicinn na bh' s'nn riamh roimhe. Agus cha bhitheadh e ladarna a' smaointeachadh gu bheil ruideir aig a' chreidimh Chrìosdaire ri dhì-mhinn ri sin.

PS

Facal cnàmhain bho 'n Chomunn Ghaidhealach fhéin. An latha roimhe thainig còr is sia mie leabhar, sgoile thugainn as a' Fhrang. Nam robh iad air a bhith mìos na bu tràithe, mun d' thainig diù-luach (devaluation) a not, bha e air leth-chiad not a chaoimhnadh dha na Chomunn. Ach fadaidh sibh an ceannach gu math saor fhastast, aig leth chruin a fear.

Agus facal searmoin. Tha prìsean ag èirigh thall sa bhios, ach tha cur-feum na Gàidhlig cho saor sa bha e riamh. Agus a' bhàid deagh dhùrachd. Bliadhna mhath ùr dhuibh nuair a thig i.

Donnell Grant

TOPICAL COMMENT

It is the end of another year and looking back over the past twelve months most of us have mixed feelings — of achievement and of failure. In this age of technological revolution we have much of which to be proud — we can see the efforts of grappling with science being richly rewarded by the results of space research, the awesome Concorde project, the more peaceful, we hope, use of nuclear energy and even more important the advance of medical science, culminating recently in the transplant of a young girl's heart to a chronically sick man. Tragically, this experiment has ended in death, not attributed by the experts to the actual transplant, but to yet another failure of Nature herself.

In the initial stages I scoffed at the cynics and objectors and as the days went by I even condemned them. Louis Washkansky was given a "second chance," as he put it himself, albeit a short-lived one, surely no-one can grudge him those 17 days on which he felt better than he had felt for years. He was a dying man before the transplant and a terribly ill one at that, and although his willingness to act as a "guinea pig" may have curtailed his days on this earth, we should all be

proud to know that his last few days of life were much happier and healthier than they would have been without the miracle operation.

But there is much of which we should be ashamed at the end of 1967. I will not dwell on the "trouble spots" of the world: Aden, Vietnam and the Arab/Israeli War, are only too familiar already. But we have not done much to combat the problem of the two-thirds of the world's population who are starving — an inhuman problem this one, but one which a little extra kindness at this time of year could do much to relieve. Oxfam is an admirable organisation and well worth sparing a thought for when you embark on your seasonal feasting.

But, nearer to home, we have our own problems — other than freeze, squeeze and devaluation, which, although they are the outcome of economic failure, are not tragic in themselves. It should not be necessary in this age of advanced civilisation to have societies such as the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children or Animals and that these are necessary is a sign of failure; it should not be necessary for our population to put up with appalling housing conditions and

it should not be necessary for the powers-that-be to be repeatedly reminded of our plight.

As was said at the beginning we have much of which to be proud and much of which to be ashamed when casting our eyes back over the year that has gone. It is to late now to change that, but let's try hard to make a worthwhile New Year's resolution — and let's try hard to keep it.

SLUGH

A reir a chunntais a chaidh a dheanamh an uiridh de 10%, den t-slughadh tha 5,108,210 a dhaoine an Alba. Se Sasanaich a tha annan 255,110 diubh no 4.9%, den t-slughadh. Tha 717,040 de dh Albanaich an Sasainn. So mar a tha an corr den aireamh a tuiteam 9,570 Amerigianach, 8,090 Innesach, 8,060 Canadian, 7,590 Gearmailteach, 7,220 Polach, 5,720 Eadaidheach, 3,010 Astralianach, 2,030 Pacistani. O nacheil againn ach cho beag seo de Phacistani saoil an sgrìom eam B.B.C. a cur a' nagh program teibheiscan nam Pacistani an Alba is an cuir iad Gàidhlig air na aite. Tha corr is 89,900 Gàidheal ann.

woman to woman

Hogmanay! The traditional eve for Scottish family celebrations and reunions. But what a lot of work for poor overworked Mum. She has already gone through the ordeal of having the children home on holiday and through the even greater one of Christmas Day, with its endless piles of crumpled fabric papers, tangled string and new toys; its tummy upsets and most of the day spent in the kitchen preparing the usual turkey, Christmas pudding and what have you. Probably the thought of doing it all over again just one short week later makes you cringe — I know it does me!

The only evidence of Christmas by this time is the festive decorations and the now hourly brushing up of fallen pine needles, but most of you probably have your Hogmanay preparations well underway. Perhaps you are having a family party at home or some of you may be visiting friends to bring in the New Year. For although Hogmanay is a traditional celebration, its festivities vary widely from town to town and family to family.

A good way to get the party going (if it needs that), particularly if you don't have a television set or cannot get good reception, is to invite a guest who can entertain — either musically or otherwise, and welcome all your guests with a glass of warming punch (the recipe was given in the last issue).

Probably, some of your guests will arrive before mid-

night and a great many after. Because of this the only sensible way to feed the "five thousand" is to set a buffet table with the usual traditional fare along with some more unusual items as well.

A quick, simple way to make your table attractive and provide something for everyone, is to buy half-a-dozen large oranges or grapefruit and a large packet of cocktail sticks. Cut the fruit in half and place each section flesh-side-down on a plate. You can use your own imagination as to what to put on the cocktail sticks, but popular suggestions include pickled onions, cubed cheese, cocktail sausages, stuffed olives, gherkins and pineapple. My favourite is thinly sliced boiled ham cut into strips, rolled round a pineapple chunk, and pierced with a cocktail stick! Delicious. When the sticks are stuck into the fruit they look really appetising and a most attractive decoration as well. Of course you can put two or more items on each stick, which works very well with something like a chunk of apple and cube of cheese.

Cheese dips are becoming most popular, too, these days and are simple to prepare: one or two tasty ideas are Philadelphia cream cheese whipped up with a tin of cream (three packets to one large tin of Nestlé's cream); Philadelphia cheese whipped up with chutney, pickle or even tomato ketchup and Philadelphia cheese whipped up with apple sauce. To go with the cheese you can have chunks of French bread, crisps or cheese sticks — just put the bread dips in bowls and the cheese, crisps, etc., on a plate and leave your guests to do the rest! The plates will be clean in no time at all.

People coming in from the cold need something to warm them up (apart from a dram!) and broth, hot dogs or chicken legs solve this one admirably. The chicken legs can be attractively wrapped with "ruffles" so as to avoid greasy fingers, and the soup is best served in large mugs. Hot dogs are easy to deal with if each one is

served on a plate with a paper napkin.

