

TRANSACTIONS  
OF THE  
GAELIC SOCIETY OF INVERNESS.

VOLUME V.,  
1875-6.





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TRANSACTIONS  
OF THE  
Gaelic Society of Inverness.

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VOLUME V.  
1875-6



Gwynn Stewart Murray,  
from her Mother

Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 1808

# TRANSACTIONS

OF

# THE GAELIC SOCIETY

OF

# INVERNESS.

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VOLUME V.,

YEAR 1875-6

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Clann nan Gàidheal an Gnáillean a' Cheile.

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1876



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# The Gaelic Society of Inverness.

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## OFFICE-BEARERS.

YEAR 1876.

### CHIEF.

*Professor Blackie.*

### CHIEFTAINS.

*Charles Mackay, Culduthel Road.*

*John Noble, Castle Street.*

*Alex. Fraser, Church Street.*

### HONORARY SECRETARY.

*William Mackay, solicitor, Church Street.*

### SECRETARY.

*William Mackenzie, "Free Press" Office, Inverness.*

### TREASURER.

*Evan G. Mackenzie, solicitor, High Street.*

### COUNCIL.

*Alex. Mackenzie, auctioneer, Inglis Street.*

*Huntly Fraser, merchant, Tomnahurich Street.*

*James Fraser, C.E., Castle Street.*

*James H. Mackenzie, bookseller, High Street.*

*Lachlan Macbean, Hill Street.*

### LIBRARIAN.

*Lachlan Macbean.*

### BARD.

*Mrs Mary Mackellar.*

### PIPER.

*Pipe-Major Alexander MacLennan.*

### BANKERS.

*The Caledonian Banking Company.*

# COMUNN GAILIG INBHIR-NIS.

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## C O - S H U I D H E A C H A D H

1. 'S e ainm a Chomuinn "COMUNN GAILIG INBHIR-NIS."

2. 'S e tha an rùn a' Chomuinn:—Na buill a dheanamh iomlan 'sa' Ghàilig; cinneas Cànaine, Bardachd, agus Ciùil na Gàidhealtachd; Bardachd, Seanchas, Sgeulachd, Leabhairchean agus Sgriobhanna's a' chànan sin a thearnad o dhearmad; Leabhar-lann a chur suas ann am baile Inbhir-Nis de leabhraichibh agus sgriobhannaibh—ann an cànan sam bith—a bhuiteas do Chàileachd, Ionnsachaidh, Eachdraidheachd agus Sheanachasaibh nan Gàidheal no de thairbhe na Gàidhealtachd; còir agus cliù nan Gàidheal a dhòn; agus na Gàidheil a shoirbheachadh a ghnà ge b'e àit am bi iad.

3. 'S iad a bhitheas 'nam buill, cuideachd a tha 'gabhair suim do rùntaibh a' Chomuinn, agus so mar gheibh iad a staigh:—Tairgidh aon bhall an t-iarradar, daingnichidh ball eile an tairgse, agus, aig an ath choinneamh, ma roghnaicheas a' mhor-chuid le crannchur, nithear ball dhith-se no dheth-san cho luath's a phaidhear an comh-thoirt; cuirear crainn le ponair dhubh agus gheal, ach, gu so bhi diligheachd, feumaidh tri buill dheug an crainn a chur. Feudaidh an Comunn Urram Cheannardan a thoirt do urrad 'ns seachd daoine clìuiteach.

|   |   |    |    |   |
|---|---|----|----|---|
| 4. Pàidhidh ball urramach, 'sa' bhliadhna | . | £0 | 10 | 6 |
| Ball cumanta                              | . | 0  | 5  | 0 |
| Foghlainte                                | . | 0  | 1  | 0 |
| Agus ni ball-beatha aon chomb-thoirt de   | . | 7  | 7  | 0 |

5. 'S a' Cheud-mhios, gach bliadhna, roghnaichead, le crainn, Co-chomhairle a riaghlas gnothuichean a' Chomuinn, 's e sin—aon Cheann, tri Iar-chinn, Cleireach Urramach, Runaire, Ioninhasair, agus còig buill eile—feumaidh iad uile Gàilig a thuigsinn 's a bhruidhinn; agus ni còigear dhiubh coinneamh.

# GAELIC SOCIETY OF INVERNESS.



## CONSTITUTION.

1. The Society shall be called the "GAELIC SOCIETY OF INVERNESS."

2. The objects of the Society are the perfecting of the Members in the use of the Gaelic language; the cultivation of the language, poetry, and music of the Scottish Highlands; the rescuing from oblivion of Celtic poetry, traditions, legends, books, and manuscripts; the establishing in Inverness of a library, to consist of books and manuscripts, in whatever language, bearing upon the genius, the literature, the history, the antiquities, and the material interests of the Highlands and Highland people; the vindication of the rights and character of the Gaelic people; and, generally, the furtherance of their interests whether at home or abroad.

3. The Society shall consist of persons who take a lively interest in its objects, admission to be as follows:—The candidate shall be proposed by one member, seconded by another, balloted for at the next meeting, and if he or she have a majority of votes, and have paid the subscription, be declared a member. The ballot shall be taken with black beans and white; and no election shall be valid unless thirteen members vote. The Society has power to elect distinguished men as Honorary Chieftains to the number of seven.

4. The Annual Subscription shall be, for—

|                            |    |    |   |
|----------------------------|----|----|---|
| Honorary Members . . . . . | £0 | 10 | 6 |
|----------------------------|----|----|---|

|                            |   |   |   |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|
| Ordinary Members . . . . . | 0 | 5 | 0 |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|

|                       |   |   |   |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|
| Apprentices . . . . . | 0 | 1 | 0 |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| A Life Member shall make one payment of | 7 | 7 | 0 |
|---|---|---|---|

5. The management of the affairs of the Society shall be entrusted to a Council, chosen annually, by ballot, in the month of January, to consist of a Chief, three Chieftains, an Honorary Secretary, a Treasurer, and five other Members of the Society, all of whom shall understand and speak Gaelic; five to form a quorum.

6. Cumar coinneamhan a' Chomuinn gach seachduin o thoiseach an Deicheadh mios gu deireadh Mhàirt, agus gach ceithir-la-deug o thoiseach Ghiblein gu deireadh an Naothamh-mios. 'S i a' Ghàilig a labhair eachd mu'n seach aig a chuid a's lugha.

7. Cuiridh a' Cho-chomhairle là air leth anns an t-Seachdamh-mios air-son Coinneamh Bhliadhnaile aig an cumar Co-dheuchainn agus air an toirear duaisean air-son Piobaireachd 'us ciùil Ghàidh-ealach eile; anns an fheasgar bithidh co-dheuchainn air Leughadh agus aithris Bardachd agus Rosg nuadh agus taghta; an deigh sin cumar Cuirm chuideachdail aig am faigh nithe Gàidhealach roghainn 'san uirghioll, ach gun roinn a dhiúltadh dhaibh-san nach tuig Gàilig. Giùlaineas cosdas na co-dheuchainne le trusadh sònraichte a dheanamh agus cuideachadh iarraidh o'n t-sluagh.

8. Cha deanar atharrachadh sam bith air coimh-dhealbhadh a' Chomuinn gun aontachadh dha thrian de na'm bheil de luchd-bruidhinn Gàilig air a' chlar-ainm. Ma's miann atharrachadh a dheanamh a's eiginn sin a chur an cèill do gach ball, mios, aig a' chuid a's lugha, roimh'n choinneamh a dh'fheudas an t-atharrathadh a dheanamh. Feudaidh ball nach bi a làthair roghnachadh le lamh-àithne.

6. Taghaidh an Comunn Bàrd, Piobaire, agus Fear-leabhar-lann.

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Ullaichear gach Paipear agus Leughadh, agus giùlaineas gach Deasboireachd le rùn fosgailte, duineil, dùrachdach air-son na firinn, agus cuirear gach ni air aghaidh ann an spiorad caomh glan, agus a reir riaghailtean dearbhta.

6. The Society shall hold its meetings weekly from the beginning of October to the end of March, and fortnightly from the beginning of April to the end of September. The business shall be carried on in Gaelic on every alternate night at least.

7. There shall be an Annual Meeting in the month of July, the day to be named by the Committee for the time being, when Competitions for Prizes shall take place in Pipe and other Highland Music. In the evening there shall be Competitions in Reading and Reciting Gaelic Poetry and Prose, both original and select. After which there will be a Social Meeting, at which Gaelic subjects shall have the preference, but not to such an extent as entirely to preclude participation by persons who do not understand Gaelic. The expenses of the competitions shall be defrayed out of a special fund to which the general public shall be invited to subscribe.

8. It is a fundamental rule of the Society that no part of the Constitution shall be altered without the assent of two-thirds of the Gaelic-speaking Members on the roll; but if an alteration be required due notice of the same must be given to each member, at least one month before the meeting takes place at which the alteration is proposed to be made. Absent Members may vote by mandates.

9. The Society shall elect a Bard, a Piper, and a Librarian.

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All Papers and Lectures shall be prepared, and all Discussions carried on, with an honest, earnest, and manful desire for truth; and all proceedings shall be conducted in a pure and gentle spirit, and according to the usually recognised rules.



# INTRODUCTION.

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In issuing to the members the fifth volume of the Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness, the Publishing Committee view with pleasure the interest now-a-days taken in all matters connected with the Celtic language and literature. Five years ago, when the Society was established, the Gaelic world, as such, was dormant, and it is believed that the awakening which has since taken place is due in no small measure to the Society's exertions and publications. Older societies in the South acquired new life, and new societies were started into existence. All these organisations are now at work with more or less vigour; and it may be safely asserted that healthy Celtic enthusiasm has never been higher than at the present time.

In the Transactions for last year, a sketch was given of the various steps taken towards the establishment of a Celtic Chair in one of our universities. Since then the labours of Professor Blackie, the present Chief of our Society, have been bearing more and more fruit, and now the whole sum which he originally set himself to collect is all but in his hand. There is scarcely a Celtic meeting at which our venerable Chief is not present advocating the interests of the Chair; and everywhere he is greeted with a Highland welcome. Our Society takes some pride in the fact that he began his campaign by giving a lecture under its auspices. To his *cath-ghairm* there has been many a hearty response from Highlanders in all parts of the world. The Professor's "brither Scots"

listened to it, and gave their money, and its influence has been felt by "John Bull" himself, who has just founded a Celtic Chair at Oxford. It is even said that there will ere long be another at Cambridge, and there is already a movement to establish one in Dublin University.

Celtic literature is now being studied by people who were formerly considered the natural aliens of everything Celtic. In a previous volume of Transactions, allusion was made to the labours of Mr C. S. Jerram in the Celtic field, and in this volume the members are presented with a paper from his pen. Dr Hately Waddell has published an able work on the Ossianic question, and before this volume will be in the hands of all the members it is expected that he will lecture in Inverness under the auspices of the Society on the same subject. Professor Blackie has issued a valuable book on Gaelic Literature—a work which will be long treasured by all Highlanders; and Mr Skene's admirable "Celtic Scotland" has also been published during the year. So much for the labours of those who, not speaking a Celtic language as their mother-tongue, acquired a scholarly knowledge of it for themselves.

The Very Rev. Canon Bourke, of Tuam, Ireland, in course of last year, gave to the world a volume on the Aryan Origin of the Celtic Races, and we hear that a second edition of it is now in the press. Mr Lachlan Macbean, Inverness, the librarian of this Society, and one of its first members, compiled and published a series of easy lessons in Gaelic, whilst, in the same line, Messrs MacLachlan & Stewart, Edinburgh, issued a new edition, with a preface by Dr Maclauchlan, of Dr Stewart's Gaelic Grammar. Logan's "Scottish Gael," edited by the Rev. Alexander Stewart, Nether-Lochaber correspondent of the *Inverness Courier*, has been published by Mr Hugh Mackenzie, Inverness.

Of our magazines and newspapers, the oldest is the *Gael*. The character of this magazine need not be explained to the members of this Society. It has now lived for five years, and, judging from the healthy character of its articles, it is likely to live for many years to come. The *Highlander* newspaper, which is now in its

fourth year, still flourishes ; and the *Celtic Magazine*, conducted by the late Secretary of this Society, and editor of the last volume of Transactions, regularly appears with its instalments of Celtic lore. Recently a new weekly paper, the *Glasgow Highlander*, was started in Glasgow. *Buaidh leis na seoid*. These are special Celtic organs that have come into existence since the formation of this Society. Our northern local newspapers—particularly the *Inverness Courier* and the *Inverness Advertiser*—have always been ready to give publicity to our doings, and the success which has attended the Society's labours is much owing to the help received at their hands.

The field of Highland music has of late been well cultivated. Mr William Mackay, the first secretary of this Society, recently edited, and Hugh Mackenzie, Inverness, re-issued, the collection of Highland music made by Captain Fraser of Knockie. Miss Morrison, Kintail, published a collection of Highland airs which deserve to be better known. Messrs Logan & Co., Inverness, since the publication of our last Transactions, issued a collection of *ceòl mòr*, &c., arranged for the pianoforte, a third edition of which we understand is now in the press. These works are intended for instrumentalists. Vocalists, however, were neglected ; and to meet this desideratum, the *Gael* took a step in the right direction by publishing a popular Gaelic song (with music in the two notations) monthly during the past four years. The *Highlander* has of late been giving a Gaelic song, with music, in the tonic sol-fa notation weekly, and the *Celtic Magazine* has begun to work in the same field, the first song, with music, having appeared in its January number. The Gaelic Society of London recently issued a collection of Gaelic airs, which was bought up before the general public were well aware of its existence ; and Mr H. C. Gillies, Culloden, a member of our Society, has a collection of Gaelic songs, with music, in the printer's hands.

Looking to the facts above stated, and to the revival of Celtic manners and customs, as evidenced among other ways by the numerous Shinty Clubs which have of late been formed by High-

landers from home, the Publishing Committee have cause to congratulate the members of the Society on the awakened interest now taken in the various objects for the promotion of which the Society was established.

21 Union Street, Inverness, January 1877.

# TRANSACTIONS.

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8TH JULY 1875.

## FOURTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY.

This evening—the first night of the Inverness Great Sheep and Wool Fair—the Society held its Fourth Annual Assembly in the Upper Hall of the Northern Meeting Rooms. During the day a number of strangers had arrived to attend the Wool Market; and the night being an open one—little business being done on Thursday evening—these crowded in along with the townspeople, until the spacious ballroom was filled in every corner. Four pipers—Piper-Major Maclennan, the Society's Piper; Pipe-Major Watt, Pipe-Corporal Macdonald, and Mr Macdonald, Hilton—played in the entrance hall while the company assembled.

Shortly before eight o'clock, Mr Fraser-Mackintosh, M.P., Chief of the Society, entered the hall, accompanied to the platform by the following gentlemen, viz.:—Provost Lyon-Mackenzie, Professor Blackie, Capt. Fraser of Balnain, Bailie Simpson, Bailie Macbean, Bailie Baillie, Bailie Davidson, Inverness; Captain Chisholm of Glassburn; Dr George F. Forbes, Bombay Army; Dr Carruthers, of the "Inverness Courier"; Sheriff Macdonald, Inverness; Councillor Huntly Fraser, Inverness; Dr F. M. MacKenzie, Church Street, Inverness; Dr George Duncan, Conchra, Lochalsh; Councillor P. Falconer, Inverness; Dr Bryce, of Glasgow; Councillor Noble, Inverness; Professor Black, Aberdeen; Rev. Dr Mackenzie, Silverwells; Rev. Alexander Macgregor, Inverness; Rev. Lachlan Maclachlan, Gaelic Church, Inverness; Rev. J. W. Wright, Inverness; Rev. A. Macdonald, Queen Street Free

Church, Inverness ; Rev. A. D. Mackenzie, Beauly ; Messrs Alex. Dallas, Town-Clerk ; Allan Macdonald, Commissioner for The Mackintosh ; H. C. Macandrew, Sheriff-clerk of Inverness-shire ; D. Macrae, Fernaig ; Wm. Jolly, Inspector of Schools ; Walter Carruthers, Gordonville ; Alex. Ross, architect ; M. E. Mather of Glen-Druidh ; H. Fraser, Balloch ; James Cumming, Allanfearn ; John Murdoch, editor of the Highlander ; Angus Nicolson, editor of the Gael ; R. Scott, solicitor, Inverness ; James Ross, solicitor, Inverness ; D. Macrae, Camusunary ; Duncan Macrae, Ardintoul ; Ewen Macrae, Ardtulloch, Australia ; Simon Fraser, banker, Lochcarron ; A. R. Macrauld, Lochalsh ; A. C. Mackenzie, Maryburgh ; Alex. Mackenzie, Secretary of the Society, and Hugh Mackay, deputy from the Ossianic Society of Greenock.