All these ideas will suit the children just as well as the grown-ups and if they are being allowed to stay up for New Year, you'll find they enjoy this sort of informal "meal" much better than sitting down to sandwiches and trifles, etc.

Well, this is the last "Woman to Woman" for 1967 and may we wish you a happy and prosperous 1968 and hope that you will find some of our tips useful when entertaining this Hogmanay.

★ ★ ★

PETTICOAT TAILS

14 oz. flour; 4 oz. sugar; 2 oz. rice flour; 1 egg yolk; 8 oz. butter. Mix butter, sugar and egg yolk together. Sieve flour and rice flour on to butter and knead. Continue working till smooth. Mould, stab and bake lightly. Dust with caster sugar.

★ ★ ★

BOOTS FOR WALKING

The popularity of knee high and above knee boots has led to some styles being bought and worn for purposes other than that for which they were designed. Many of these smart new boots with low or block heels are really court shoes with a slim leg added, and they are therefore suitable for crisp winter days to protect legs from cold and the splashes of passing traffic.

With thicker soles, the whole foot is lifted above wet pavements, and will obviously stay drier, but if boots are needed for tough walking through mud, snow and slush the real answer is to buy wellingtons or styles with a storm welt sealing the join between sole and upper. If footwear is to be impervious to water and damp it will also prevent heat from the foot escaping. This makes such footwear uncomfortable, if worn for any length of time.

The best advice for those of you who haven't already bought your winter boots is: Make sure when you buy that you know for what purpose you want the boots and ensure that the style you like is suited to that purpose.

And remember that while these fashion boots may be completely weatherproof, they can prove a disappointment to the buyer if worn in foul weather for the uppers may be damaged if worn in heavy rain or used to plough through snow and slush.

Inneasrachd No Manaidsearachd

The gach fear den luchd obraich aig Woodward Governor (U.K.) ann an Slough a meas an 82 cil. A h-uile foghar tha iad a' faighinn pàipeir measaidh agus tha gach duine an uair sin a' cur sìos a bhàrail air a cho obrich a reir an luchd don chompanaidh. Tha meas gach fir air a thogail as a sin air leth. Tha an luchd obraich an uair sin a meas nan gafair agus na gafairean na mandsearan agus sìos air an rathad cheudna. Tha luchd an duine an uair sin air a chuir mu choinneamh a thurasaidh agus chan urrainn e ardachadh fhaighinn air a bhun paigheadh mar a bheil a nabadhach ga meas gach bhi air barrachd feum a dheanamh. Saol an cosnadh sinn feir sgillinn idir nan r'achadh air cur air a lethidh so de mheidh!

AN GAIDHEAL AIR AINEOIL

“Get a tha mi car ramull
A'thamb meas nan Gallabh
Tha mo dhunhaich air m'aire
’S cha mhaith leat a h-ach-
cadh.”

Seo nar sgrìobh Donnchadh Ben Mac an t-Saoir o chionn daichead bliadhna air n-ais. 'Sann an Dun-Eideann a bha e's ann aig an am id ach tha mi cinnteach gum bheil seo fìor de Ghaidheil Ghlaschu cadhon an diugh. Tha corr air trì fichead mìle Gaidheal an Glaschu ach tha mi creidsinn gum biodh a' chuid mhor dhaibh gach dheonach tilleadh do'n Ghaidhealtachd nan b' urrainn daibh. 'Nuair a thig an Gaidheal a

sraid a'dol mar seo agus gun fhios gadaid a' taobh a thionndaidheas tu mur eil cuideigin rolach comhla riut. 'S i an oilthigh bu mhotha chuir de eagal, ormsa 'nuair a chaidh mi innse an toisach. Bha i cho mor a' coimhead is gun tubhairt mis riom-bein tach' deannain mo rathad fein g' siorraidh innse ach ri tìde dh' fhaill an t-eagal seo agus tha cuisean g' dhoigheal a nis.

'Arson maitheas a' Gaidheal tha ceidhean agus damhsachan Gaidhealach ann an feadhainn de thallichann a h-uile seacdain Di h-anoig agus Di-Sathairne agus bitheadh moran a' cruinneachadh thug airson luchd colais a choinneachadh. Tha sochair aig Gaidheil Ghlaschu air na cuirmean seo oir tha moran de na seinneadairean Gaidheil as ainmeil a' comhannadh anns a' bhaile mhor agus tha an duine ris nach còrd an oidhech g' dhoirbh a riarachadh. A bharrachd air na ceidhean seachdaineil seo tha na cuirmean moran ann aig Comunn Leodhas agus an Hearadh Comunn Uidhist agus Bharraich agus iad feadhainn eile cuideachd, agus iad seo is fearr builean.

Chan'eil moran Ghaidheal ann an Glaschu tejs nach bu mhiann tilleadh dhachaidh do'n Ghaidhealtachd. A bharrachd air an tarmh agus an fhois ris an robh iad cleachdaich tha iad cuideachd ag ionndrain farsaingeachd nam beann agus nan sliabh. Tha iad a' faireachdainn cho ceangailte anns a' bhaile mhor agus bu mhiann leotha mar a thubhairt am bard Uidhisteach, b'ate na ce'bhag fhaigal agus tilleadh dhachaidh far an robh iad ealach.

OICHE CHIUIN

Oiche Chiuin, oiche Mhic De, C'ach 'na suan, Di's arain, Di's is dilso' f'air seòl, Naion beag gnoai-ghac annais taic coimh, Mhiorist 'na chodhladh go seimh, Mhiorist 'na chodhladh go seimh, Oiche Chiuin, oiche Mhic De, 'Aoiri ar dtùs chuala an seal, Alleluia 's'geal ag glach, C'antain suaic' i' ngar' s' g'cein, Crìost ar Slnaithoir fein, Crìost ar Slnaithoir fein.

Oiche Chiuin, oiche Mhic De, Mac De bhì — gaire ar bheil Tuar a' bh' alan cur' g'ceill, Ann go d'atig trath c'm an tein; Crìost a' s' theacha ar an soal, Crìost a' s' theacha ar an soal.



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The Speywife

by Francis Thompson

It was a sharp, cold morning in late autumn. The broad hills hunched up their shoulders and hugged their pineclad coverings closer to keep warm. High up into the pale-blue sky, now reddening with the birth-colours of the rising sun, the glens blew huge clouds of white vapour, like the irregular breathing of a sleeping giant. Above the many first-of-morning sounds, the occasional cloying coughing of a hen of leese punched its way through the thickness of the protective trees, and was lost in the deep rumble of the River Glass. The water, stirred by the river, swollen with the recent heavy rains, hurried away to the sea, impatient and anxious to be gone.

Half-hidden by the towering pine trees and graceful birches, a thin, single-track road made its slow, cautious way down the cleft between two hills, past the open fields used for winter-grazing the sheep, and into the village.

Following the road's leading figure, as it twisted and turned, a small, frail figure of a woman placed one worn, earth-stained shoe in front of the other. She walked as though each and every bone in her body was stiffly full of the night cold, a cold that was beyond the point where one no longer shudders.

Her skirt of faded colours was long. It flapped like a wounded bird about her ankles, as would be the sudden, deprived life of the life-filling nuzzling of the sea winds. Her old coat, pitifully thin, had long since given up its true shape, and had resigned itself to being a blanket and no more. It had, however, a good, high collar. This the woman wore up about her ears, and the silver-grey streaks that ran through and through her hair.

The woman's face was lined like well-used leather, each line the constant reminder of the sorrows of all mankind's yesterdays—with more to come on the morrow. There was, however, a soft, pinky glow to the face as though it had seen a wonderful mystery, but was forbidden on pain of death to tell its meaning to the world.

The eyes were the most alive feature about her. They were almost jet-black, with a touch of the brown that is seen in the deep pools of peaty water in the moor. And, just as the sun reflects the image of itself in dark water, so each of the black eyes contained a sun, small, false and completely without heat, but penetrating to the very heart of life itself.

The Bridge

As she approached the old wooden bridge that spanned in a transfixed leap the foam-flecked River Glass, the woman stopped and looked beyond the houses in the village. Here and there from the chimneys, long, thin fingers of smoke reached up to grasp at the morning air laced with the sweet, pungent and nostril-twitching scent of burning wood carried itself over to the small, dark, earthy mouth moved. A long-drawn sigh escaped from her thin, bloodless lips and formed itself into a sharp, cold spark of her. Then, like a ghost at cock-crow, it slowly disappeared.

With the scent of burning pine-wood, she stopped at a second cooking oats. The woman's nose twitched like a dog's. Then she went forward again to cross the bridge. She stopped a second time. The swollen water of the River Glass roared in her ears as she stared at them, hypnotised. A hand, she thought, was in her mouth ran riot, out of control, and she pulled and leaped in a frenzy of uninhibited freedom. With an almost mechanical movement her eyes darted to the bridge. She stood for a few moments like this, hardly breathing, then

slowly raised her eyelids. She pulled inside her body deep draughts of the cold morning air, exhaling each one slowly and carefully, retaining the substance of its life.

With an almost robot-like movement the woman stepped on to the wooden floor of the bridge and clattered her loose-fitting shoes over it. The waters of the River Glass tumbled the thickness of the bridge beneath her. The heavy rains that had recently fallen on the already, saturated moors had begun to drain into the growing river. They growled and worried at the stone supports that raised the bridge above the torrent. Their hidden strength could be felt as a thick, frightened shudder.

When she was half-way over the bridge, the woman quickened her pace and made for the first cottage. A yellow light beyond the deep-set window attracted her as it would a moth. In a minute she made her way round and was knocking, gently but firmly, on the back door.

At first her knocks were unheeded. So she knocked again, this time louder. The sounds of early morning inside the house quietened a little as a child's voice spoke.

"There's someone knocking at the back door, child."

"Ach, nonsense, child! Now, who would be knocking on a door in this village at this early hour?"

"But there is a knocking! I heard it! Just listen!"

"And, as the household became quiet and listened, the woman knocked again—a shy, gentle knock that begged pity from those within."

"Aye, you were right, child. There's someone at the back door. Though you on earth can't be?" Footsteps sounding on hard flagstones came to the door and rattled the lock. The door opened to a face that shone from a recent, fresh, cold-water washing looked out at the woman.

"Aye?"

"The question was put and waited for an answer," said Duncan MacRae looked at his strange visitor, not a little taken aback at her appearance. For, though he had known a time and a tramp on his doorstep, he felt there was something unnatural about this one.

"What business be on you and your house," said the woman, with a voice as soft as a summer wind among young, growing grass.

"The same business as on yourself," said MacRae, his mind for a moment running riot with tales of false blessings bestowed by witches on many an unsuspecting Highlander, and he gave her the blessing kindly just in case.

"Might you have a spoonful of warm milk and a bit of bread to eat?"

Only once before had MacRae turned someone away from his door, once when he had been in need of a wife, and he had regretted the deed around with him ever since.

"Indeed I have. Will you come in and sit by the fire in the kitchen?"

"The woman's bright eyes lost their sparkle for a moment as they flamed over."

"I can but give you no more than my grateful thanks for the sight and feel of a fire on this cold morning. I've been walking all night."

"Have you come far?" asked MacRae.

"Yes, far enough. From the North," the woman replied, and volunteered no more information. MacRae stood aside and, with the corner of his eye, noted the kitchen door. The woman felt the warmth of the small room force itself on her body, and she welcomed the heat with a grateful sigh.

MacRae's wife was stirring a panful of noisy porridge. It puttered and made a confused rec-

itation of the traditional names of Scottish towns and villages to indicate that never more than now would it be good and ready for eating.

"You'll take a sup of porridge," MacRae's wife said to the woman. It was more an order than asking. The woman sat down heavily on a chair beside the fire. She stretched her thin, bony, supplicating hands out to the flames as though to catch one and keep it. "Ah, mistress, but you'll be needing it all for yourself and the wee bairn there."

"Nonsense! There's more than enough here. What's left over we usually throw out to the hens. And, anyway, it's as little as we could do for a body just in from the cold of a long night's walking!"

Without more ado, MacRae's wife swept the big pan from the fire and placed it, on a wooden board on the table. The woman began to spoon out the porridge into white bowls.

Duncan MacRae came into the room with a couple of hard, black peats, which he placed on the fire. The flames ate into them hungrily. He took up one of the filled bowls and a spoon and handed these to the woman.

"Here. You had better take this sitting by the fire. And here's a drop of milk."

The woman took them, with a murmured thanks. Despite her eagerness to blunt the sharp edge of her hunger, she waited while Duncan MacRae, the head of his house and small family, intoned a Grace to be said before the taking of food. It was a sad-sad prayer, half-spoken, half-sung, invoking the mercy and blessing of his house and those in it who were about to eat what the Lord had provided.

After the Grace, the woman supped her porridge slowly, carefully savouring every mouthful, as though giving each one a name by which it would be remembered on a future day when there was nothing else to eat but a handful of sour berries.