Apologies for absence were announced from the following :—Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch ; Sir George Macpherson-Grant, Bart. of Ballindalloch ; General Sir Patrick Grant ; Major Ewen Macpherson of Cluny, 93d Highlanders ; Professor Geddes, Aberdeen University ; Dr Maclaunchan, Edinburgh ; Mr J. F. Campbell of Islay ; Captain Gordon Macpherson of Cluny ; Lieutenant-Colonel Mackenzie, Poyntzfield ; Osgood H. Mackenzie of Inverewe ; Angus Mackintosh of Holme ; Dr Mackenzie of Eileanach ; and E. W. Mackintosh of Raigmore.

The Chief having taken the chair, commenced the proceedings with the following address :—Before proceeding to make some remarks apposite to our present meeting, I take this opportunity, the first which has presented itself, of thanking, as I do now sincerely thank, the Society for electing me to the honourable post of its Chief. Nearly three years have elapsed since I last had the pleasure of being present at one of your meetings, and though many events have since occurred, the pleasure of presiding at the supper in December 1872 occasionally passes across my mind as an agreeable reminiscence. It was right that Inverness, as the capital and centre of the Highlands, should have taken a decided part in a movement intended to preserve not only the past literature and traditions of the Highlands, but also to do something for the vindication and conservation of Highland feeling and Highland interests in the present. I may add that this was the more necessary because there is, and has always been in Inverness, what may without invidiousness be termed a foreign element, valuable in many respects, but still an element which, in so far as regards the objects of our Society, has exercised a paralysing influence, not merely within the town and immediate neighbourhood, but over the Highlands generally. For a considerable time land was locked up by

strict entails, or in the hands of impoverished proprietors. Communication was difficult, prices fluctuated, and the general tendency was the enlargement of farms, and the still greater impoverishment of the people; and it had become too much the practice, not only in the North, but over the kingdom, to deify the Highlander, whilst the periodic occurrence of famine was said to demonstrate that emigration was the proper and only destiny of the Highlanders. From a combination of causes, the population in the Highlands has steadily diminished, and while agricultural prices have risen, labour has done so in a still greater degree, and we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the prospect of many of our Highland small farmers, crofters, and peasants being bettered, are of a sombre character. In these circumstances, it occurred to several, some of whom are now present, that it would be a right thing to establish here, in the capital of the Highlands, a society from which should emanate a desire for the collection and preservation of much that is interesting of a glorious past, and for the furtherance and fostering of efforts for the amelioration of the present. As Highlanders, we are proud of our country, and particularly proud of our descent. This sentiment ought to animate us in our career through life. Who among us, I may ask, and let him look over the whole world, would have been born other than he is? Is this, then, not of value? I say it is of a value the wealth of India cannot purchase; and from the inheritance we derive as the offspring of a race eminently sober, chaste, and warlike, we enter upon the arena of life under great advantages. While, then, we are to be, in the present, busy, active, and persevering, the loyal sons of a beloved Queen who rules over an unhomogeneous, but still united people, it should be our anxious care to preserve and hold by the virtues and example of those who have gone before us. In so doing we are fulfilling our proper part and laying a sure foundation for gaining the respect and sympathy of those who come after. We do not, of course, arrogate too much to ourselves and our exertions, but since our Society was started, about four years ago, a great impetus has been given to Gaelic spirit, and numerous associations with kindred objects in view have sprung into existence; the great movement for a Celtic Chair has been organised, and is now being brought to a successful issue; and a newspaper specially devoted to Highland interests has been established. Our Society has published some interesting and valuable information. The volume now passing through the press I have had the pleasure of looking over, and I can say that it is superior to any of the previous ones. I will single out the translation of the "Dan an Dearg,"

by our townsman, Mr Lachlan Macbean. If nothing else were in the volume, it would be worth the 3s. 6d. charged to *non-members*. Mr Mackintosh Shaw's paper as to the unfortunate occurrence in the 42d Regiment is a most interesting historical paper, and the paper by Dr Maclachlan is also of scientific value. We are honoured with the presence here to-night of several distinguished men who are to speak on specific topics in which our Society is interested, and I have been requested to devote myself to one in which the Society has taken a special interest, viz., the teaching of the mother tongue in the schools in Gaelic-speaking districts. Formerly, as you are aware, the parish schools were under the charge of the heritors and presbyteries, who had the chief control of the subjects taught. Under this government some regard was paid to the Gaelic language, and more particularly the reading of the Gaelic Bible and the Catechism were taught as ordinary lessons over a wide district. This, though feeble and limited in area, did serve to keep up, as it were, a glimmer of the language in a fundamental subject. By the Education Act of 1872, Government took the matter under its own control, and it is with Government we Highlanders have now to deal in the matter of teaching Gaelic. It is almost childish to assert that a child must make more progress in the mother tongue than in a foreign language, yet there has been such a desire to obliterate the Gaelic language, which has been falsely charged as the real cause of the Highlander's inferior position, that the teaching in the mother tongue has been ignored as far as possible. The limited education which poor children could receive was thus of little use; the child at home heard and spoke nothing but Gaelic; on his way to and from school, in the playground with his companions, Gaelic alone was used; and in these circumstances what else could be expected, but that English and other branches were taught to him, not as a thing which he understood, but "learnt by heart," to use a common school expression. This child, when he left school, which depended much on the wealth or poverty of the parent, accordingly never having had his intellect awokened, or curiosity excited, gradually lost the little knowledge he acquired, and the general results were what all of us must deplore. Now there is a danger of these evils being continued. We do not desire that the Gaelic children only learn their own language properly; far from it. We desire that they be placed in that position from which alone they can compete with fairness in the race of life with their fellows. It will not do to ignore the existence of the language. No mistake can be greater. Everything

has been done to carry out this object, but while the object has not been attained, and Gaelic is still loved and treasured by the people, they themselves are probably in a lower and more hopeless condition. Let us see what will be the effect of teaching Gaelic in schools under the present system. In the first place, there is the great advantage that children must attend a much longer period than the average under the old voluntary system. Thus we may reasonably expect that what is learnt at school will have a more lasting effect. Next, with regard to the Gaelic-speaking children, the basis should be, which is the best mode by which the required information and knowledge can be attained? We say it can be done by utilizing the Gaelic language, whereby the intellect and curiosity of the child are awakened, and he then begins to comprehend what he is being taught; the spirit of emulation next comes into operation, and without losing his Gaelic, but actually by means of it, the child comes to be master of the subjects communicated, and will be better able to go through life than the English child. When he leaves school, understanding what he has been taught, he will, as far as his means allow, continue the study of English and English literature necessarily as the leading language, though he need not forget his mother tongue. Would any one of us who knows Gaelic say, I wish I had it not, or knowing other languages, would say the same of them? On the Continent many commercial men, and these the most successful, speak six or eight languages. I conclude by observing that possessing a knowledge of Gaelic will be of great help, and its teaching in the manner suggested the most important boon which could be bestowed on the people. Is the Government, however, friendly to these views? By no means; and it will require decided movement and petitions from every Gaelic-speaking district to awaken the Education Department to a sense of the true position. If this be done, and I am thereby enabled to present as it were an unbroken front on behalf of all those concerned, I shall early next session give notice of moving a resolution on the subject in the House of Commons, and support it to the best of my power by a simple narrative of the failure of past modes of dealing with the education of the Highland peasant, and the certainty of success by the manner I have indicated. All depends on the number and extent of the petitions. I commend, as an example, that which I presented this session from the parish of Gairloch, signed by upwards of 600 persons, including its honoured and popular proprietor, and every one of influence within its bounds. It is to the credit of the Inverness poet, Macdonald, now dead, that about

thirty years ago a petition in verse was first sent to Parliament by him in favour of this Celtic Chair, which Professor Blackie has done so much to establish. In standing up for fairness being dealt out to the Gaelic-speaking districts and in preserving the language, which, having been handed down to us, we are bound to transmit, our Society is acting an important part; and in conclusion, as to Gaelic generally, slightly altering the famous Cornish rhyme, let this be our determination—

Before the Gaelic die !  
Before the Gaelic die !  
Ten times thirty thousand Highland men  
Shall know the reason why,  
Shall know the reason why.

The Reel of Tulloch was then danced by Messrs John Macpherson, James Gordon, James Finlay, and Peter Stuart, Strathspey. The performance was loudly applauded. Miss Annie Ferrier, accompanied by Miss Maclernan on the pianoforte, sang very prettily “The Piper of Dundee,” which was also heartily cheered.

Mr Macandrew next addressed the meeting. He assumed that they were all agreed on one point—that the Gaelic language was well worth preserving, especially by those who, whether they spoke it or not, bore Highland names, and were descended from Highlanders. Now, why was it so well worth preserving? They would admit this—that if the population was to be brought more and more into contact with people of another race; if they and their sons, and their sons’ sons, must look for success in life elsewhere than on the soil of their country, then the speaking of Gaelic alone must be a disadvantage. Again, without disparaging the literary remains of the Highlands—he admired them as heartily as any man—still, the language did not contain such a body of literature as to make it worth preserving merely on that account. In a philological point of view, Gaelic was most interesting. The history of the human race, as traced in its language, would be incomplete—would want one of its most important links—if Gaelic were forgotten. But this was a subject of more interest to philologists and literary men than to men of the world. And yet, though he did not speak Gaelic, he desired as heartily as any of them to have it preserved; and he contended that it should be preserved, because it was the language which their ancestors spoke—which expressed the hopes and fears, the heroism and poetry of the race from which

they came. To justify that sentiment, they must be able to show that the race was a worthy one. He did not wish to exaggerate their qualities; he would not point to exceptional examples of men who had ruled in camps, in cities, and in Parliaments, for there was no town or county which could not point to such exceptional instances. Rather they should look at what the race had done in its general character—at what the average Highlander could do, or had done, or was likely to do again. The Highlander only became thoroughly known about 1745, and he must have lived for a long period pretty much in the state which he then occupied. There were, perhaps, a good many still living who had spoken to those who had known people who had taken part in the '45. It had been his own lot to come into contact with a few old persons who were familiar with men of that period; and so far as he could gather, the state of society then was not very different from what it was within living recollection. No doubt, as Bailie Nicol Jarvie said, there were in the Highlands "lawless, broken men, who lived on their chiefs, and were ready to do anything;" but the great majority, he believed, must have been, on the whole, a peaceable, orderly, industrious, pastoral and agricultural population—a people who obeyed the law and cultivated the land to the best of their ability, and who above all loved and protected and helped the poorer members of the community. The Stuarts had been absent fifty-seven years; almost no man capable of bearing arms could have known anything about them; and yet a young man landed in an outlandish place on the West Coast, without help, apparently without means or money, without anything in his favour except a principle—and the whole population—those peaceable herdsmen, and shepherds, and agriculturists—rose in arms, and staked their whole prosperity in this world on the hazard. The age of chivalry was said to be long past, but here was an instance of as real chivalry, as real devotion, as could be found in any age or country in the world. And he thought, when all the incidents and accidents of time and circumstances had disappeared—they had hardly done so yet—and when the events of that period were looked at in the pure light of history, the true worth of that chivalry would be fully acknowledged and celebrated. He hoped that when the deeds of that period were sung, they would be sung in the native language, and in strains worthy of the heroic time. Later, when the country required the services of stalwart, brave, and honest soldiers, the Highlands poured forth their sons in numbers he would be afraid to mention, to fight the nation's battles. He would not dwell on the military qualities of the race

—qualities which they possessed in common with other peoples, though he believed none ever surpassed them. No regiments in the world bore prouder banners than did the Highland regiments. But he would not speak of the two or three hundred men who carried the heights of Mount St Jean; he would rather for the present refer to the thousands who served for years in the field and in quarters. In the records of a dozen regiments there was no sign of insubordination or disorder; and in one case, perhaps after twenty years' service, the first man who was convicted of a dishonourable crime was bought out of the regiment by his comrades. When the regiments were assembled on parade to witness punishment, the commanding officer was known to have ordered the 93d off the ground, as the sight was unfit for men with characters like theirs. The characteristic of those Highland soldiers was orderliness, good conduct, the utter want of dishonourable crime. Surely, then, the language had been rendered illustrious by the deeds of the men who spoke it. And if the language was worth preserving, he wished to ask whether the race was not worth preserving too? It was worth their while to consider the circumstances under which that race grew up and flourished. What enabled them to send out men not only courageous, stalwart, manly, and independent, but orderly and God-fearing, in every relation of life? Not long ago, with reference to the question of a disputed march, he had a conversation with a very old man, who, in his simple way, drew quite an Arcadian picture of his early days, as he herded his mother's cows on the side of a burn, and sat on a stone in the water with his young companion. "Perhaps," said the old man, as he described the scene, "you don't know that it is different now from what it was then, for then the poorest man had a bit of land." In those days every man was allied to the soil, and possessed part of it, on which he reared his cattle and his corn, and lived on what he reared. But great changes had occurred. The potato came, and enabled people to live on smaller patches of land; great sheep runs became common, and the poor people were crowded down to the seashore; grouse came, deer came, and everything went against the Highlander. The flats of the straths, where the old race used to flourish, always in comparative comfort, often in considerable comfort, were now waste; and ruins of bothies were all that remained to speak of those who had made the Gaelic language illustrious. He was not prepared to advocate any radical measures, and he had no desire to say anything offensive; but he put it to this meeting whether, while advocating the preservation of the Gaelic language, they should not also urge upon those whom the Almighty had blessed

with large possessions, to make an effort to re-introduce that state of things in which the true Highlander alone could flourish? The Duke of Sutherland was now, greatly to his credit, doing something in that way; and, in the words of a man who knew the Highlands well, he hoped the scheme had not come a day too late—when there was really no population left to occupy the small farms thus created. As a gillie or as a shepherd, the Highlander must decay; the true nature of the man could only come out when he possessed his own place in his own Highlands, and when, whether reared in a bothie or in a cottage, he felt himself to be the independent master of a family.

Mr James Fraser, Glasgow, sang a Gaelic song, *Soraidh bhuan do Chòmhail*, for which he was heartily encored; and on coming back he sang, amidst renewed applause, *Cabarfeidh*.

Rev. Alexander Macgregor, M.A., West Church, Inverness, said—Is fhad o'n thubhlairt Gaidheal treun agus gaisgeil araidh, a bha ann roimh so “Is e fear mo chridhe an crualad”—ach a'n aite sin, theirinn-sa a nis le mor-fhirinn, “Is e fear mo chridhe-sa Comunn Gailig Inbhirnis.” Tha e ro thatneach r'a smuaineachadh agus r'a chluinntian g'um bheil gach cuis a' soir-bheachadh leis a' Chomunn so—gu'm bheil a bluill a' dol a'n lion-mhorachd—a chumhachd a' dol a'm farsuingeachd, agus a chliu air a sgaoileadh air feadh na'n cearn' as iomallaich 'san tir. Agus cha bheag an t-urram a chuireadh air a chomunn air an fheasgar so fein leo-san uile a ta lathair, chum an deagh-dhurachd fein a nochdadhdh, agus chum am mor-speis fein do'n chuideachd a leigeadh ris, gach aon fa leth ann am briathraibh tla agus tuigseach, agus ann an oraibh lan teas-ghraidh agus deagh-ghean do na h-uile. Nach cumhachdach an comhnuidh an t-Ollamh Blackie? Nach dileas, treun 'Bun Lochabuir? Nach ealanta, deas, an caraid daimh-eil, an t-Uasal Tearlach Friseil Mac-an-Toisich? Ach cha'n eil ni sam bith anns a' chairdeas agus anns a' chaoimhneas a ta air am foillseachadh mar so aig an am, ach na għlan-thoill Comunn Gailig Inbhirnis gu maith agus gu ro mhaith. Thoill iad e air son na spairne cruaidh a ta iad a' deanamh chum na Gailig a neartachadh, ath-leasachadh, agus a theagasg anns gach uilinn agus oisinn dhe'n Ghaidhealtachd. An uair tha e dligheach do gach ard agus iosal aig am bheil spiorad an dutchais 'nan eridhe, mor-thaing a thoirt do gach ball de'n Chomunn, air son an diam-dhurachd ann a bhi 'cumail suas gach reachd agus cleachd, gach modh agus measarrachd a bhuineas go na Gaidheil, tha cliu agus buidheachas gu'n choimeas dligheach gu h-araidh do'n Run-chleireach threun agus thugseach aca—Alastair Mac-Coinnich—air son na saothreach, an eid, agus

an dian-dhealaic a ta do ghnath air an nochdadh leis, chum a bhi ag eiridinn agus a' dionadh na Gailig anns gach sgireachd far am bheil i'ga labhairt! Tha dian-dhuthchas a' deachdadh innitinn an Run-chleirich le tabhachd do-cheannsachaidh, agus le dealas gu'n choimseas aig gach am, agus is eudthromach na nithe a bheirear gu crich le fior dhuthchas! Tha'n sean-fhocal ag radh gu'n "D'theid duthchas an aghaidh nan crag," ach cruaidh mar chreig, agus daingeann mar "Chlachnacudain," sheas esan an aghaidh na muinntir sin leis am bu mhiann a' Ghailig oirdheire e smaladh as, agus a ruagadh gu'n mhoille gu'n bhaigh as gach tigh-searmoin, tigh-sgoile, agus tigh-comhnuidh 'sa Ghaidhealtachd air fad! Tha deagh fhios gur e an Run-chleireach a thug bith agus co'-dhealbhadh air thus do'n Chomunn so, agus a bha riamh o sin a' dol gu dhuian 'ga near-tachadh. Chum na criche so, mar an ceudna, tha'n "t-Ard-Albannach" air mhireadh le tlachd agus toil chum gach cuis adhartachadh a bhuiteas do shliochd 'nan Garbhchrioch, agus chum an staid ath-leasachadh! Cha'n eil uin' agam 'san am gu bhi' leudachadh air buaidhibh, aois, oirdheirceas, cumhachd, agus co'-dhealbhadh na Gailig, ach gu'n abair mi ann a'm briathraibh a' Bhaird Ghriogairich:—

"Co thairgeadh dhi mi-mhodh,  
 'S nach cumadh am miagh i ?  
 'S gur i Ghailig bha sgriobhta,  
 Air na clachanna criche,  
 Anns gach ionad dhe'n rioghachd,  
 Ged' bha i fuidh mhi-ghean,  
 Tha i nise a' direadh,  
 'S gu'm mair i gu dilinn,  
 Mar 'bha i 'sna linntibh o thus !  
 Mar 'bha i, &c."

Cha'n eil uin' agam an nochd gu bli' cur an ceil mor-luach na Gailig mar chainnt a ta air a labhairt leis na muilleanaibh sluaigh ann an Alba', ann an Eirinn, 'n-America, 'n-Australia, agus ann an iomadh cearnaidd eile dhe'n t-saoghal, agus mar chainnt a ta air a searmonachadh ann an tri no ceithir chend sgireachd air feadh na Gaidhealtachd againn fein. Tha e, uime sin, an aghaidh nadair, an aghaidh reusoin, an aghaidh tuigse, agus an aghaidh fior cheartuis, gu'm biodh a' Ghailig air a druideadh suas ann an cuil; seadh, gu'm biodh i air a muchadh, agus air a fogradh air falbh as na sgoilean againn air feadh na Gaidhealtachd air fad! Tha gu'n teagamh iomadh caraid aig a' chanain mhaisich so,

cairdean mora, foghluimte, ealanta, agus ullamh gu comhnadh a dheanamh leatha, ann an am na h'aire a's na h-eigin. Ach mo chreach ! tha mar an ceudna ionadh namhaid aice, daoine goileamach, caoin-shuarach, meadh-blhlath, daoine leis an comadh co dhiubh a bhios a' Ghailig ann no as, ach, ciod as miosa na sin uile, cha'n eil riaghailtean na rioghachd, no reachdan ura 'na sgoilean fein, a' toirt misnich, no duais, no luchd-teagaisg seachad chum an oigridh arachadh suas ann an eolas air cainnt am mathar fein. Tha so, gu'n teagamh, cianail. Cha'n 'eil cairdean na Gailig ag iarruidh gu'm biodh a' chlann air an teagastg an toiseach auns a' Ghailig 'na h-aonar, ach gu'n toisicheadh iad leis a' Bheurla, gu'n rachadh iad air an aghaidh leatha, ach, aig an am cheudna, gu'm biodh a' Gbailig air a cleachdadh gach latha. Seasadh an da chanain taobh ri taobh, faigheadh iad le cheile ceartas gu'n leth-bhreith, agus an uair a ghlaodhas a' Bheurla a mach a' beul a' bhrogaich bhig' ud—“*House, bridge, hill, horse, tree, stone,*” ann an sin, glaoadhadh a' Ghailig a mach 'sa mhionaid sin, “Tigh, drochaid, beinn, each, craobh, clach,” mar sin, leughar agus tuigear an da chainnt comhladh, builichear beannachd air an obair, giulainear gach ni air aghaidh le ciuineas agus ceartas, bheirear mor-thoilinntinn do gach Comunn Gaidhealach 'san rioghachd gu leir, agus cha'n flaigneach “Clachnacudain” air deireadh 'san iolach-aoibhneis, a thaobh leas aimsireil agus spioradail shliochd 'nam beann ! A' Chomuinn ionnlhuinn, beannachd leibh, agus a nis gabhaibh a' chomhairle a thugadh seachad le seann Bhard a' Chnuic Mhuire, a thubbairt mar a leanas :—

- “ Cumaibh suas an commun brathaireil,  
  'Bh' aig ar sinnsear 'n tir nan ard-bheann,  
  Cridhe caoimhneil, saoibhear, pairteach,  
  Lan do dh' aoibhness 'Chlann nan Gaidheal ?
- “ Sliochd nan curaidh, buadhach, treubhach,  
  Sheasadh suas an guaillibh cheile ;  
  'S muirneach, smachdail, reachdmhor, eudmhor,  
  Luchd nam breacan dathte 'n-fheilidh.
- “ Dream tha rioghail, dileas, sgairsteil,  
  'N am dol sios le piob fo blhratach ;  
  'S ard an inntimm, 's cinnteach, beachdail,  
  Siol na Feinn' nach pill le gealtachd !”

Mr Peter Stewart then danced with spirit “ Gillie Callum,” for the neat execution of which he was greatly applauded. Selections

of pipe music were next given by Pipe-Majors Maclennan and Watt, and Macdonald, after which the second part of the programme was entered upon. Miss Maclernan sang, with great taste and feeling, " Bonnie Scotland," and was encored.

The Chairman explained that, owing to the illness of a daughter of the Rev. Mr Stewart's (Nether-Lochaber), he was unable to be present that evening. He had received a letter from him in which he expressed his regret at this, but promised to make up for it by contributing a paper to the next volume of "*Transactions*." Mr Hugh Mackay, of Greenock, representing the Greenock Ossianic Club, had kindly consented to supply his place, and he would now address them.

Mr Mackay said—I came here as the representative of the Greenock Ossianic Club. By all right, Inverness is the place from whence all representations should go forth to Highland lairds and London lords in reference to the Highlands. With your various facilities, your geographical position, and, best of all, your inhabitants being Highlanders, you have every advantage. Now, if you are going to retain the honour of your ancient town and of men worthy of the names which you bear, you must, without hesitation or fear, impress your chiefs and landholders with the duty of re-peopling their lands with the native race, and removing all the barriers and difficulties which may stand between them and bettering the peasant population. If you do not thus stand forward, we on the banks of the Clyde will remove your candlestick out of its place, and take the good, godly, patriotic work out of your hands, and frame a measure which will compel the landowners of this country to direct their attention more to the cultivation and reclamation of the land in their possession than to the rearing of deer and grouse. Then, again, our chiefs would be valued for their numerous and happy tenantry, and not for their sheep walks and deer forests, and the tenant's wealth and happiness would be centred in an affectionate landlord that would not allow factor or ground officer to do as he pleased; but to speak to them as a man would do to his friend. Then our Saxon neighbours would visit us oftener, and in greater numbers than ever, to breathe the pure air of our Highland hills, and drink at our fountains and streams; smell the fragrance of our valleys, and partake of our Scotch cakes and venison, and of the fish of our sandy bays and mountain streams, all flavoured with the essence of Highland hospitality. Then our commanders-in-chief will not have to complain of having nothing better than the refuse of our cities to fill the ranks of the army, for they will have the best of

men, nurtured amid our Highland hills, and filled with the spirit of their forefathers in genuine Highland schools. Our dress was proscribed, but it has been restored. Our language has been voted out of fashion; but, thanks to Professor Blackie, and to this and similar glorious Celtic meetings, our language will soon be restored to us. And these are assurances to us, that if the Gaelic Society of Inverness is true to itself, to its principles, and to its country, our land will also soon be restored to us.

Professor Blackie, on rising, was received with cheering frequently renewed. Folding his arms, the Professor addressed his audience—Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, members of the Gaelic Society, citizens of Inverness, and big sheep farmers from all parts of the country, I have now been about forty years practising occasionally the art of thinking aloud, or thinking on my legs, and I have never during that time been able to suppress my repugnance to giving what is called an address. I could give you a lecture or a sermon. I have preached before, and I hope to preach again—not certainly in the style you do it in Gaelic—but yet in a passable way. I could give you a song—a Gaelic song, too—and if it was not for these reporters, that will not allow a man to be natural, I might sing you a Gaelic song now. But I must preserve my dignity before them, and give them nothing to tell that would not be suitable to the dignity of the Professor of Greek in the metropolitan city of Scotland. Well, if it was not for these reporters, I should sing to you "*Ho mo Mhairi laghach*," or "*Gum a elan a chi mi*." But I have no doubt, if this movement continues, every Professor in broad Scotland will be proud to sing Gaelic songs. Ay, and compose Gaelic songs too. He congratulated them on the revived interest in Celtic literature, and the prospect of establishing the Celtic Chair. I certainly, he said, did not hope or believe that in twelve months—it is not twelve months—that in eight months, we should not only have laid the base of the cairn, but should actually have raised the whole cairn—this cairn for the study of Celtic literature, philology, and song. We have raised it, I say, triumphantly, by the aid of such as our Chairman, such noblemen as the Duke of Sutherland, the Duke of Argyll, the Marquis of Bute; such of our scholars as Sir William Stirling Maxwell and Lord Neaves; and by the sympathy expressed by Professors in London, Oxford, and Cambridge; by the countenance of her Majesty the Queen—who only lends her gracious support to things worth supporting—and the cairn only now requires to be topped. Faith removes mountains. "Whatever a man dares, he can do." By the grace of God. I

dared to attempt to establish this Chair—I dared it, and *you* dared it, and we have done it. It is not generally so much a hostility to what is good that prevents a thing being done, but ignorance and indifference that requires to be stirred up, and walked into with swords, and, if necessary, with red-hot pokers, and bellows to blow up the dying embers. Go to the people, and you will find them ready to support you, that is, if you have the right inspiration. There are two classes who wish this Gaelic language of ours dead. There are those who want the people to be sent to America; and those men of science who would have it dead to-morrow, who have expressed a wish to have it dead, that they might have its body to cut up and dissect. But even these men have expressed the feeling that, if it were extinguished to-morrow, there should be an Academic exposition of the Celtic languages. They all confess this is the right thing to be done, and it has been approved of by the highest authority in this country, who never puts her name to anything that is not noble and worthy of that exalted name. True, it ought to be studied scientifically, as we study the skeleton of the Dodo, or any other extinct animal; but still I think that a living dog is always better than a dead lion. I value Gaelic as the language of the Gaelic people. I love the Gaelic people. They are a people that have performed a noble part in the history of this country. We Scotch, English-speaking or Gaelic-speaking, are Gaels. Our very names prove that we are. And I say that it is a disgrace and a shame to us, inheriting that blood—the combination of the Celtic fire with the stubbornness and the sagacity of the Saxon—to say that this Gaelic language has existed only to be kicked out of the world. I will go a good deal further than Mr Macandrew. Where is Mr Macandrew? I say I'll go a good deal further than you; and maintain that Gaelic is so rich in its stores of everything that is noble in a literature, that it not only rewards those who study it, but brings discredit on those belonging to the country who don't study it. We are not called upon to prove that it contains a literature like that of Greece and Rome, but I say to all those who are born in the Highlands, to all those who breathe the Highland air, there is a literature of the utmost possible value. It is a good deal more extensive than that which we call Scottish literature. Our literature consists of popular songs. Now, I say with perfect honesty, in face of Professor Black there, or a Professor Blackie—I say that I value these Scottish songs, that I have got from these Scottish songs more than I have got from Homer, Aristotle, or Plato; or from all of them put together. The Scottish songs are full of wisdom