When the woman had scraped her bowl clean, Mrs MacRae handed her a mug of strong tea and some bread. Though an outsider, the family made the woman feel as one of themselves. In a short time the first meal of the day was over, the night fast broken, and all were prepared to sit by the fire and chat whatever it might bring.

MacRae said to his wife — "I think first of all I'll have across to see the young man on the Amhunn. It's so flat there that the river might easily overflow over it. It's running as high as I can remember for a long time. Then I'll get that old tree sawn up for the winter logs."

Mrs MacRae nodded. "You'll be in for your dinner, then?"

"Aye."

The Vision

MacRae turned his chair to face the woman, and the hair on the back of his neck rose as he saw her looking at him, through him into the very depths of his eyes, as though trying to find the secret of his being.

Her lips hardly moved as she asked — "You have to go across the bridge this morning?"

"I have to go up to the field yonder. It's up the road, back the way you came this morning."

MacRae and his wife were that she had died. Then, slowly, the eyelids lifted, and the features softened.

"She looked at MacRae with normal eyes."

"The river is crying for someone this day. I heard it this morning. I will go for you. It has to be, I cannot escape it!"

"Whatever do you mean?" MacRae began to ask as the woman quickly rose from her chair.

"My thanks to you for your kindness. It will be well repaid," she said, and before MacRae could say another word she was gone. They heard her light footsteps going round the house and on to the road outside.

The Sacrifice

MacRae moved over to the window and looked out. He saw the woman's retreating figure go back the way she had come, making for the old wooden bridge.

"Well, she was a strange one and no mistake," he exclaimed. "I think she must have been one of you fey-tinker women. She just looked the part."

Curiosity took him to the front door. He went down the path and on to the road in time to see the woman walking towards the bridge. She walked with no life in the movement as though she were already dead.

The woman stepped on to the bridge and made her way across it slowly, expectantly. The road of the River Glass drummed into MacRae's ears and soared high above the tops of the watching pines.

It was then that Duncan MacRae could not believe the sight of his eyes. For the river seemed to swell up. The waters rose and tugged at the bridge; it pulled and heaved at it like a mad thing. MacRae tried to shout a warning to the woman, but his cry stuck like a fishbone in his dry throat. In a second the bridge had collapsed and was being swept away, taking the woman with it. The wrenching and cracking of weak wood echoed in the trees, and above it all came a small thin cry, pitiful in its dying note. It startled MacRae into action.

He ran down the road to the river's edge, to follow the fast-

disappearing wreckage of the bridge, now being tumbled and tossed by the water. There was no sign at all of the woman. Her body would appear soon enough. It was past saving now.

MacRae climbed back up the river bank and looked at the stone supports of the bridge with gaping holes in them as useless as blind eyes. He thought of what the woman had said, that she would take his place, and the thought made him shudder. If that had been him . . .

"She knew it would happen," he said in a harsh whisper.

And for the second time that morning the nape of his neck grew stiff with a prickling fear of the unknown that was far beyond the pale of human understanding.

Sgrioban Shrupan

The Ughdarras an Eisg Ghil air sgrìoban deochaid a dhèilbh (Subtraction dredge) coltach ri (Subtraction dredge) a bhios bata a toghadh as a deidh a' cur air a' bhàrtaich a' toghadh an ghaibhinn. Oibreachd an sgrìoban sìos gu da aithmean a dh'iomhne (12 TR.) cha leigear a leas an uair sin fuireach ri traigh roghart. Thig this then naot tunna de shrupan ann an uair a thide leis an sgrìoban deochaid se seachd tunna a toghadh le racain air an aon traigh. Ach tha luch a mhaorach air margaidh Lunnain a dol suas a h-uilz bliadhna £1.93 muiloinn ann 1966 agus ma oibreachd an t-inneal so bit-hiadh baisteachan a ruith air Traigh Bharraich a' traighan Chluaidh an Bhaighe Moireach Tunng an Ctaibh is oitirean nan eileanan siar. Nach bu chòir do b-hiasgarann againn a' fhearr a' bhì seallean rompa san latha a' thinn. Chruinnic sin mar a' mhìll feadhainn eile iasgach a ghnoimh leis a' bhàrta a' ghabhaidh. Ach tha ceist a' feithamh fangsaidh that-hast an cuir an t-inneal air as don stoc a tha a' sìolachadh air na traighen sin agus ma durr?



over to you.

Letters to the Editor

HIGHLAND AGRICULTURE

Sir, — We are losing ground rapidly in more senses than one. I scan every newspaper eagerly looking for an article by an agricultural expert crying out against the trend and telling us to "close up" and to stop the landslide which we all know ends in agricultural collapse. Very well then, I, who am no expert, whose 9 acres smallholding isn't even registered as a croft and whose ancestry is more Northumbrian than Highland, dare to raise my voice and shout "close up" Highlanders!

Let us start by looking at paragraph 25 of the Highland Development Board's first report, it says: "Crofting appears to be a form of living and working which gives deep satisfaction to those who follow it. It does not and cannot, support the crofter as a full-time pursuit. It is fundamentally unstable, therefore, unless a supplementary income is provided from other sources . . ." and it goes on.

I don't know what you feel when you read the first sentence, but, if it is the same as I feel then we are already "on our way". That crofting does not normally support the crofter as a full-time pursuit means, presumably, that a crofter does not normally, these days, earn his living entirely from agriculture on his ten acre croft. I think that we all agree that it is impossible to do so with the backing of machinery, co-operation and organisation is quite untrue.

I have made this point to begin with because we all know that the progressiveness and success of the agriculture being done on the crofts is the thermometer which shows the state of health of Highland agriculture. It is upon the health of agriculture that the whole economic stability of our people rests.

What do we see when we look at this thermometer? We see rushes on the fields, broken fences, beds for gates and choked drains. We see top hand-reared calves being snapped up for nothing by avaricious dealers, good crofts being planted with trees, other crofts being deserted

for lack of trees for shelter and, everywhere, mono-grazing and overstocking with sheep in a desperate attempt to earn enough subsidies for a living.

Stock going to market in transport too expensive to take it there, let alone bring them home should the prices be poor.

Am I painting too dismal a picture? We all know that I am not, and we also know that this state of affairs is the "broken" or thing which is wrecking our future, our culture and our language. It is enough to give an energetic young lad the creeps and we should not be surprised that they are leaving.

Should we stop here, as is the current fashion, or should we make a plan?