—the wisdom of life, sagacity, humour, pathos ; full of everything that makes a man a man ; full of everything which constitutes poetry, true sublime poetry. It has been said that “poetry makes rich the blood of the world ;” and I say that popular poetry makes rich the blood of the people. I have great respect for Mr Jolly and all school inspectors, and schoolmasters, and professors of course ; but there is no book they can put into your hands so good and useful and inspiring as these songs, which are native to the atmosphere. And if I and all good Scotchmen rejoice in Scotch songs, and if all foreigners are delighted to hear Scotch songs, and if the greatest musical composers have stolen some of their best musical ideas from Scotch music, and if we are all proud of the noble inheritance we have received in them—then I say, what the Scotch song is to me the Gaelic song is to you, and a man is not true to you if he takes it from you, and you are not true to yourselves if you allow him to take it. I should like to know what a Highland schoolmaster gains by going up to Edinburgh and getting a smattering of Greek and Latin. You who are ignorant of these languages think him awfully learned, and no doubt he thinks himself so ; but he would require to be a thorough Greek and Latin scholar before he could enjoy the good things which their poets wrote ; and meantime he is neglecting or despising the beautiful strains of Alistar Macdonald, Duncan Ban Macintyre, and those fine poetic things written by nobody or everybody in the Highlands. You are essentially a lyrical people ; I have heard a common woman express herself in the language of poetry ; and it is a wretched affectation to stuff fragments of Greek and Latin down the throats of Highlanders, and stamp out the Gaelic which is natural to them—to throw cold water upon all their noblest aspirations, and cramp them with classical stays, instead of allowing them to breathe with freedom in the bracing air of their native mountains. I believe in the people, and in the language of the people, and the songs of the people, as the best means of popular education. Highlanders hear plenty sermons, and sermons are good, but they should have songs too ; and with a sermon in his right hand, and a song in his left, and a sword where it ought to be, I will back the Highlander against the whole world. The value of a literature does not depend upon the bulk of it ; if it did, what value would we set upon the Old Testament ? It depends upon its intrinsic worth, and here it is the natural product of the Highland braes and the Highland heather. I could sing some of those fine old songs ; I read translations of them before some of the most learned men in Oxford, and there was not one that did not feel his bosom thrill—yes, even those dignified

old square-caps. And I have seen beautiful ladies thrill with sympathy to the tips of their fingers, when I read some of those pathetic Highland lamentations. Highland poetry belongs to the country, and is characteristic of it, just as deerstalking is. Talk of deerstalkers—they are a most excellent race—and deerstalking is a sport by which some of our best soldiers were trained. And where will you find the poetry of the deerstalkers ? where but in Duncan Ban ? Why should not sportsmen make themselves familiar with a deerstalker who knew far more about sport than any Greek or Roman that ever wrote ? Highland poetry is as characteristic of the Highlands as the heather is of the hills ; and though you could remove the heather, and plant the soil with English roses, I would still say, give me back my heather. If you were to tell me to-morrow that you were to build me a beautiful cottage in the midst of Kew Gardens, on the banks of the Thames, and plant it all round with rare exotics, I would say, Let me lie upon a Highland brae, and keep your garden to yourself. That is human nature. Your language is yours in the same way that your mother is yours. There may be many handsomer women in the country, but only one woman who is my mother—who gave me milk and blood, and whom I claim as the noblest among women. And though my mother should turn old and wrinkled, and sit a dry grannie beside the smoky ingle, I would still sit and hear her old stories and her wise saws, and I would not kick her into the grave because she is going to die. We must all die some time, but why should we kick an old friend—our old Gaelic tongue—into the grave? The Professor went on to say that the moment Gaelic died, the Highlander died, for the one could not subsist without the other. Referring to the difficulties of the Gaelic language, he admitted it had its own peculiarities, and he had been speaking to a landed proprietor near Oban the other day, who said he had been studying it for twenty-five years, and had not made it out yet. But it was not a bridge that could not be passed ; like the *pons asinorum*, it could be passed by all but asses. All languages had their difficulties. The sight of the Greek alphabet was enough almost to make some ladies faint ; irregular verbs were an immense difficulty ; and the gender of nouns in German was very hard to master. But Gaelic could be learned, and he told them the way to acquire it —by asking the names of common objects, and repeating them till they were firmly fixed in the mind. He could himself read Gaelic quite easily ; and he could have learned the whole language in six months, if he had devoted himself to it with determination. He advised them to read the books issued by old Norman Macleod, brimful of character and

humour; and, in conclusion, he again urged them to preserve the Gaelic language and literature, so far as that could be done in a natural way. He did not ask any man to go out of his way to bolster it up. Those who had it might neglect it, and from love of foreign affectation, let it die; but learned men in Berlin, in Dresden, in Leipzig, in Cambridge, and in Oxford would study the language, and would wonder how the people who possessed it should trample it under their feet.

The rest of the entertainment consisted of singing and pipe-playing. Miss Maclernan, who presided at the piano, sang in her charming style several Scotch songs, for which she was repeatedly encored; and the three pipers—Pipe-Major Maclennan, Pipe-Major James Watt, and Macdonald—discoursed upon the national instrument.

Mr Fraser, Glasgow, was again called upon for a Gaelic song, and gave “*Mairi Bhan Og*,” by Duncan Bàn Macintyre, which was heartily applauded. At the close,

Professor Black, of Aberdeen, proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman. He expressed his belief that, by meetings of this kind, and by petitions such as that sent from Gairloch, the Highland people would succeed in obtaining Gaelic teaching. He ventured to express a doubt if the Chairman was correct in saying that the Government was averse to the teaching of Gaelic in Highland schools, and he hoped that they were not. He believed they required only to be educated, and to be told of a means whereby it could be best accomplished. Success, then, would entirely depend upon two conditions. The first was that the people of the Highlands should suggest a specific plan to the Government—a fair and reasonable plan, not one that would propose the teaching of Gaelic to the exclusion of all other subjects. The second was that the claim would be thoroughly backed up—outside the House of Commons by a united voice, and inside by their Members of Parliament.

The Chairman briefly replied, and having paid a warm compliment to the exertions of Mr Alex. Mackenzie, the secretary of the Society, and to the committee, for the successful manner in which they had arranged the present meeting, also to the pipers, dancers, singers, and speakers, and to Miss Maclernan for presiding at the pianoforte, proposed a vote of thanks to them all, which was heartily accorded. After the singing of “*Dhia Gleidh Bhan-righ*,” he declared the assembly at a close.

The speakers were heartily applauded throughout, and the meeting was a great success in every respect.

15TH SEPTEMBER 1875.

A special meeting of the Society was held this evening, at which it was unanimously agreed to record the thanks of the Society to the ladies and gentlemen who gratuitously rendered their services at the annual assembly in July. Mr Murdoch, on behalf of Mr Whyte, Temperance Hotel, Fort-William, handed the librarian a copy of an old edition of the Psalms of David. A committee was appointed to appeal to authors and the public generally for books for the library of the Society. The following new members were elected :—Mr C. S. Jerram, M.A., Windlesham, Surrey (honorary); Mrs Macfarlane, Denny, Stirling; Miss Macpherson, do., do.; Surgeon-Major General W. A. Mackinnon, C.B., Aldershot; Rev. John S. Mackay, J.P., the Manse, Poolewe; Rev. Dr Mackenzie, Silverwells, Inverness; Dr George Duncan, Conchra, Lochalsh; Mr C. Livingston, Fort-William; Mr A. Burgess, Caledonian Bank, Gairloch; Mr Roderick Macrae, Island of Eigg; Mr Simon Chisholm, Flowerdale, Gairloch; Mr Thomas Sinton, Nuide, Kingussie (all ordinary members); and Messrs Alexander Ross and John Mackintosh, 57 High Street, Inverness (both apprentice members).

14TH OCTOBER 1875.

At the meeting on this date, Mr James Fraser, manufacturer, 41 North Albion Street, Glasgow, presented the Society, through the Secretary, with a copy of the “History of the Scottish Metrical Psalms,” by the Rev. J. W. Meeken. The Secretary at the same time presented a copy of Part I. of the “Kenlochewe Bard’s Poems.” In consequence of other engagements, Mr Alexander Mackenzie resigned the office of Secretary, which he held since the commencement of the year. The resignation was accepted, and a committee appointed to secure a suitable successor.

29TH OCTOBER 1875.

At this meeting the following new members were elected :—Mr Evan Maedonald, Banker, Buckie; the Rev. James Grant, the Manse, Ullapool; Mr W. C. Joass, Architect, Dingwall; and Mr James Macpherson, 38 Rose Street, Inverness. Further arrangements were made for the election of a new Secretary.

18TH NOVEMBER 1875.

At this meeting a letter was read from Mr G. J. Campbell, resigning office as Honorary Secretary, in consequence of his leaving Inverness. Mr Campbell's resignation was accepted, and Mr Wm. Mackay, Solicitor, appointed Honorary Secretary *ad interim*.

25TH NOVEMBER 1875.

At this meeting further arrangements were made with the view of electing a secretary.

2D DECEMBER 1875.

At this meeting, Mr Mackay, the Honorary Secretary, reported that, in compliance with the instructions of former meetings, he negotiated with Mr William Mackenzie, *Free Press* reporter, Inverness, anent the office of Secretary, and that Mr Mackenzie had consented to act on the terms proposed. Mr Mackenzie was accordingly elected unanimously Secretary to the Society. The meeting then set to make arrangements for the annual supper of the Society.

9TH DECEMBER 1875.

On this evening the Secretary, on behalf of Mr A. A. Carmichael, Benbecula, read the following sgeulachd :—

FIONNLADH CHOINNEACHAIN, MAC NA  
BANTRAICH.

[Sgialaiche, Domhnul Mac Cuithein, coitear, Fearann-an-lethe, faisg air Carbost, 'san Eilean Sgitheanach.]

Bha fear ann roimhe so ris an abairte Fionnladh Choinneachain, mac na Bantraich. Bha e na Shealgair, agus bha e fhein agus a phiuthar a' ga'ail mu cheile. Bha iad a' tamh ann am bothan beag fasaiich, fad o laimh am measg nam beann, agus cha robh neach a' fuireach comhla riuth ach iad fhein. Bhiodh Fionnladh

a' falbh tra sa' mhaduin do'n bheinn sheilg; agus an uair a dh' fhàlbhadh e theireadh e r'a phiuthair "Na fosgail uinneag na h-airde tuath, 's na leig an tein' as." "Cha'n fhosgail mi uinneag, 's cha duin mi ainneag, 's cha leig mi 'n tein' as" theireadh a phiuthar. Ach 's e bh'ann gach ni shireadh a brathair oirre gun a dheanadh dheanadh ise, agus an rud a dh'iarradh e oirre dhianadh cha dianadh i. Dh'fosgaileadh i uinneag na h-airde deas, agus dhuineadh i uinneag na h-airde tuath, agus leigeadh i an tein' as air chinn a brathair. Cha robh a' phiuthar agus a brathair idir a' riarrachadh a cheile.

Thog Fionnladh air la bha sin agus falbhar mar gu'm bitheadh e 'dol bho'n bhaile. Bha e 'falbh agus a' ga'il seallaidh uaith a's thuige, agus faiceas bothan beag bochd faisg air ceum an Rathaid far nach fac e bothan roimhe riamh. Chuir am bothan neonachas air agus gabhar ga ionnsuidh. Bha seann bhoirionnach air ursor a' bhothain agus cha robh is taigh ach i fhein. Shir i air Fionnladh suidhe 'dheanadh, agus shuidh e. "Dean suidhe a mhic na bantraich" ors a chailleach. "Is math a's aithne dhomh do charamh agus do chor. 'S ann agad a tha 'n droch phiuthar a tha deonach cur as duit." "Am bheil?" ors esan. "Tha" ors a chailleach "agus mar chomharradh gu bheil, 'n uair a theid thu dhachaidh a nochd bithidh leaba lair luachair deanta taobh an tein' aice los thusa shuidhe oirre. Ach na suidh thus idir air an leaba làir luachair so, oir tha fuamhair fo'n luachair agus claidheamh geur gorm aige 'na laimh gus do mharbhadh. Ach dian thusa 'mhic na bantraich mar a shireas mis ort agus cha'n eagal duit," agus thug cailleach a' bhothain bhig seòladh no dha do mhac na bantraich mar a dhianadh e 'n uair a reachadh e dhachaidh.

Thill Fionnladh dachaidh agus choinnich a' phiuthar anns an dorus e le failte 's le furain. "A ghaoil 's mise 'rinn an t-socair dhuit a' nochd," ors ise, "gus thu fhein a' leigeil a d' shìneadh air, 'n uair a ghabhas tu do dhinneir gus an tig àm duit dol a laidhe. Rinn mi leaba shocrach luachair duit, agus a ghaoil 's i tha socair." Cha do leig Fionnladh dad air ach ghabh e staigh. Bha e na chleachdadh aige bhi nitheadh a chasan a chuile h-oidhche mu'n reachadh e 'laidhe; agus eirear agus thugar coire goileach uisge far an teine, agus cuirear sid na sluaidhe air an leaba luachair a rinn a phiuthar dha, agus cha do shuidh e fhein idir oirre. A chiad chnáimh dheth an d' thug e 'n fhéoil agus e aig a dhinneir thilg e sid a null thun nan con air an leaba luachair. Leum na tri choin mhora air an leaba luachair an deigh a' chnaimh agus leum iad air a cheile air son a' chnaimh. Agus cha luithe thoisich na coin mhora ri sabaid na chuir iad car dhe'n choire

agus dhoirt iad an t-uisge goileach. Co leumi a mach bho'n leaba luachair ach gu'm b'e am fuamhaire a' sgriachail, 's a' sgreanadail, 's a' raoiceil, agus a mach an dorus a ghabh e, agus mach an dorus as a dheigh ghabh piuthar Fhionnlaidh, nighean na bantraich, agus thug iad uamh mhor nam fuathairean orra.

Bha Fionnl aig an taigh leis fhein, agus a chridhe air chrith leis an eagal, agus e gum fhios aige co mhionaid a dh-fhaodadh na fuathairean tighinn air a mhuin agus a mharbhadh

'Nuair a chaidh am fuathair dachaidh agus a chunnaic na fuathairean eile loisgt' e, leum am fuathair og air a' chois agus thuirt e, "S mi fhein a theid a theirt a mach torachd mo bhrathar." "Cha tu theid ann ach mis'" ors am fuathaire mor fhein. "Is e theid ann mi fhein," ors' a chailleach ghara-ghlas (gharbh-ghlas). "U cha'n e theid ann ach mise," ors' am fuamhair og agus e leum a mach dorus na h-uamh.

Bha Fionnl a' feitheamh a bhàis aig an taigh na 'bhothan beag fhein agus chual e sin a tighinn firream agus farram agus fuaim tairneanaich; clacha beaga dol an iochdar, 's clacha mora 'dol an uachhdar, 'sam poll ga shadradh 's na speura!

Co bha so ach am fuathair og, brathair an fhuathair loisgte, 's e tighinn a thoirt a mach torachd a bhrathar. "Fith! foth! fuagaire! (*nasal*) tha barradh (? baladh) an arrabhalaich an so. Leig a staigh mi 'mhic na bantraich," agus leis a sin thilg e 'n dorus a staigh roimhe mar gu'm be duileag chail e.

Chuir Fionnl Choinneachain an da pheileir a bh' aige 'sa ghunna agus leig e sid ris an fhuathaire, ach cha d'rinn sin an gnothach air. Leum an sin na tri choin mhora na charaich agus riab, a' s dhochain iad e, agus eadar iad fhein 'us Fionnl mharbh iad am fuathair. Thug an sin Fionnl na coig cinn, na coig mill, 's na coig muineil bhar an fhuathaire agus cheangail e iad air gad. Bha oillt air Fionnl agus cha do charaich e mach as an taigh an oiche sin tuille. Ach mu b'fbada bha'n la gum tighinn cha b'fhaide na sin bha Fionnl gun fbalbh chum cailleach a' bhothain blig. Thug e muillionn (? buillionn) chruinneachd agus stopa fion g'a h-ionnsuidh, ni a chord gu math rithe, agus cinn agus mill agus muineil an fhuathaire.

"Bhuiil mata a lamh threun 'ciamar a dh'eirich dhuit an raoir?" ors a chailleach ri Fionnl. Dh'innis e dhi mar a thachair dha, agus gur h-iad na coin a chuir crioch air an fhuathaire.

"Tha feum air na coin fhein," ars a' chailleach, "ach cha tainig am feum orra fhathast."

Bha Fionnl cho siobhalta modhail ris a' chaillich agus a b' urrainn e, agus bha e fhein agus ise 'n cairdeas math. Thainig e

sin dachaidh ach mu thainig cha b'ann gu fois. Thainig an oidhche ach mu thainig cha b'fhada gus an cual e tighinn chum dorus a bhothain, firream agus farram agus fuaim tairneanaich, clacha beaga dol an iochdar, 's clacha mora dol an uachdar, a' s poll ga smuidreadh 's na speuran. "Thomh ! thomh ! uagaraiche ! tha boladh an arrabhalaidh a staigh a so—Leig a staigh mi mhic na bantraich—Ged a mharbh thu mo mhac an raoir cha mharbh thu mise nochd," agus leis a sin thilg e 'n dorus a staigh roimhe air an urlar agus chrionaich an taigh agus chrionaich am fear a bha a staigh, agus shaoil leis gu'n robh an taigh a nuas air a mhuin.

Chuir an sealgair an sin an da pheileir 'sa glunna agus loisg e sid air an fhuathair ach cha tug e deargadh air. Chuir e sin a chlaidheamb ann agus cha mho rinn sin gnothach air, ach leum na tri choin mhora na bhad agus eatorra chuir iad as da.

Thug a sin an sealgair na coig cinn, na coig mill, agus na coig muineil bhar an fhuathaire mhoir agus thug e leis air a mhuin iad chum na caillich, agus muillionn chruinneachd agus stopa fion na laimh.