"United we conquer, divided we fall." All of us who live and work in Highland agriculture, either as crofters or smallholders, tenant farmers, graziers, lairds, dukes and lords must work for the success of their own and each others enterprises. How often do we hear the crofters unions slating the landlords as if they were all wicked barons? Almost as often as we hear the landlords pretending that all crofters are idle and useless. Most landlords are keen to stop the rot in Highland agriculture as most crofters, graziers and tenants are skilled, hard-working people. Every community has its share of drones, however, and judging by recent articles in the press, they get more than their fair share of the platform.

There is an almost incredible surplus of official bodies working on a problem whose solution is obvious to you and I. A Highland Development Board which takes nothing to do with agriculture; a Crofters Commission which takes nothing to do with smallholders; a Department of Agriculture that takes nothing to do with crofting; a Forestry Commission administered from Basingstoke and a Scottish Tourist Board unrepresented in the West Highlands. A County Council with no power and M.P.s all of different parties fighting like cats and dogs to decide whether we should pay S.E.T. and Road Haulage Taxes, or both. They should all knock off work

on Fridays and come to dig ditches, mend culverts and put up fences in the West . . . the solution would be much closer to problem!

But seriously, a much more simple and practical plan is needed.

Firstly, a development officer for each parish who should be one of the residents (i.e. a crofter, contractor, laird, or what have you). The people would apply to him (or her these days!) for the development assistance. He in turn would report to the County Council.

Secondly, a county development machinery pool for use in agriculture, forestry or tourist development; the machines would be mostly owned and operated by individuals or small firms scattered about the county.

Thirdly, a county development engineer to replace the forestry engineers and to co-ordinate the use of the machinery pool. The machinery to be used under the direction of the development officer at no cost to the crofter, farmer, hotelier, laird, Forestry Commission, etc. The amount of development controlled by an overall financial ceiling.

Fourthly, a trading post in each parish for the marketing of all Highland produce. The posts to include freezing arrangements for deer, mutton, fish and local produce; fattening lots for cattle and sheep; a craft community centre; transport section and agricultural machinery for hire for all seasonal operations.

Fifthly, central trading posts to handle the volume of exports from the parish trading posts. International marketing and transport arrangements and an air strip would be provided.

Trading posts would publish lists of what was required for the market. Crofters, graziers, contractors, lairds etc. would grow or manufacture the goods required. Hotels and local shops would then be able to buy a great deal of what they needed from the parish trading post instead of importing their stock as they do now.

If we were to do this the Crofters Commission and the Department of Agriculture could be amalgamated and greatly reduced in size; the forestry engineering staff would be streamlined and the Highland Development Board could go home. And, best of all, we, the people, could get to work.

I am not at all daunted by the serried ranks of salaried gentlemen who are prepared and ready to tell me that I am talking nonsense. I am more nervous about those of us who are slating at the hearth because we have been put on the left wine. Those who belong to the "THEY ought to do something" club. The "Pphhh . . . can't be done" club or the party with the largest membership of all — "the fence sitters club."

It is really quite simple because, as a famous millionaire once said — "It's merely a question of doing it!" Yours etc.

Captain E. GREY
Garrygualach,
Invergarry.

TRIBUTE TO EDUCATION AUTHORITIES

Fhir Dheasachaidh Choir,

I would like to correct one of the errors in your contributor's report on my talk to the London Gaelic Society. Where it is stated that "An Comunn spearhead Gaelic into primary schools outside the Gaelic area"—this should read in full—Local Education Authorities, particularly Invernesshire and Glasgow, have spearheaded Gaelic teaching in primary schools outside the Gaelic-speaking area, and the primary classes are taught in both Aberdeen and

Stirling. Gaelic is also taught in Edinburgh Academy."

We cannot over-emphasise the tremendous work local Education Authorities' headmasters and teachers are undertaking on behalf of Gaelic at this time, and I shall be grateful if this connection can be published.

A Barra poet has eleven lines of Gaelic verse in the Icelandic Saga, with the scribble "Eri the Red" journey to settlement in Greenland prior to the voyage to Vinland in North America. It is highly unlikely that the same poet would accompany him on that journey as well.—Le meas,

D. J. MACKAY.

Sir,—Lest I offend the pure in heart and mind with bad Gaelic, allow me to quote some very good Gaelic for the benefit of Mr Johnstone (no Mac Garry):
Còd mhullach a mogaill fein
bhaineadh do Chloinn Neill go

Is tric roinnean na bhfeair bhfial go leabaidh na Niall a nuas."
(Aithbhean inghean Coirceadail)—Yours etc.

A. NEILL
Lulliam Neill (Lan Ghall)
13 South Gyle Road,
Edinburgh, 12,
18th December, 1967.

SCOTLAND AND MECHANISATION

Sir,—In the matter of mechanisation many people are tempted to put the means before the end. It should hardly be necessary to recall that the machine is made to serve man not the reverse. Yet there are mistaken attitudes that denigrate human dignity and happiness to mechanisation with cocksure arguments about progress being inevitable and we "must bow to the winds of change." And where are so many other ambitious schemes of manufactures of human ingenuity? Blown up or destroyed and promptly forgotten in so many cases.

There only remains the service of God and of the human race. Now if charity is to begin at home it would be nonsense to start vaunting the machine before first examining whether it will preserve what is characteristic of our country. In Genesis we were told "increase and multiply" but at the same time every species was commanded to remain true to itself. Now if animals and plants are to conform to this law, why not man? It takes nothing away from the richness of the human race to bring out what is characteristic of one particular race. On the contrary, without this there would be no richness at all, only dull uniformity and death-like sameness.

Now, by keeping the above ends in view, those who accuse us of being romantic don't know what they are saying. We are not going to let ourselves be robbed of our language, of our traditions and national dress under the pretext of better mechanisation. The latter is for full time employment, but this should offer no contradiction to living up to a Scottish and Celtic way of life. I am not asking anyone to make a religion of it. Culture and religion should

(Continued at foot of next column)

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go hand in hand but are not identical. Therefore those who advocate a Celtic Church are cutting themselves off from universal acknowledgement of public worship. The more we progress the more it should be made clear that we are no backward nation that needs to be under the tutelage of others and the machine, like all material things, is neutral in itself and can be used both for or against Scotland's interests. Yours etc.

JAIN G. MACNAIR
Comde de Panleva
Teléfono
Madrid.

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The Scottish Clan

In "The Clans, Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands," published first in 1908, Frank Adam wrote: "The clan system is dead, but a clan spirit survives."