"A lamh thapaidh," ars' a chailleach 'nuair thainig Fionnlá dhachaidh thuice, "ciamar a dh'eirich dhuit an raoir?" "Dh'eirich gu math," ors' esan; "tha erioch air an dithis ud co dhiu. Ach 's e na coin a chuir crioch air an flear so cuideachd." "'S math a fhuardas thu a threin thapaidh agus is math a fhuardas na coin mhora, agus bha feum orra ach cha tainig ami feum idir fhathast. 'S ann an nochd tha an cliu r'a dhearbhadh agad uile. Tha chailleach gharaghlas fhein a tighinn an nochd a thoirt a mach torachd a fir agus a mic (*? a dithis mhac*). Tha i cho uamhasach 's gu bheil fiacaill aice na brod rothaid (*? Rathaid*) air son a bhi reiteach na slighe dhi 'nuair a bhios i siubhal, agus fiacaill eile na brod griasaithe air son reiteach an teine 'n uair a bhios i ga h-earraineadh fhein ris a bhliaths. Thig i nochd far am bheil thu ann am mìn mhodhalachd 's an ciuin ceanalas agus iarraidh i ort a leigeil is taigh. Tha i an rùn do bheatha thoirt dhiot. Ach dian thusa mar a shireas mis' ort agus cha 'n eagal dhuit" agus dhinnis i dha mar a ghnàthraigheadh se e fhein an déigh dol dachaidh.

Thainig mac na bantraich dhachaidh g'a bhothan bochd fhein agus O ! bha eagal gun chiall air. Thuit an oidhche 's mu thuit thainig a' chailleach gharaghlas than dorus bothan mhic na bantraich gu cinin foi'eachail foi' idneachail, agus shir i air mac na bantraich a leigeil is taigh. "Leigidh," ors esan, "mu gheallas tu gu'm bi thu modhail gu maduinn 's nach enir thu dragh ormsa." "'U cha chuir mi ear dhiom," ors ise, "'s leig is taigh mi," agus leig Fionnladh is taigh a' chailleach gharaghlas.

Shuidh a' chailleach għarragħlas mhōr air taobh shuas an teine, agus shuidh an sealgair air taobh shios an teine. Cha b'fħada mar sin gus an d'eirich a' chailleach agus shuidh i air taobh thall an teine agus dh'eirich Fionnladh ('s bha'n t-am aige)'s shuidh e air taobh bhos an teine. Bha na tri choin mhora feadħ an taigh agus thuirt a' chailleach cholgħil għarragħlas ri Fionnladh—"Eirich a mhic na bantraich agus cuir ial air do chnid chon." "U cha dian na coin blasad coire," ors ēise. "U feumaidh tu 'n cea'al co-dhiu," ors ēise, "Cha'n eil sian agam leis an cea'ail mi iad," ors an sealgair. "Bheir mi fhein dhuit tri riobaine ròbach ruadha far braġħ mo chinn phiollaich pheallaich a ghleidheadħ an long mhor air a h-acair fad nan seachd bliadhna." Thug i sid dha agus chuir ēise na tri ròineagan riobacha ruadha, 'na phoca an àite an cur air na coin agus thug e air na coin laidhe ann an eul mu achanan (? amh achan) a cheile mar air lothain.

"An do cheangail thu na coin a mhic na bantraich ?" orsa chailleach għaraghla. "Cheangail" orsa mac na bantraich, "nach eil thu ga'm faċċin ceangailte thall 'sa chuil ?" Shuidh iad a sin a sios aig taobh an teine—mar a bha iad roimhe—mac na bantraich air an dara taobh agus a' chailleach għarragħlas air an taobh eile.

"Cha chreid mi fhé a' chailleach nach eil thu 'fas mor" ors mac na bantraich. "'U cha 'n eil a ghraidih" ors ēise; "cha 'n eil ann ach m' iteagan a's m' oiteagan ag eiridh ris a' għealbhan." Tiota beag an deigh sin thuirt an sealgair ris a' chaillich, "Gu dearbh a chailleach cha chreid mi nach eil thu 'fas mor." "Aobh cha'n eil" ors ēise; "a bheil ann a mhacain ach m' iteagan a's m' oiteagan a' togail ris a' għealbhan ?" An ceann greis an deigh sin thuirt eise rist—"Tha thu 'fas mor co-dhiu a chailleach, għab gu math no gu h-olc e." "Tha mi 'fas cho mor a mhic na bantraich 's ge do mħarbh thu le d' charachd 's le d' sheoltachd m' fhear an raoir's mo mhac air a mhor raoir gu'm marsh mise thus an nochd" agus leum a' chailleach għarragħlas air a bonaibh agus chrionaiċi an taigh fo 'casan, agus leum mac na bantraich air a bhonnaibh cuideachd 's mar h-e bu luaithe cha 'n e dad bu mhaille. Chaidh iad a sin am bādaibh a cheile 's għabb iad a mach an dorus gu taobh a muigh an taighe. Agus leum na tri choin mhora mach as an deigh. Shin iad an sin air a cheile—Fionnladh Choinneachain mac na bantraich, agus a Chailleach Ghara għħlas, bean an fluuamhaire mhoir agus mathair nam fuuamhairean oga, 's mo chreach bi sin a charrahd! Chuireadħ iad toin-neadħ thall a's car a bħos dhiubħ, lüb shios a's laidhe shuas (? orra) a's threeo'adh iad an gar'alach cruaidh-ghħlas le'n casan mar a mhachair mħin bhog, a's dħianadħ iad a bhogain an aodann għach

cruaidh chreagain ; 'n uair bu lagha bhitheadh iad fotha bhitheadh iad fotha gu'n glúinean 's an uair bu mhutha bhitheadh iad fotha bhitheadh iad fotha gu'n súilean !

Chuimhnich mac na bantraich air fhein 's air a dhaimh 's air a dhaoine agus smaoinich e aige fhein gu'n robh e fad o charaid agus faisg air a namhaid agus chuir e 'n car sunntach siubhlach suigearratach dheth agus chuir e chailleach gharaghlas air a druime direach, agus bhrist e asna foipe 's gairdean os a cionn !

"Leig air mo chois mi mhic na bantraich" ars a' chailleach. "Cha leig" ars eise, "gus an innis thu dhomh gu de d'eirig." "Tha tróig óir agus tróig airgid agam anns an uaimh agus is leat iad a mhic na bantraich."

"U chailleach's liom fhein sin co dhiu; ciod e d'eirig?" "Tha tróig làn do bhraisdeachan óir agus tróig eile làn bhraisdeachan airgid a bha aig tighearnan a's baintighearnan agus 's leat iad a mhic na bantraich." "U chailleach's liom fhein sin.--Gu de d'eirig?" "Tha anns an uaimh uaireadair óir a bh'aig mac righ Torra-fo-thuinn agus ainnm oirre, agus fain óir a bh' aig nighean righ Torra-fo-thuinn agus a h-ainnm air agus is leat iad a mhic na bantraich 's leig air mo chois mi."

"A chailleach gharaghlas's liom fhein iad sin co dhiu—de d'eirig ?"

"Tha claidheamh òir agam anns an uaimh agus cha do nochdadh ri duine no ri biast riamh e air nach d'rinn e gnothach. 'S leat e mhic na bantraich 's leig liom éridh" "'S liom fhein an claidheamh óir co-dhiu" ors eise—"gu de d'eirig a chailleach?" "Tha m'eirig mata, agus is cruaidh e, da shlait a bh'anns an uaimh agus ma bhuaileas tu buille am bad 'sam bith dhe'n t-saoghal air cara creige, fasaidh an cara (*i.e.*, caragh) na dhuine, agus mu chuireas tu an claidheamh oir an láimh an duine so cha'n eil duine fo'n ghrein a sheasas roimhe. Agus mu bhuaileas tu buille leis an t-slait eile air an duine so fasaidh e na chara creige mar bha e roimhe. Is leat mo dha shlataig charach dhuibh agus leig air mo chois mi a mhic na bantraich."

"Is leam fein do dha shlataig charach, dhrui'each, codhiu, a chailleach ghara-ghlas. Ciod e d'eirig?"—"Aobh! aobh! a mhacain ghradhaich, cha'n eil an corr agam sa dhuit," ors ise.

Leag an sin an sealgair agus na tri choin mhòra anns a' chailllich ghara-ghlais; agus mbarbh iad i, agus cha d'fhag iad sgrid innte. Fhuair e sin òrd, agus thug e 'n da blrod fiacail as a' chailllich, agus thomhais e iad agus bha coig laimh-choille air fad agus traimh-choille mu'n cuairt anns gach te dhiubh.

Thog Fionnla air, agus rainig e bothan beag cailleach na faos-

nachd, agus thug e leis an da bhrod fiacail a thug e á beul na cailllich-ghara-ghlais. "An tainig thu, a lamh-threun, 'sa laoich thapaidh?" ors a chailleach.

"Thainig mi" ors esan, "agus 's e sin fhein uile e." "Agus cia mar a tha thu, no cia mar a dh'eirich dhuit an raoir?" ors ise. "Tha mi beo, a 's cha 'n eil an corr ann; ach dh'eirich gu math dhomh ann a' sin—tha erioch air a ghraisg ud co-dhiu. Chuir mi fhein is mo choin erioch air a chaillich-ghara-ghlais, agus thug mi na brod fiacail aice thugad fhein," 's e g'an tilgeil air an lár g'a h-ionnsuidh. "Faodaidh tu fhein, s' mi fhein a bhi doigheil gu brach. Tha storas a's ionmhas riomhlach, a's seudan gun chiall anns an uaimh; ach ciamar a gheibhear thuice—cha'n fhios domh." "Moire! cha'n fhios dhomhsa ni 's mo na thu fhein" ors a' chailleach, "ach theid mi fhein, 's mo dhalta leat a' nochd, agus cuidichidh sinn thu, 's cha chreid mi nach toir sinn buaidh. Bheir mi fhein liom mo shlacan druidheachd, agus ma dh'fhairt-licheas gach rud eile oirnn, cha 'r fhairtlich sin oirnn co-dhiu."

Thog iad an sin orra—mac na bantraich, a' chailleach bheag, leth-shuileach, chiarr għlas, agus a dalta mheal-shuileach, mhingheal, agus rainig iad bial uamh nam fuamhairean. Bhuan iad seachd saic de fhraoch glas, agus thug iad sud gu beul na h-uaimh, agus chuir iad teine ris na seachd saic fhraoich aig beul na h-uaimh, gus am fuamhair a bha staigh a thachddadh le toit agus a leonadh le deathach. Chuireadh teine ris an triasg għlas agus lionadh an uamh le deathach. Bha am fuamhaire a' seidil, agus an uair a thairneadh e 'anail bheireadh e staigh na clachan a bha 'm beul na h-uamh; agus an uair a sheideadh e 'anail chuireadh e 'n teine 's an triasg 's na clachan 'nan smuidreach 's an adhar!

Chunnaig iad an sin fairreadh a' tighinn air cinn an fhuamhaire agus thuirt mac na bantraich gu'n lcisgeadh e air an fhuamhair. "Cha loisg!" ors a' chailleach, "cha deanadh sin ach an dearg chaothach uile 'chuir air, agus cha dean na coin feum dhuit ann a so a measg an teine. Leig leis, dh'fhiach am faigh mi fein cothram air le m' shlacan beag carach ciar, agus mu gheibh cha'n fhàg mi sgrid ann leis an aon chlibheig; ach mar a faigh, agus gu'm faigh esan clibheag a thoirt dhomhsa leis a' chlaidheamh, liobhaidh, loinneireach lia-ghlas a ta na lamh, ni e cnap creadha dhiom."

Shin am fuamhair a mach air bial na h-uamh agus ma shin, cha bu luaithe a shin, na shin a' chailleach a lamh, agus thugar a' clibheig chnaparra chruaidh sin da 's a cheann leis an t-slacan-druidheachd aice; agus cha d'fhag i sgrid ann! Thainig boills-geadh soluis, agus chunnaig an sealgair a phiuthar shuas an ceann eile na h-uamh, agus loisg e oirre, agus mharbh e i.

Thug an sealgair an sin na coig cinn, na coig mill, 's na coig muineil far an fhuamhaire agus cheangail e iad air gad “A lamh thapaidh, 's a threun ghaisgeich,” ors a chailleach “is tu rinn an gniomh gaisgeil nach d'rimm fear romhad riabh, agus bithidh a bhlath 'sa bhuil ortsu mu ghabhas tu mo chomhairle-sa.” “U, gabhaidh mise do chomhairle, bhean, 's mi a ghabhas, agus a's ann domh a's fhiaoch. Is tu a chuir a chuile seeim (*scheme*) a bha nam' cheann ann, agus mar bhith thu, a's cinnteach gu'n robh mise am bhuta marbh aig a ghraisg ud. Bithidh fois aig a chuid so dhe'n t-saoghal tuille bho'n fluadaradh cur as daibh so.”

Thog a sin Fionnlà, a chailleach, agus a dalta leo gach sian agus seun, òr agus airgiod, agus gach luachmhoreachd eile a bha 'san uamh, agus thug iad leo iad gu bothan na caillich. Fhuair Fionnlà an da shlataig charraigich, dhubbh, chiar a bha aig a' chailllich gharra-ghlais, agus thug e leis'na laimh iad, agus bha e gle mhiaghail umpa. Air an rathad bhuaile cara cloiche le te de na slatan, agus dh'fhas an cara na dhuine. Chuir e sin an claidheamh òir an laimh an duine so agus cha'n fhaca suil riabh gaisgeach bu sgiamhaiche na e agus ged thigeadh còig mile fear fo'n armachd cheannsaicheadh e uile iad. Bhuaile Fionnlà an sin stràc de'n t-slataig eile air gaisgeach na cara, agus am priobadh na sùla bha e na chara glas mar bha e roimhe.

“Ciod tha so?—‘Se tha so gniomh fuathasach’ orsa Fionnlà. “U, 's e” ors a' chailleach; “cha robh a leithid so ann roimhe riabh.”

Rainig iad an sin taigh na caillich for an d'fhuirich Fionnladh an oidhche sin.

Mochra maduinn an lai-na-mhaireach thog e air agus falbhar gu taigh an righ. Thug e leis cinn, a's mill, a's muineil nam fuamh-airean agus uaireadair òir a's braisdeachan 'us faineachain mic agus nighinn an righ. Mas d'fhalbh e thuirt a' chailleach ris, “So deise 's cuiridh tu umad i,” agus chuir e uime 'n deise “Nis cha chuir thu dhiot an deise gus an till thu air ais thugamsa.” Sgriobh an sin a' chailleach air cul mac na bantraich gu'm be so am fear a mharbh am fuamhaire mor gun dochas agus a dhithis mhac agus a' chailleach ghara-ghlas. Cha robh sion fios aig Fionnlà gu'n do sgriobh a chailleach air a chulthaobh. Ghabh e air aghart air a thuras, agus rainig e baile mòr an righ, agus cha robh neach a bha ga fhaicinn nach robh a' sealltainn air an sgríobhadh a bha air a chulthaobh agus ga 'leughadh. Bha so a' cur ioghnadh air Fionnlà, ach cha bhristeadh e air a ghealladh do'n chailllich, 's cha shealladh e air cul na deise feuch ciod a bha daoine fuaicinn oirre. Rainig e taigh an righ augs dh'fheoraich e 'n robh duine teaghlach aig an righ, agus thuirteadh ris gu'n robh

aon nighean aige, gu'n do mharbh na fuamhairean nighean eile leis agus a mhac.