Fourth and Fifth editions of his work have been published in 1952 and 1955, revised by Sir Thomas Innes of Learney, Lord Lyon King of Arms. In the preface Innes writes: "One dominant difference will, however, be found in the scheme and motif of the present edition." In law and social organization the "Clan System" is still quite "alive!" No legislation "destroyed it." This presumably refers to some statement of Frank Adam in the original work to the effect that legislation had destroyed the Clan System. I do not have a copy of the original work to refer to but it seems to me important to remember this essential difference in presentation. Particularly as Innes accepts and presents the Clan as feudal-torial even when he says: "In Scotland we are fortunate that, in a great measure, our 'old laws' — on which tenure and clan organisation were based — have in their essentials survived until now from their age-old evolution in the early days of our Pictic-Scottish patriarchal organisation; and it is these which have preserved in Caledonia so much of its ancient structure, character and outlook."

Later in the preface to the Fifth Edition, Innes writes: "... the children of the Clans, wherever they may settle, may preserve the vitality of those age-old hereditary Highland institutions, that were so securely enshrined in the Laws of Scotland, which southern politicians — when from certain provisions in the Treaty of Union they found they could not abolish them as readily as they would have wished — have instead, in not a few cases, sought to destroy, trying by groundless propaganda to wheedle the Scots into abandoning the very laws whereby their ancient and native civilisation and their high national character have actually been preserved."

I suggest we wish to establish the position of the Clan and land-tenure in the ancient Celtic tradition — not in the Pictic-Scottish tradition. The Picts and the Scots were invaders. The Clans of Celtic tradition are said to have been original inhabitants of clan-lands some of which can still be identified today. They certainly seem to have been in possession when the Picts and the Scots invaded the areas concerned.

The essence of Clanship is that Clan lands are held for the benefit of the Clan, not for the personal benefit or enrichment of any individual or Chief of the Clan. The Clan and its soil are indivisible and while there may have been variations in the rights which any particular

family in a particular Clan had in an particular section of Clan land the affection of the Clan members for the Clan land as a whole was very real and deep. Clan land could not be disposed of by sale and it is not surprising, therefore, there are, as I believe, no Title Deeds going back to Celtic i.e. pre-Pictic-Scotts days.

It is important to remember that when the (Celtic) Clans mustered they were not mercenary troops fighting at the dictation of feudal chiefs for the preservation of a dynasty but free men coming together of their own free will to fight, when necessary, for the preservation of their common inheritance and the jointly owned clan lands. The King of Scotland in the early days held his position by the people's choice and held it only so long as he retained the confidence of the people. It was no treason to depose the king when the people thought it correct to do so. The aim was to preserve the peace of the Scots, not the King's Peace. Similarly, Clan Chiefs held their position only so long as they retained the confidence of the Clan. It was no treason to depose the Chief when the Clan thought it correct to do so. There is an old Celtic saying: "Stronger than the chief are the clansmen."

The position is well brought out by comparing Magna Carta and the Scottish Covenant.

The principle declared in Magna Carta was that the King acknowledged the existence of rights and liberties in his (the King's) people. The people, in effect, belonged to the King. Since 1066 England had been a conquered land. The King assumed ownership of the land by right of conquest. To maintain that position he granted ownership rights of varying degrees to his (imported) supporters ostensibly as rewards for services rendered (in subduing the real owners) but also with a view to maintaining overlordship in the future. In acknowledging rights in Magna Carta, the King was in fact acknowledging privileges bestowed by a conqueror, not rights by birth. Similarly, land ownership in England is a privilege conferred by a conqueror, a privilege that in the last resort can be withdrawn by the conqueror at will.

The Scottish Covenant was the direct result of Charles I's attempts to withdraw from the Scots peoples' rights to which they attached great importance, rights which they were prepared to fight for, and, if necessary, to die for. Charles I believed passionately in the Divine Right of Kings and the Divine Right of Episcopacy. In accord with ancient Scots concepts of land tenure he revoked Crown lands (just as Clan Chiefs did from Chief lands). But Charles I purposed to sell

outright and to guarantee permanent ownership to the purchaser. The Crown had no right to denude itself of Crown lands.

System

By A. A. MacInnes

Everyone purchasing Crown Lands was fully aware that the transaction was liable to be overturned.

Because Charles I also determined to make the Scots Kirk truly Episcopalian with all the ritual connected with the High Church and Roman practices, the people united against him.

Under the Clan System the Covenant was able to proclaim loyalty to the King and disclaim any charge of rebellion although uniting against him, which would be impossible in a feudal state. It was their insistence on their birth-rights. Land could not be taken from them by the King (except by force which in the end it was), and the right to worship their own God in their own way. By that time feudalism had made progress in Scotland. Men like the Duke of Montrose originally subscribed to the Covenant but later treacherously went over to the King.

The problem will be to show that various agreements and legislative enactments which purport to govern land-tenure in Scotland today are illegal.

(To be continued)

Cereals Deficiency Payments

Growers are reminded by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland that certificates relating to deliveries of wheat during the special accounting period (October 1-November 30) must be submitted by December 31, 1967.

Certificates received after December 31, 1967, will not normally be accepted. Growers are responsible for submitting their own certificates to the Department. Any grower who has not received an acknowledgment from the Department within ten days of posting a certificate should get in touch with the Department at Government Buildings, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, 11, immediately.

SHEEP SUBSIDY

The general issue of claim forms for sheep subsidy has now been made. Any farmer who considers that he has sheep which would qualify for the Hill Sheep or the new Unplanned Sheep Subsidy, and who has not already received an application form, should write immediately to the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland, Sheep Subsidy Section, Government Buildings, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, 11.

Completed claim forms must be returned to the Department by January 31, 1968.

SCOTLAND NOW

By JOHN DOLE

A line of empty pockets stared, like blind and sightless eyes at the hard-boiled counter that separated those out of work from the bureaucrats with an old, salaried indifference fixed on their faces. The counter was painted with the sick-sea green of governmental charity and pity. Its top was marked, scored and lined with age and the silent scuffing of a million and more coat-lace buttons as arms, young, old, strong and frail, stretched out for the 'S.O.' stamped indelible pencil to 'sign-on'.

A line of nervous, workless hands twitched in their parallel pockets as the men waited, with the patience of the Jobless, for the full-feel of crisp, new, Bank of England pound notes, reeking wealthily of rich-green ink. The sound of tin-bright shillings and the poorer, working-class copper-clanking piece jarred on hungry ears as small paper bags coughed out their exact, weighed-and-counted contents into well-worn holes in an open drawer. Its sides were smoothed to a bright polish as though to prevent escape.

Skiffles, small steps, restless, and under-breath chuffs marked the forward progress of the line. The man moved forward — a little — and his newly-left, made-to-measure space was taken over by

another as though laying claim to a right.