Thainig an sin nighean an righ thun an doruis agus thug Fionnlà dhi uaireadair agus bràisdeachan agus faineachan a brathar agus a peathar. Thill nighean an righ leis na rudan so far an robh a h-athair agus a mathair na'n suidhe aig taobh an teine agus thug i dhaibh iad. Lion luchd dheur suilean an righ agus na banrigh 'n uair a chunnaig iad seudan am mic agus an nighean. Thainig iad an sin a mach far an robh Fionnlà agus shir iad air tighinn a staigh, ach cha tigeadh e. Rug an sin an righ air an dara laimh, agus a bhanrigh air an laimh eile aig Fionnlà gus a tharruing a staigh a dheòiu no dhaineoin ach cha reachadh alt dhe a staigh. “ Mòran taing dhuibh,” orsa Fionnlà, “ air son m' iarraidh a staigh, ach cha teid mi a staigh idir; le'r cead. Tha bòid agus barantas ormsa nach dian mi ach mar a dh'iarradh orm, agus cha bhrist mi mo bhòid no mo bharantas air son neach a chunna mi riabh.” “ Thig a staigh,” ors an righ, “ agus tha aon nighean agam flin, agus gu dearbh mu chòrdas thu fhein agus ise ri cheile bithidh mise deònach a toirt dhuit, agus bheir mi dhuit leth mo chuid fad 's is beò mi, agus an leth eile 'n la 's bas dhomh.” “ O, gabhaibh mo leisgeal an trath so ; tha cabhaig mhòr orm gus mo bhòid a chomh lionadh, agus cha 'n urrainn mi dol a staigh gus an tig mi rithisd. Mòran, mòran taing dhuibh.” Thionndaidh Fionnlà a chuloabh ris an righ agus thug e suil uaithe agus chunnaig e clach bhiorach għlas. Għabli e null far an robh a' chlach, agus bhuaile e 'n t-slatag charach dhuibh air a chara chloiche, agus leum an cara-glas cloiche na bheò-dhuine sgairteal am fianuis an righ agus an t-sluaigh. Chuir e an sin an claidheamh òir 'na laimh agus chuireadh coltas a' ghaisgeich crith air còig mile marc-shluagh fo'n armachd. Thug e sin strachd leis an t-slatag eile dha 'n ghaisgeach agus leum an gaisgeach na chara glas cloiche mar a bha e roimh. Bha 'n sluagh uile air an lionadh le ioghnadh, agus na'm measg uile cha robh aon bu lionta le ioghnadh na'n righ. “ O, ciod e, ciod e so,” ors an righ. “ Cha 'n fhaca mi leithid so riabh roimhe ; agus cha'n eil mi 'n duil gu 'm faic na dheigh.” Dh' innis an sin mac na bantrich dha'n righ mu dheighinn nan slatag, agus feum nan slatag, agus far an d'fhuair e iad—ni a chuir ioghnadh gun chiall air an righ. Thill an sin Fionnlà dhachaidh gu bothan beag cailleachag na fasaich.

Chuir an righ cosruith a's eachruith mach feadh fad agus far-suinnseachd a rioghachd air toir mac na bantraich, ach cha chual iad so sgial air, agus thill iad dachaiddh mar a dh'fhalbh iad.

Phòs an sin Fionnla agus dalta na caillich. Bha triuir nighean agus triuir ghillean aca. Chaochail a' chailleach, agus goirid an deigh sin, chaochail a dalta. Bha Fionnla na cheannaiche mòr agus bathar aige de gach seòrsa air an smaoinicheadh duine. Ach an uair a chaochail a' chailleach agus a dalta, chrion ceannachd mac na bantraich agus dh'fhalbh e gu neon, agus mu dheireadh chaill e chuile blasad riagh a bha aige ris an t-saoghail.

An uair a chaill Fionnla Choinneachain a chuile sian a bh'aige, smaoinich e aige fhein gu'r h-ann a reachadh e thun taigh an righ, fiach ciod e bu chor dhaibh an sin. Cha robh sian an t-saoghal aige de na bh'aige roimhe ach an deise 'thug a' chailleach, muime mhna, dha, agus an da shlataig a bha aig a' chailllich ghara-ghlais. Rainig e taigh an righ agus chuir e fios thun an righ gu'n robh toil aige a bhi bruithinn ris, na'm b'e 'thoil a tighinn mach g'a fhaicinn. Dh'innis a luchd muinntir do'n righ gu'n robh an duine treun a chunnacas roimhe air tighinn. Chuir an righ mach fios e tighinn a staigh; agus thainig e a staigh. Dh'eirich an righ, agus a bhean agus a nighean a chuir failte agus furain air mac na bantraich, agus ghabh an nighean gaol a cridhe air. Bha an t-àm a la mu àm dinnearach, agus bha 'n dinnear air a' bhord. Chaidh Fionnla a thoirt gu ceann uachdrach a' bhuidh, agus failte chridheil a chuir air. Bha nàir air dol an dàil a bheidh maille ris an righ 's ri theaghlaich. Cha robh fios aige ciod e dheanadh e air an t-saoghal's O! bha e cho diù'itidh; ach smaoinich e gu'n deanadh e mar a b'fhearr a b'urrainn da, agus rinn e mar sin. An deigh na dinnearach thug an righ agus a nighean seomar eile orra. "Cha chreid mi fhein" ors an righ "gur h-e th' ann idir." "'Se gu dearbh, 'athair" ors a' nighean; "ach gu bhi cinnteach, thig mise mu'n cuairt air, agus gheibh mi mach." Thainig iad an sin a staigh far an robh an t-òganach, agus thuirt nighean an righ—"S mor an gniomh a rinn thu an uair a bha thu 'n so roimhe. Cha robh moraire no diue, no iarla, no ridire, no tighearna fearainn, no coitear bothain nach euala mn'dheighinn, 's nach fac e, nach robh 'eur ag ann. Bha iad ag rathain nach ro duine 's am bith a b'urrainn an gniomb ud a dhianadh. Saoil thu am b'urrainn thu dheanamh fhathast?" "U's mi 's urrain," ors esan. Chaidh iad an sin a mach agus a chiad chlach għlas a chunnaic esan thall bhuaile stràcan dheth 'n t-slataig bheag charagaiche chiardhuibh air a charra chruinn chloiche agus ri prioba na sùla leum an carra cruinn cloiche 'na 'oganach leadara donn f' an coinneamh! Chuir mac na bantraich an claidheamh ðir an laimh an òganaich leadara dhuinn agus chuireadh colg-choltais a' ghaisgich fiamh air coig ciad cois-shluagh ga'm feothas. Bha na laig fo eagal 's na laidir

fo mhór ioghnadh ("iomart."—A.A.C.); mnathan òga a' guil, 's leanabain ag eu'ach, 's laoich eath a's comhraig a dearcadh le h-ioghnadh 's beul duinte air an smuain. Bhuailean sin Fionnladh an gaisgeach leis an t-slatag eile bha na laimh agus am prioba na sula bha 'n t-oganach leadarra donn na charra cruinn cloiche glaise, mar a bha e roimhe!

Rug nighean an Righ air laimh air Fionnladh agus thug i steach e, 's eha dealaicheadh i ris beò no marbh. 'Sin chuir an Righ fios a mach fad a's farsuinn thun gach stàta 's urra mhòr 'san rioghachd iad a thighinn a nis, agus gu luath, chum agus gu'm faiceadh iad rud nach robh iad a 'creidsinn roimhe. An sin thrus iad agus mo chreach b'e sin an trusadh, bho 'n la sin gu ceithir la deug na dheidh! Cha robh na bu lughána ceud gu leth carbad air tighinn gus ma dheireadh nach robh àite 'sa' bhaile mhór a chumadh a sluagh de gach ainn agus seorsa b' inbhíche na cheile. Bha do nigheanan dhiúcanan, 's iarlaichean, 's mhorfhearan, 'thighearnan 's urrachan mora, cùntas gun aireamh ann agus na h-uile te riabh a' call a eeille 's a cuimhne an gaol air Fionnladh Choinneachain, mac na Bantraich, ["Nach be sin an duine fortanach?"—Seanach-daih.] Ach a thaobh 's gu'n robh nighean bhàn an Righ an gaol air Fionnladh cha robh math no stath do chach an suilean a thogail no chaogadh ris. Bha farmad aig càch rithe agus dhuraichdeadh iad air a gonadh i. B'fhearr leis na daoine mora nach d'thainig iad riamh bho'n taigh le'n euid nighean. Bheireadh iad an saoghal air chumhanta 'sa bhi aig a 'n taighean leotha rithis. Bha eagul orra nach deanadh an euid nighean tòrn no ear matha gu bràth thaobh an staid anns an robh iad air son mac na bantraich. Bha e cho eileachdail, aoibheil, dleasnach, blath-chridheach, 's e cho smiorail, duineil, na fhior Ghaidheal anns gach dòigh, agus cha robh e idir na ioghnadh iad a ghabhail gaoil air. Bha triuir mhaighdeanan òga ann a bha 'n impis dol as an eidal air a shon, agus bha eagal mor air an athairichean do'n taobh. Bha nighean an Righ coltach ri dhol á eidal air a shon mar an ceudua agus thubhairt i ri 'h-athair agus ri 'màthair nach bu tamh oidhche no fois latha dhi mar pòsaadh i Fionnladh. An sin phòs i fein agus Fionnladh. B'iomadh Maighdean Og aig an robh eridhe leòinte 'n latha sin chionn nach i fein a fhuair Fionnladh Choinneachain, mac na Bantraich, ri phòsadadh, an aite nighean mheallshuileach bhàn an Righ. Rinneadh banais anabarrach mor dhuibh, agus chaidh mòran sluaigh a chumail rithe. Thogadh eol agus leagadh bròn, chuireadh cuirm na suidhe 's euideachd air bonn, fuaim clarsaich shios a's seisd fidhle shuas, oighean grinne 'seinn, oigfhearan meara a' cluich 's ri cèòl-gaire, ri linn

nighean mheallshuileich, mhiogaich bhan an Righ bhi pòsadh ri gaisgeach na slataige carraigiche ciardhuibh, a thug buaidh 's a mharbh famhairean mòra na h-uamha.

Thug Fionnladh dhachaidh nighean an Righ. Chuir e mach a thriuir mhac air bhòrd, agus cha d' innis e dh'ise (nighean an Righ) gu'n robh e posda roimhe sin, idir. Bha e na chleachdabh aig na bantighearnan mora gun an clann féin altrum idir. Agus a thaobh nach eil na màthairichean a tabhairt eiche do 'n cloinn tha iad a tabhairt dachaидh muimeachan-altruim dhoibh. [“Och an cuala sibh riamh mathairichean is mi-nadurra na iad?”—Seanachaidh.] Bha muim-altruim aig nighean an Righ agus thug i dhachaidh leatha i. Ciod a dh'innis a' mhuim-altruim do nighean an Righ ach gu'n robh an duine aice posda roimhe 's gu'n robh triuir mhac aige ri 'chiad mhnaoi. Cha robh nighean an Righ 'creidsin seo, ach coma co dhiu bha e 'eur sgainneadh-eridhe oirre agus cho luath 'sa thainig an duine aice dhachaidh ghramaich i ris agus dh'fheoraich i deth an robh firinn anns a' chainnt a chual i. Cha deach e as aicheadh nach robh. Shir nighean an Righ an sin air Fionnladh a chlann a thoirt dhachaidh ga h-ionnsuidh fein agus gu'n deanadh i gniomh màthar agus muime dhoibh. Thug e dhachaidh a chlainn ga h-ionnsuidh. Cha 'n fhaca sibh triuir ghiullan riamh bu luraiche na iad, le 'm falt camalubach, òrbhuidhe, 's le'n gruaidean maotha mine dearga. Bu ghruamach farranach gruaidh nighean an Righ ri linn nan triur mhacan a thighinn dachaيدh ga h-ionnsuidh. Shir i air a muim-altruim doigh a dheanamh air an cuir fo gheasan agus fo chroisean, agus gheall a muim-altruim gu'n deanadh i mar sin, agus rinn. Gu de ach a bhualt muim-altruim nighean an Righ an triuir mhacan leis an t-slachdan-druidheachd, agus dh'fhas an triuir mhacan na 'n tri chòin bhoidheach bhan. Dh'fhalbh iad. Bha iad a' falbh agus iad a sior shiubhal fo chroisean agus fo gheasan gun flois latha, gun tamh oidhche.

Bha nighean an Righ 'toirt cluas agus eagar do 'm muim-altruim, 's le buidseachd 's le gisreagana cha robh dad a bha riabh ann nach robh i 'g innseadh dhi. Bha i (nighean and Righ), air dol gu mi-thlachd a's mollachadh, le eud 's le farmad ri linn di faighinn a mach mar a thachair, 's cha b' urrainn Fionnladh cuir suas leatha na b' fhaide, 's falbhar e agus fágáir i, agus togair air air toir a chuid cloinne.

Bha Fionnladh a' siubhal frith agus fasaich agus am beul an anmoich chunnaig e bothan beag air srath glinne. Smuanaich e aige fein gu 'n deanadh e air a' bhothan bheag agus gu 'n iarradh e euid na h-oidhche ann. Rinn e air a' bhothan agus shir e euid na

h-oidhche ann agus fhuair e sin. “ ‘S ann dubhach, deurach, trom a tha thusa nochd a dhuine bhochd, a’ siubhal frith agus fasaich a’ sireadh do thriuir mhae,” arsa fear a bhothain. “ O ’s ann,” arsa Fionnladh, “ Am fae thus’ iad ?” “ Tha iad a’ falbh monaidh a’s mointich na’n tri choin bhàna. Cha ’n urrainn mise sion a dheanamh riut, ach bithidh tu an taigh bràthar dhomh an ath-oidhch’ agus mar dean esan cobhair ort cha ’n flios dhomhsa ciol a ni thu.” “ O cha ’n ’eil fios agamisa c’ait am beil taigh do bhràthar agus cha ’n urra mi amas air.” “ Bithidh tu ann eodhinn, c’ia aite ’sam beil e,” arsa fear a’ bhothain. Am beul an latha maireach, ma bu mhoch a dh’eirich an uiseag, cha b’fhaide laidh Fionnladh, agus dh’ fhalbh e, a’s bhà e fad an latha siubhal. Am beul an amioich faicear bothan beag air urlar glinne agus gabhar thuige agus shir e aoidheachd. Fhuair e sin. “ ‘S ann dubhach deurach a tha thusa dhuine bhochd a siubhal frith a’s fasaich a’ sireadh do thriuir mhae,” arsa fear a’ bhothain. “ ‘S ann, ’s ann,” arsa Fionnladh, “ Am fae thusa iad ?” “ Tha iad a’ falbh monaidh agus mointich na’n tri choin bhana. Cha ’n urrainn mise sion a dheanamh riut. Bha thu an taigh bràthar dhomh an raoir; tha thu na ’m thaigh fein a nochd; bithidh tu an taigh brathar eile dhomh an ath oidhch’, a’s mar dean esan cobhair cha’n eil comas agams’ ort.” Mu ’m bu mhoch a dh’eirich grian air glas-shleibhteann ’s air gorm-choilltean, bu mhoiche na sin a dh’eirich mac na Bantraich, agus dh’ fhalbh e air a thurus. Bha e ’siubhal frith a’s fasaich, mach-raichean mìne gorma, ’s garbhlàichean glasa shleibhteann gus an robh ciaradh air an adhar, a’s neul glas air an speur, agus eòin bheaga nam preas a’ sireadh cothrom cadail fo sgath nan corra-chreag ’s fo dhubhar nan crann uaine. Chunnaic e sin bothan beag air sgath glinne ’s ghabh e lom a’s direach dha ionnsuidh. Shir e aoidheachd agus fhuair e sin. “ ‘S ann tùrsach, deurach, trom, lanalabainn a’ samraigdh a tha thusa nochd a’ sireadh do thriuir mhae, a mhic na Bantraich,” arsa fear a ’bhothain. “ O ’s ann, am fae thusa iad ?” “ Chunnaic mi ; tha iad a ghnath gun tamh a falbhaonaich agusa’ siubhal fasaich nan tri choin bharr-fhionn bhana. Bha thu an taigh bràthar domh air a mhon-raoir, an taigh bràthar eile an raoir, agus na m’ thaigh fein an nochd. Thubhairt a’ chiad bhràthair nach b’urrainn dhasan dad a dheanamh air do shon ach gu’m bitheadh tu an taigh brathar eile dha an ath-oidhche. Bha thu sin, ’s thubhairt am brathair sin riut nach b’urrainn dhasan dad a dheanamh riut, ach gu’m bitheadh tu an taigh a bhrathar an ath-oidhche. Tha thu sin a nis. Bha gach fear dhe ’m blraithriean cho comasach riumsa comhnadh a dheanamh riut n’an togradh iad fein. ’S beag ’s cha