"Anything doing for you yet?" asked an unknown, monotonous, brother-in-dole voice from behind.

There was a full grounding of resignation in the young face that came from his lips. They fluttered like diving butterflies straining to see the last of the farewell sun.

"An eye of despair poured into the questioner from a remote interior of bitter, dense blue.

"I'm too old," so they say. It's another eight years from the dole for me. The firm closed down and the work went to the South of England. They said they were really sorry — and gave me my books — but I pause for a drag at an inch of cigarette — "and two weeks pay."

Said the other: "I was a loyal servant of the Comprints only last year when I got ma gold watch for my twenty-five years' service."

A fat, bony, black-be whiskered arm flexed upwards. The age-retarded movement revealed a gleaming yellow circle of fidelity enclosing a white ring and of the face at the watch ticked its silent, jewel-borne way into five minutes past three.

"I'm holding on to it in case of a town of fear. It'll maybe fetch a five or so."

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Thù-singular or familiar form. Sibh-plural or polite form.

Lesson 17

The irregular verb 'faic', compared with the regular verb 'seinn'.
Seinn! Faic seo!
Sing! See (look at) this!
Shine! Fyckh sho! (y in Mike).

a' seinn. De na iad 'a' faicinn!
singing. What are they seeing?
a-shine. Jay ha ee-aa-a-fyckhinn!

a shineinn. De na sin 'a' dol 'a' dh' fhaicinn! (fh is silent).
to sing. What are we going to see?
a-hine. Jay ha sheenn 'a' dol 'a' fyckhinn! (l'st y in your)

Sheinn mi. Chunnain sinn an pata. I sang. We saw the boat.
Hine mee. Choon-eek sheenn an ba-ta.

Do an do sheinn mi! An facu tu e?
Did I sing? Did you see him (it)?
Do an d'oine mee! An fac'ha tu o e?

Cha do sheinn mi. Chan fhaca mi Tormod an dé.
I did not sing. I did not see Norman yesterday.

Cha do hine mee. Chan ach'ha mee Tormod-an Jay.
Sheinn mi. Chi mi Mullie.
I shined. I saw Mullie.

Shine-e mee. Chee mee Moo-luh.
An seinn mi? An cluain sinn Murch ad air 'a' phioib-mhor?
Shall I sing? Shall we hear Murdoch on the bagpipes? (i.e., playing the bagpipes).

An 'shin mee. Chan cloo-eenn sheenn Mooru-choo air 'a' ffepp-einn?
Shall I sing? Shall we hear the bagpipes?

Cha seinn mi. Chan fhac mi an telepheasan an nochda.
I shall not sing. I shall not see the television tonight.

Cha shine mee. Chan yckh mee an television an nochd (fh is silent).

CINN T-SAILLE

Bidh an earrainn nu dheireadh air Cinn t-Saille 'San ath chlo.

The arm fell away sharply like a hawk and plunged swiftly into its coat pocket to bury the show of wealth.

There was a commotion at the door. A bulky man swung his way into the room. He looked around for a glimmer in the bright glare of the undecided queue, but was unable to find it. He made for the counter.

"See here, Jock!" A cry rasped its rough way towards him. "There's a queue here!"

The man's face reddened and his eyes glittered in a bright anger as he stopped in his tracks and scanned the multi-eyed line. Silently he moved to what was roughly the end of the queue at the door. As he searched for a place the queue tightened up automatically, like a caterpillar in a confusion of fear.

"Things quietened as the man took up his position.

"It's a terrible pity for 'a' them young chaps."

A grey-moustached voice threw a look over to three teenagers. Their clothes were new; their pin-pointed shoes shone; and their faces, though covered with young skin, were beginning to show a premature hardness about the eyes and mouth. Ash fell to the floor from a low-hung cigarette.

"Ave! It's as bad being young as it is being old these days."

A throaty rhye came from a small, mouse-faced man submerged in the mass of people, who was relentlessly down almost to his ankles.

He said: "We've had our chance. They've no had theirs yet."

A rubber stamp was applied and left for the records the word "Unemployed" between neat printed rules. A scrawl served for a signature although it was almost a false witness against the man.

In return for the signature a piece of paper was given: passport to a pitance.

The pay queue was now joined. The money came nearer. Notes were counted. Loose change jingled in a well-counted, correct dance. A hand was made on the screen, grasped, and withdrew again, clutching what would mean food for one, cigarettes for another, and more for a third.

But out in the sun-bright street there was little cause for satisfaction to a man used to work and reward of it. People on the pavements moved of their own volition.

They had business to attend to. They had their employers' biddens to heed. They had jobs.

Review Order

LEABHRAICHEAN UR BHON CHOMUNN

Ged is iomadh leabhar a chuir An Comunn Gàidhealach an clo o chionn leth-cheud bliadhna tha do chuir iad an a mach cho seòmhoir ris an trì mu dhreaghadh na riu ar coimhearsnachd.

'S ann am Paris a chluh-bhuair iad so ach sann a mhaoin air sgath coisgair a rinnadh so. Ann a' bhith deasachaid leabhair-raidhean de'n t-seorsa so tha na dealbhan a cuir na coisgais an arda ann a' leithid a dhioigh 's'g' bheil a' reamhan cho beag 's' dh' orduich e leabhair-raidhean Gàidhlig ghe coisgail. Bha An Comunn fortanach air an turus so ma tha gu robh na seuglachdan air an cuir an clo roimhe so 's an Fhraing, sug robh mar sin na dealbhan deantail.

Dh' adhar-theanguidh Donaldh Grandt trì seuglachdan. bho Grinnn agus Hans Anderson, Rosbhan is Rowdhon, rannn mi radh gu bheil an t-Sneachda agus ged nach urrainn sug bheil an obair gu h-iomlan cho taitneach 's' tha na dealbhan feumar meal — an-naidheachd a chuir air. Bha agus tha feum air an leithid so, agus tha Mgr. Grandt 'a' mholadh airson obair a dheanadh a lionsa bearn 's'na sgoilean sin anns a' bheil clann aig a' bheil a' Ghaidhlig. Saoidh mi gu ta gu bheil a' chaint' tuilleadh is domhain an drasda 's' rithist agus gur docha gun b'urrainn i a' bhith na b' aotrom gu h-araidh nuair a chumhnicheas sinn gur ann airson na cloinne tha na leabhair-raidhean.

Co dhiu, cha riarachair a h-uile duine agus tha sinne an dochas gu lean An Comunn orra leis an obair tha so 's'gu faicear tuilleadh leabhranan gasda mar iad so a dh' uine gun a bhith fada.

Gheibhear na trì leabhair-raidhean bho oifisear a' Chonnunn air 2/6 am fear. CLAR UR

O chionn da sheachdhuir air ais chuala sinn clar ur Gàidhlig a chòrd air leth mar'a

SYLLABUS OF SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION IN LONDON

Enfield and District Scottish Association — Saturday December 30 — 1967's Last Fling in Co-op Hall, Enfield Highway. Secretary: Mrs. L. G. Barlees, 16 Tollgate Road, Waltham Cross, Herts.

Greenford and District Caledonian Association — Sunday, December 31 — Hogmanay Dance in New Greenford Hall, Greenford, Sec. Secretary: W. Merrick, Esc., 4 Haven Lane, Ealing. ALP 2626.

Harrow and District Caledonian Society — Monday, January 1 — New Year Ball in Brent Town Hall, Wembley. Convener: G. Workman. Waxlow 1283.

Scottish Reel Club — Saturday, December 30 — Dance in Royal Scottish Corporation Hall. Secretary: Miss H. Jones. 405-4023.

Sidcup and District Caledonian Association — Saturday, December 30 — Old Year's Dance. Secretary: Mrs. M. Halstead, 2 Chatworth Avenue, Sidcup. Footscray 5427.

The Scottish Association for Allerton, Scarsdale and District — Friday, December 29 — New Year Scottish Country Dance in Wallington Public Hall. Secretary: Mrs. A. M. Leslie, 4 Woodcote Green, Wallington. WAL 6863.

ruinn. B'i sin "The Bard Sings" le Tormod Mac Illeathain a chòisinn am Bonn Oir agus crun a Bhairead aig a Mhòd an Glaschu.

Air an dara taobh chluinnear an da oran "Caint na m'bhathair Gàidhlig Bhairead" agus "Soraigh leis a' Bhairead Ur." Shaol lean gu bheil a cheud oran air a sheinn fìor-mhath agus a thuilladh air an sin an eòl-connstramaid a tha mille ris air leth taitneach! — ruid nach eil an comhnuadh fìor mu leithid. Ged is aithghearrach "Soraigh leis a' Bhairead Ur." 's iongantach lean. gun chiallaichear e a bhith air a sheinn mar so.

'Smor a b' fhearr a chòrd an taobh eile de'n chlar rium "Uibhist nam Beannan" agus "An Bothan a' bh' aig Fionnghal." Tha daoine colach gu leor air fonn "Uibhist nam Beannan" ("The Dark Island") ach saoidh mi gu bheil so cho thachdmhor ri ionn-suidh a chuala mi f'arasth. Aithnichear air seinn Thormod Mhic Illeathain gu bheil taobh mar aige ri ceol na pioba!

"Am Bothan a' bh' aig Fionnghal"—so gaibh lunneg 'san t-seann nos. Cha b'ann an diugh no'n de rinnadh i' so agus tha i' sealltunn nach leig sinn a leas idir a bhith cho deas gu bhith 'g eadar-theangachadh ma 's e oran aotrom aighearrach tha sinn a' sireadh.

DO YOU GIVE AWAY HALF OF A TYRE?

Motoring organisations in Britain have recently revealed that tyre defects represent the greater part of all car faults checked by their personnel. Now comes equally damning reports from a survey carried out in Germany by researchers of Uniroyal operating from their tyre plant at Aachen.

This survey was carried out in German car parks. It revealed that two out of every three drivers seemed determined to throw away a substantial part of their life. Thirty-six per cent. of the inspected cars had pressures appreciably below the recommended level, resulting in the owners getting only 75 per cent. of the normal mileage. It was worse with 18 per cent. of the vehicles showing under pressures of 30 per cent. A tyre, permanently driven on pressures of 30 per cent. below, only achieves half its normal mileage.

Even more surprising was the fact that 11 per cent. of the inspected vehicles had as much as 40 per cent. below. In total, therefore, 65 per cent. showed tyres under-inflated.

Besides all that sorry state of affairs, the technicians of Uniroyal were shaken to find a number of other extraordinary instances. A car with a left front wheel with 0.9 lbs. pressure and its right front 1.5 lbs.

A Peep At The Heavens

If you look at the sky in the late evening just now, you will see many wonderful objects—even with the naked eye. I don't mean Unidentified Flying Objects, but planets!

Fairly high in the south-west may be seen a bright golden yellow stellar-like planet — Saturn. Binoculars will show it up as a definite disc, while a small telescope will reveal a system of rings

Jupiter has four satellites, two of which are about the same size as the Moon; its eight other satellites are too small to be seen without a powerful telescope. The planets, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto are either badly placed for viewing as in the case of the first two, or too far away to be clearly seen in the case of the remainder.

Star Gazing

There are several very bright stars or suns visible just now — Vega in the constellation of Lyra is high in the north west and is a lovely blue point of light; the beautiful constellation of Orion is visible in the south-east — particularly colourful is the bright orange-red star, Betelgeuse, which is so intense that it has a diameter of 25 million miles, compared to the sun's 865,000 miles.

It is amazing how the orient's star patterns in the stars — the Plough, Orion the Hunter and Canis Major are just a few examples — and they believed that Orion, the legendary hunter was placed among the stars after his death and that Canis Major was his faithful hound; still following his master in his eternal journey through the Universe.

I don't think man realises what an insignificant speck of dust he really is in the Universe. "... so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable." (Hebrews 10 v. 12).

by Donald G. W. Hurry

surrounding the planet. These rings are, in fact, composed of numerous small particles moving independently round the planet, just like small moons. Saturn lies 793 million miles from Earth; its surface cannot be seen with even the world's most powerful telescopes, since it is covered in a dense layer of ammonia and methane gases at the extremely low temperature of -155 degrees C. Jupiter is very much brighter than Saturn and can be seen in the very late evening in an east-south-east direction. It is also a bright golden disc and is large enough to contain 1,300 bodies each the size of Earth. It lies 390 million miles away and a pair of good binoculars or a small telescope will show faint belts crossing the planet. These are likely to consist of ammonia droplets which float in Jupiter's atmosphere. It is impossible to see the surface of the planet and, like Saturn, is incredibly cold.

Good binoculars will show that



HAVE YOU SEEN THIS KILLER?

Keep a sharp eye open for this smooth round object. Looks harmless, but on roads that are wet or worn mirror smooth by heavy traffic, it loses all control... and kills, kills, kills. If you are riding on a smoothie bring it in and we will soon put it right.



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