mhor a's urrainn mise a dheanamh riut, ach na's urrainn mi, ni mi. Tha do thriuir mhac a' siubhal aonaich 'sa 'falbh fasaich n'an tri choin gheala. Is mac Bantraich thu fein. Bha thu fein 's do phiutar a' gabhlil mu cheile gus an d'fhalbh i leis an Fhamhair, mac Famhair mor na h-uamha. Mharbh thu Famhair mor na h-uamha —nan coig ceann, nan coig meall 's nan coig muineal—agus a chuid mac, agus a' chailleach gharbh-ghlas. Chuidich Cailleach chiar dhurbh na buitseachd 's nan geasan thu agus phòs thu a dalta—mathair nam macan air am beil thu an toir. Chaochail an sin a' chailleach agus a dalta, 's dh'fhag iad thusa na d' aonar leis an triuir mhacan. Phos thu sin nighean an Righ agus gaol a beatha 'sa bais aic' ort. A mhic na Bantraich cha d' innis thu dhi gu'n robb dragh ort roimh ach dh' innis a muim-altruim dhi e. Bha gruaimean air do mhnaoi riut agus shir i ort do thriuir mhacan a thabhairt dachair do 'h-ionnsaidh. Rinn thu sin, ach cha bu lhuaithe thug thu dhachaidh iad, na bhual muim altrum do mhna leis an t-slachdan-druidheachd iad, agus leum iad nan tri choin bhana mach air an dorsus agus bithidh iad fo na geasan sin gu luain mar dean aon rud e." "O ciod an rud tha sin?" arsa mac na Bantraich?" "'S e an rud tha sin thu dh' fhaotain tri leinntean air an deanamh de chaineachan an t-shleibhe, agus am fàgail air enoc. An sin thig do mhic agus cuiridh iad umpa na leinntean geala caineachain. Tha 'n tur agus an toinisg aca mar bha aca roimhe, ach cha'n urrain dhoibh sgor dhe'n alaban, 's dheth annradh gus am faigh iad na leinntean caineachain. Tarruingidh gach te de na leinntean caineachain bliadhna gu deananh agus cha lhuaithe na ceann tri bliadhna blitheas na leinntean deas agad mar urrainn dhut bannal do mhnathan callanais flaignein gu'n deanamh. Ach faigh thusa, mhic na Bantraich mnathan callanais agus cuir banal dhinbh a thrusadh a' chaineachain, buidheann ga chireadh, banal ga chardadh, banal ga shniomh, banal ga fhidheadh agus banal a dh-fhuaigheal nan leinntean." "Ciamar a gheibh mise sin!" arsa Fionnladh, "is nach d'fhagadh blasad de 'n t-saoghal agam nach do chaill mi." "Tha fios agam air sin cuideachd ach cha'n urrainn mise an corr a dheanamh riut."

Dh'eirich mac na Bantraich moch 'sa mhaduinn, agus dh'fhalbh e. Bha duil aige gu'n faigheadh e fath no gu'm faiceadh e faireadh air a thriuir mhacan, ach cha'n fhaca. Bha e falbh mar sin fad an latha, ach am beul dorcha na h-oidhche chunnaic e solus agus ghabh e lom a's direach a dh-ionnsuidh an t-soluis. Ghabh e steach bog fluech mar bha e. Ch robb duine staigh roimhe. Bha teine math air agus bha e ga thiormachadh fein ris. Chual e sin fathrum agus staim chas, gliogairt lann agus monomhor dhaoine tighinn chum

an doruis. Leum e suas do'n chul-thaigh as fhuair e cuil anns an deach e 'm falach. Bu ghann a fhuair e suas do'n chulaiste 'nuair a thainig da-cheatharnach-dheung dhachaidh agus mart aca. Mharbh iad am mart agus rósd iad air an teine i, agus dh'ith iad an leor dhi. Bha Fionnladh a' sporail 's a' chuil, agus a' sineadh a lamhan uaith 'san dorcha feuchain an tuigeadh e ciod an seórsa aite anns an robh e agus chuir e a lamh air corp. 'Ghabh e oillt gu leór ach cha d'thubhairt e guth. 'Nuair a dhith a cheathairne 'n fheoil thubhairt fear dhiubh—" "S fearr dhuinn scalltain a sios agus falbh leis a' chorp sin fiach an cuir sinn á sealladh e." "S fhearr dhuinn sin gu dearbh" arsa na h-uile fear dhiubh. Thainig iad a steach do'n chulaiste agus fhuair iad Fionnladh na ghurranban an sin. Cha robh cothram teichidh aige. Bha cuid de'n chleith ag iarraidh a mharbhadh an larach nam bonn agus cuid eile 'sireadh a chumail beó agus toirt air coiseachd air a chasan fein thun an tuill anns an robh iad gus an corp a chuir, seach a bhi 'giulan da chorp, agus a bharrachd air sin gu'm bu choir a thoirt air an corp a ghiulan thun an tuill. B'e seo a rinneadh. Chuireadh an corp air muin Fhionnlaidh agus dh'fhalbhadh leis. Bha seisear roimhe agus seisear na dheidh na'm freiceadan air Fionnladh mu'n teicheadh e. Bha iad a' dol air adhart gus an robh iad fagus do amhainn mhor a bha 'n sin, agus bha cuid dhe 'n chleith a' sireadh an giubhlan agus an giubhlanaiche 'thilgeadh leis an drochaid. "Cha 'n eil math dhuinn sin" arsa cach; "snamhaidh an corp air uachdar an t-sruth, ach 's ann is fearr dhuinn dol gu Toll-dachliatain agus na dha thilgeadh a sios an sin." Chunnaic Fionnladh nach robh aige ach am bas co-dhiu agus bha e 'feathamh ; 'san uair a rainig e an drochaid tilgear e fein 's an corp sios leis an drochaid. Bha e fhein agus an corp a' siubhal leis an amhainn 'san amhainn na caorra bras. Uair bhidheadh e air muin a'chuirp 'san ath uair bhidheadh an corp air a mhuinsa ! Bha an oidhche cho dorcha 's a b'urrainn oidhche bhidh, 's bha Fionnladh a' smaointeachadh nach robh bhi bed aige co-dhiu. Bha an amhainn a' ruith 'na tuiltean caorrach, cairgheal 's bha e 'saoiltinn mar baithdht' e gu'n spadadht' e ri stail-bhinnean chreag no ri balabhagan chlach. Thilg an saobh-shruth a mach e agus air dha amhare os a chionn chunnaic e preas seilich no calltann. Rug e air a' phreas ; ghramaich e ris, agus rinn e greim bàis air. Co luath 'sa thilg Fionnladh e fein leis an drochaid, leum na robairean, ceathairn air gach taobh dhe'n amhainn diubh, as a dheigh. Bha iad a' bruachaireachd an sin agus Fionnladh g' an cluinntinn a bruthinn agus e fo'n phreas. Ghlaodh na robairean a sin ri cheile nach robh teagamh nach robh an corp agus a fear a bha ga ghiu-

lan a mach air an loch, 's nach robh feum dhaibh feitheamh na b'fhaide. Dh'fhalbh iad. Smogail Fionnladh mach as an amhainn cho math 's a b'urrain dha 's bu mhotha le 'mharbh no le bheò—le fuachd 's le fliuchadh, 's le acras. Bha e nis a' falbhan agus cha robh fios aige air thalamh an t-saoghail c' ait an robh e, no c'ait an rachadh e. Chunnaig e sin dearrsanaich sholuis agus rinn e air. Ghabh e staigh 's ciod an tigh bha seo ach an taigh 's an robh e roimhe! Cha robh a h-aon de na meirlich a stigh agus smaoinich Fionnladh o'n bu mhotha le 'mharbh na le 'bheo co dhiu gu'n deanadh se e fein a thiormachadh ris an teine. Ghair' a's thiormaich se e fein mar seo agus ghabh e 'leor de'n fleoil a dh'fhag na robairean. Bha e sin gu math dheth, agus thoisich e ri rùrach feadh an taighe dh'fhiach ciod a gheibheadh e. Chaidh e suas do 'n chulaiste far an robh e roimhe, agus fhuair e an sin cleòca 's claidheamh duin-uasail. Thainig an latha; dh'fhalbh e; agus thug e leis an cleoca 'san claidheamh. Bha e 'gabhair air aghart gus am fac e taigh briagha geal air tullaich bhoidheich uaine. Chaidh e gu ruig an taigh, agus a steach do 'n chitsin. Cha robh ri'm faicinn an sin ach dithis boireannach. Dhandeoin 'alabain agus 'annraidh bha Fionnladh na dhuine dreachmhor, 's ghabh na boireannaich suim dheth, 's dh' iarr iad air suidhe stigh chum an teine gu 'gharadh. Shuidh e, 's bha e ga gharadh fein, agus na boireannaich a beachdachadh air a cleòca gun smid ga radh. Thug Fionnladh trusadh agus sgioblachadh air a cleòca agus thuit an claidheamh air an lär f'a chomhair nam boireannach. Chuir iad suas glaodh goinnte, agus thog iad orra far an robh fear an taighe. Thuirt iad ris gu'n robh fear anns a' chitsin aig an robh coltas cleòca agus claidheamh a' mhaighisteir dig. Thainig an duine uasal a nuas agus dh' fheòraich e do Fionnladh, "Cia as a thug thu choiseachd." Fhreagair Fionnladh "Tha mi air allaban bho aite gu aite." "Se cleòca mo mhic, 'sa chlaidheamh cuideachd 'a tha agad an sin; c' ait an d' fhuair thu iad?" "Ma ta cha 'n ann a' toirt droch fhreagar duibh a tha mi, ge co e sam bith do 'm buin an cleoca 's an claidheamh 's daor a choisinn mis' orra." Dh'innis Fionnladh do 'n duin uasal cia mar fhuair e 'n cleòc agus an claidheamh agus mar a chuireadh a ghiulan a chuirp e. "O mo chreach 's mo dhiùbhail 's e mo mhac a bha sin. Dh'fhalbh e 'thogail a' mhàil bho cheann deich latha 's cha chualas guth uaith bho sin. Saoil thu fainicheadh thu aon de na meirlich na 'm faiceadh tu iad?" "Ma ta 's mòr m' aobhar air cuimhne chumail orra fhad agus is beo mi. Tha mi cinnteach gu'n fainichinn cuid diubh. Bha fear càm ruadh nam measg agus"—"O! sin fear de m' thuathanaich fein" arsa ad duin-uasal. "Cha robh agam do

mhic ach an aon fhear 's mo chreach gu'n d' thugadh uam e." Chuireadh fios air an fhear chàm ruadh agus dh'fhainich Fionnladh e. Dh'aidhich e 'chionnt a's dh' innis e air each am beachd e fein a shaoradh. Chuireadh fios air an aon fhear deug eile 's thainig iad. Chaidh mòd a shuidheachadh orra; thugadh binn an crochadh, agus chaidh 'chuir gu grad an gniomh, 's bu gheal a thoill iad sin.

Bha aon nighean aig an duin-uasal agus cha robh aige ach i fein do chlann bho na mharbhadh a mhac. Ghabh i speis mhor do Fhiounladh 's leig i laidhe bròin is bàis oirre fein agus thubhairt i ri 'h-athair nach robh bli beo air thalamh an t-saoghal aice mar posadh i Fionnladh. Bha h-athair na bhoil mu dheidhinn Fhionnladh airson a thapachd agus cha dealaicheadh e ris air chor air bith. Ciod tha air—phos nighean an duin-uasail agus Fionnladh!

Gach maiduinn 'n uair thigeadh an Ciobair dhachaidh theireadh e "S mi tha faicinn an ioghaidh air gach maiduinn 'nuair a theid mi mach—tri choin bhoidheach ghealla air a chnoc os cionn an taighe." Thainig sin gu cluasan an duin-uasail agus chuir e fios air a' chiobair. Dh'innis an ciobair an sealladh a bha e faicinn. Bha neul fol a falbh agus neul sneachda 'tighinn air Fionnladh. Chaidh nighean an duin-uasail a null 's rug i na glacaibh air, agus dh'fheoraich i ciod a bha cuir bruайдlein air. Cha robh Fionnladh idir deònach iunseadh ach mu dheireadh dh' innis e bho thoiseach gu deireadh mar dh' eirich dha riamh, 's nach robh sion a bheireadh na macain aige bho na geasan ach na leinntean canaichean. "Bòid a's briathran maighdinn ormsa," arsa nighean an duin-uasail, "ma 's suidhe no seasainh dhomhsa, no ma 's tamh latha no fois oidhche dhomh, gus an dean mi na leinntean canaichean, 's gus an toir mi do thriuir mhac bho an geasan, ged a chosadh e ar cuid an t-shaoghal dhuinn." Fhuair nighean an duin-uasail an sin mnathan callanais agus banal ghruagach gu àird a chuir air na leinntean. Chuir i banal a thrusadh a chainneicheadh, banal ga chireadh, agus banal ga chàrdadh, a's banal ga shniomh. Dheilbheadh an snath; chuireadh am beirt-fhidhidh e, agus dh' fhidheadh e. Fhuaradh ban-fluaighealaichean; dh'fhuairghealadh na leuntean; nigheadh iad; thoradh iad; a's bha iad cho geal 's cho min-bhog ri òg shneachd' an aonaich. Dh' fhàgadh air a chnoc os cionn an tighe iad. Air an ath mhaduinn chaidh Fionnladh mach dh-fheuch am faigheadh e sealladh air a mhic. Ma bha esan a mach tràth cha robh nighean an duin-uasail dad na bu mhoille. Bha na leinntean air an toirt air falbh ach cha robh

sgeul air na mic. Shireadh fad a's farsuinn ach cha d' fhuardh sgeul orra. Ma bha Fionnladh duilich, 's i' bha duilich nighean an duin-uasail, ach cha robh atharachadh air. Chaidh seachduinn thairis agus cha robh sgeul aig a' chiobair aon chuid air na coin no air na gillean. Ach air an t-seachdamh latha, thainig triuir ògannach gu dorus an tighe 's dh' fheòraich iad air son maighstir òg an tighe. Thainig Fionnladh mach far an robh iad agus e ro bhrònach. "Ciod a th' oirbh," arsa na h-òganaich. "Tha mi a' caoidh mo thriuir mhac gaolach a's nach fhaic mi gu dilinn tuilleadh iad." "'S sinne na mic," arsa na h-òganaich. "Cha sibh, cha sibh idir," ars' esan. "'S sinn gu dearbh," ars iadsan; "seall sibh, sin na leinn tean geala cainneachain a rinn ar muime ghaolach dhuinn" agus iad a fosgladh am braillchean 's a feuchainn nan leinntean cainneachain. Bha fadal air nighean an duin-uasail nach robh Fionnladh a tilleadh a stigh air ais agus thainig i mach dh-fheuch ciod a bha ga chumail.

Bha'n an triuir organach na'm fleasgaich cho briagha 's a b' urrainn duine 'fhaicinn an aite sam bith. Thog fear dhiubh air latha bha sin agus falbhar a shireadh 'fhortain. Rainig e rioghachd Righ Torra-fo-thuinn. Bha e latha an sin a sràidearachd air beul-thaobh luchairt an righ agus co thachair ris ach nighean an righ. Bheann-aich an t-òganach dha 'n oigh, agus bheannaich an oigh dha air ais. Chaidh nighean an righ dhachaидh 's leig i laidhe bròin a's bàis oirre fein. Chuir i fios air a h-athair agus thubhairt i ris gu'n robh a eridhe agus a gaol air òganach a choinnich i a' sràidearachd air beul-thaobh na luchairt agus gu'm bu bhean mharbh gun anam i mar faigheadh i ri phosadh e. Thubhairt i mar an ceudna ri 'h-athair gu'm bu mhac righ e thainig fad air astar, agus nach bith-eadh beo-shaoghal aice mar faigheadh i e! Thubhairt an t-òganach donn ri nighean an righ nach robh annsan ach gille bochd aig nach robh ni de'n t-saoghal 's nach robh e freagarach dha nighean righ a phosadh. "Coma leat sin," arsa ise, "tha do chraicionn cho gile 's cha mhiosa do shnuadh na snuagh mac righ no ridire." An sin phos nighean an Righ agus an t-òganach donn, Mac Fhionn laidh Choinneachain, mac na Bantraich. Bha dara leth na rioghachd aca fhad 's bu bheò an Righ agus an uair a bhasaich e bha 'n rioghachd uile aca dhaibh fein, agus bha 'n t-òganach donn 'na Righ. Goirid na dheidh sin chaochail Fionnladh agus a bhean, nighean an duin-uasail.

Thainig gort mhòr air an dùthaiich 'san robh teaghlaich Fionnlaidh a' tamh. Chualla dithis mhac Fhionnlaidh gun robh gràn gu leòr aig righ Torra-fo-thuinn, agus togar orra, 's falbhar a cheannach

grain uaithe. Rainig iad rioghachd Torra-fo-thuinn agus chaidh iad gu treanmor an Righ. Leig an sgallag fhaicin dhoibh an *granary* 'san robh an Righ a' rèic a' ghrain. Dh'fhainich an Righ a dhithis bhraithrean, agus thoisich e air an ceasnachadh. Bha e 'feòraich dhiubh co as a thainig iad, 's ciamar a bha daoine 'san ait as an d'fhalbh iad. An sin dh'innis e gu'm b' esan am brathair. "Cha sibh" ars' iadsan agus cha chreideadh iad guth de 'n thubhairt e. Arsa 'n Righ, "'S mi gu dearbh agus gun teagamh, agus is fearr dhuibh tighinn agus fuireach maille riùm fein 'nam rioghachd." Fhreagair na braithrean "Cha 'n fhuirich, cha 'n fhuirich; tha teaghlaichean againn aig a' bhaile, agus cha 'n urrainn duinn fuireach an seo." "Thugaibh 'ur teaghlaichean leibh an seo, agus ni mise gniomh caraid agus dleasnas brathar ribh." Chuir an Righ a bhrathairean air falbh airson an teaghlaichean, agus comhlan dhaoine chum an cuideachaид. Thainig bràthairean an Righ agus an teaghlaichean agus thuinich iad an rioghachd Righ Torra-fo-thuinn. Thog an Righ taighean briagh aир an son, agus rinn e gniomh caraid agus dleasnas brathar riutha mar a gheall e, agus mar d' rinn e na b' fhearr cha d' rinn e idir ni bu mhiosa. Bha teaghlaich mhòr nighean a's ghillean aig nighean Righ Torra-fo-thuinn, agus aig an Oganach Dhonn, Mac Fhionnlaidh Choinneachain, mac na Bantraich. Bha iad uile gu leir gu math agus gu ro-mhath, a' caitheamh cuirm agus cuideachd le solas a's le toileachas inntinn, le caithreamh bhàrd 's le fuaim dhàn.

Dh'fhas mis' an sin iad agus cha chuala mi riabh tuille, guth air Fionnladh Choinneachain, mac na Bantraich.

16th DECEMBER 1875.

At the meeting on this date, after transacting some routine business, an interesting biography of the late Dr Duncan Forbes, Professor of Oriental Languages in King's College, London, was read.

6th JANUARY 1876.

At the meeting on this date, the following gentlemen were elected ordinary members of the Society, viz.:—Mr A. R. Munro, Birmingham; Councillor Macpherson, Inverness; and Mr W. A. Macleay, birdstuffer, do. Thereafter, the meeting set to complete, so far as possible, the arrangements for the annual supper.

13th JANUARY 1876.

On this date,

**THE FOURTH ANNUAL SUPPER OF THE SOCIETY**  
was held in the Caledonian Hotel. In the absence of Mr Stewart of Brin, who was indisposed, Provost Simpson occupied the chair, and was supported by Mr Jolly, H.M. Inspector of Schools; Rev. Mr Maclauchlan, Gaelic Church; Bailie Davidson; Rev. Mr Macleod, Kincardine, Ardgay; Rev. Mr Macdonald, Queen Street Church; Mr Dallas, Town-Clerk; Bailie Macdonald; Mr W. Mackay, solicitor; and Dr F. M. Mackenzie. The croupiers were Bailie Noble and Mr Charles Mackay, contractor. Among those present were—Councillor Peter Falconer; Dr Macnee; Mr Duncan Sutherland, Lochgorm; Mr Hood, commercial traveller; Mr James H. Mackenzie, bookseller; Mr Maclean, coal-merchant; Mr Macdonald, contractor; Mr A. Mackenzie, "Celtic Magazine"; Mr Ross, teacher, Alness; Mr Clark, assistant procurator-fiscal; Mr A. Fraser, accountant; Mr Cameron, of Gordon & Smith; Mr F. Maciver, Church Street; Mr Maciver, cabinetmaker; Mr Robertson, Bank of Scotland; Mr A. R. Macrauld, Dornie; Mr F. Macgillivray, solicitor; Mr Middleton, coal-merchant; Mr W. G. Stuart; Mr D. R. Ross, Gas Office; Mr W. A. Deas, writer; Mr Barclay; Mr Hugh Mackenzie, Bank Lane; Mr Macdonald, flesher, Castle Street; Mr Hugh Fraser; Mr Macleod, of Fraser and Macleod; Mr Shaw, tinsmith; Mr Barron, "Courier" Office, Mr Bain, do.; Mr Mackenzie, "Free Press" Office; Mr Murdoch, editor, "Highlander"; Mr E. Forsyth, "Inverness Advertiser"; and Mr J. M. Duncan, "Highlander." The Chairman intimated that apologies had been received from Mr Fraser-Mackintosh, M.P.; Professor Blackie; Mr Mackintosh of Raigmore; Captain Chisholm of Glassburn; Mr Mackintosh of Holme; Mr Sime, H.M. Inspector of Schools; Mr Macleod, do.; Mr J. Macfarquhar, Edinburgh; Sheriff Macdonald, Inverness; Mr A. C. Mackenzie, Maryburgh; Dr Mackenzie, Eileanach; Dr Mackenzie, Silverwells; Rev. Mr Macgregor, West Church; Mr Hugh Rose, solicitor; Mr W. B. Forsyth; Mr Thomas Mackenzie, Broadstone Park; and Mr Alexander Mackenzie, Church Street. The Rev. Mr Maclauchlan having said grace, an excellent supper was served by Mr Menzies. The Rev. Mr Macleod returned thanks.

The Chairman said he had been very unexpectedly called upon to preside, and he trusted to the kind indulgence of the meeting in carrying through the programme. Mr Stewart had been very

unwell for two or three days, and at the last moment had sent the following letter to the Secretary :—

“ Dear Sir,—I have to express my extreme regret that in consequence of indisposition, which has for some days confined me to bed, which the doctor prohibits me from leaving, it is entirely out of my power to do myself the honour and pleasure of presiding at the festive gathering of the Gaelic Society this evening. Will you convey my regret to the meeting? I have prepared a very rough sketch of what I intended to say, and I place it at your disposal, either to be, or not to be, used. I trust you have obtained a far more competent person for the chair, and I hope you will all pass a very agreeable evening.”

The Chairman then opened the toast-list with the health of the Queen, followed by the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the other members of the Royal Family, and the Army, Navy, and Reserve Forces. To the latter, Mr Robertson, Bank of Scotland, replied. The health of the Lord Lieutenant, proposed by the Chairman, was cordially responded to. Mr Hugh Fraser then sang in a spirited manner “Oran Mhic-’ic-Alastair,” for which he was encored.

The Secretary, Mr Mackenzie of the “Free Press,” then read the annual report as follows :—

“ The Gaelic Society of Inverness continues to enjoy that success the objects for which it exists merit. It grows in popularity, influence, and numerical strength. The last year was in every respect a successful one; and an outline of what was done may not be out of place :—

“ The third annual supper (last year’s) was held in the Station Hotel. Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie of Gairloch, Bart., occupied the chair, and round the table there was a large gathering of Highland gentlemen. On that occasion, the chairman opened a discussion on Highland education, in which Mr Murdoch, Mr Jolly, and Cluny Macpherson took part. The subject was subsequently taken up at the ordinary weekly meetings of the Society and discussed; and a petition thereanent to the House of Commons will be found on page 188 of our last volume of Transactions. A sum of money was afterwards voted out of the funds of the Society as prizes to Gaelic scholars in one of the Highland parishes; and Gairloch was selected for the first competition, in consideration of the active and generous part taken by Sir Kenneth

Mackenzie in furthering Highland education. A large number of children competed, and the examiners considered the different efforts highly meritorious.

"Early in the year, the Society sent circulars to all the School Boards in the Highlands anent teaching Gaelic in Highland schools. These circulars in some cases had the desired effect.

"The Society warmly supported the movement to found a Celtic Chair in one of our Universities, and Professor Blackie began the Celtic Chair campaign with a lecture delivered in Inverness, under the auspices of this Society. The success which subsequently attended his labours is well known, and towards it this Society has contributed the sum of £20.

"At our ordinary weekly meetings several papers of interest have been read. Mr Alex. Fraser furnished what may be considered an early ecclesiastical history of Inverness, which will be found in our Transactions. In the way of tradition Mr Alex. Mackenzie contributed a paper on *Coinneach Odhar*, the Brahan Seer; and Mr Carmichael, C.M.S.A.S., an interesting *Sgeulachd*, entitled *Fionnladh Choinneachain, mac na Bantraich*.

"The annual assembly of the Society, held in the month of July, was highly successful. Mr Fraser-Mackintosh, M.P., presided, and spoke on the subject of teaching Gaelic in Highland schools; Professor Blackie, Edinburgh, and Professor Black, Aberdeen, spoke on Celtic Literature, and Gaelic in schools; and Mr Macandrew, Inverness, addressed the meeting on the chivalry of the Highlanders.

"The Society at the outset resolved to publish their Transactions annually. The first volume was published in 1872, and the volume for 1872-73 was published in 1874. A year having thus been lost, the publishing committee of 1874-75 resolved to publish in one volume the Transactions of 1873-74 and 1874-75, which they did; and to a copy of this volume each member is entitled. The volume for 1875-76 is in preparation for the press, and will be published in the course of the year.

"The membership of the Society continues to increase. The Society began with 24 members, and at the end of its first year the number had increased to 182. At the end of 1873, there was an increase of 70, the total number on the roll being 252. At the end of 1874 there were 270 on the roll, the increase during the year being 18. At the end of the present year the number on the roll is about 320, the increase during the last year being thus about 50. Nearly one-half of the members of the Society live outside of Inverness, and are spread over Ireland, Wales, the

principal English towns, America, and most of the British Colonies, as well as over all Scotland. These members have it in their power to benefit the Society more than those who live in Inverness ; for those of them who are of a literary turn of mind can furnish papers for our Transactions, and all of them can induce other Celtic friends to join the ranks of the Society, and thus increase its strength numerically and financially. If each member of the Society would secure one new member during the ensuing year, the membership would be thus doubled. This plan has been found to work admirably in other societies, and it is hoped our Celtic friends will give it a trial. Our Society is open to ladies as well as gentlemen. Of the former there is a considerable number on the roll; and at a recent meeting of the Society a resolution was passed declaring the desirableness of having ladies present in future at the annual supper.

"The Society regret the loss they have sustained during the last year through the death of Dr Halley, London, one of our earliest life members, and a gentleman who had always taken great interest in everything connected with the Highlands and Highland people.

"One of the objects of the Society is to collect books (in whatever language) bearing on Celtic subjects. A number of donations of this kind have already been made, and the Society trusts that its claims will be recognised by gentlemen in possession of such books, and who wish to popularise Celtic literature.

"The present Council now retire, and the Society, in the course of the present month, will have to elect new office-bearers."

The Chairman said he had received a telegram from the Chairman of the Glasgow *Comunn Gaidhealach*, who evidently wanted to test the power of the Chairman of the Gaelic Society in reading Gaelic. He begged to say, that though he was a very poor hand at the Gaelic, he was not beaten this time. The message was as follows :—" *Bliadhna mhath ùr dhuibh, agus moran diubh!*"—("A good New-Year to you, and many of them.") That was a pleasant salutation, and he would ask the Secretary to send a suitable reply. The next toast was the toast of the evening—" Success to the Gaelic Society"—and they would pardon him if he only said a few words on the subject, and left it to be dealt with by Mr Stewart's speech. He had much pleasure in hearing from the report that the Society had increased from 24 members to 320—fourteen times as many as they had to begin with. The object of the Society was to draw together men of common feelings, and

Highland subjects, and though he was not a Gaelic speaker—("Yes, you are")—well, he was but a poor hand at it—he had as strong Highland feelings as any one present. Highlanders ought to remember the old motto, "Shoulder to shoulder"; and by sticking to that motto, the Society would continue to prosper. If the Society had done nothing more than collect the papers which they had published in their Transactions, they would have done a good work. To young men he recommended the study of Gaelic, for it was not a dead but a living language; and if they went in for learning French and German and other tongues, he did not see what was to deter them from acquiring Gaelic. Certainly no other language had stronger claims upon them. He would now ask Mr Mackenzie, the secretary, to read Mr Stewart's speech.

Mr Stewart's speech was as follows:—Gentlemen,—I do not use mere words of form in assuring you how conscious I am that you have made a very bad selection in doing me the honour of asking me to take the chair on this occasion. I feel that it is almost scandalous that one who by descent is about the most Highland of Highlanders—being about equally connected with Lochaber, Badenoch, and Strathspey—who has not in his veins a drop of blood that is not purely Celtic, and who owes so much to Highlanders, should not be able to speak fluently and perfectly the language of the Gael. But I am not singular in my shame, and the number of persons in the same unhappy state of ignorance requiring correction, is some argument in support of the movement made by this Society to vivify and restore the Gaelic language. In addressing a few words to you on the subject of the Society, permit me to say that it appears to me to be of great importance that its objects should be clearly understood, and that there should be no exaggeration or misunderstanding on the subject. Exaggeration on your part would be to place a formidable weapon in the hands of those would-be wise men, whose arguments, in the absence of tinsel or over-covering, would be shattered to pieces by the sound of your voices or the ink of your pens. Then, gentlemen, without exaggeration, I say that your objects are simply defensive and restorative, and in no way aggressive. Just as the serjeant with his military band, acting in the true policy of his country, goes about seeking recruits, not for the invasion of France or Germany, but for the protection and defence of his native shores—so you do not wish to supersede the English, French, or German tongue, in the business of life, or even in social intercourse; nor is it yet your desire to take one iota from any other literature. Your simple desire is to rescue from

neglect the language of the Celt, to unearth its rich literary treasures, and to hand its gems to future generations; and as your aims are peaceful, so are the means you employ for their attainment. Those means are also rational, and well calculated to attain your ends. You stir the hearts and sympathies of your Highland fellow-countrymen, and sound on your mountain tops, and in your glens and valleys, and in your towns, and villages, and hamlets, and in the household of men of every degree the trumpet of danger to the language of their fathers, and you endeavour to obtain the union of them all in its defence—that union which is strength. You seek to invigorate that union by inviting the co-operation of your countrymen who have found their residence in other lands, many of them far away. You seek the union of the learned of other lands, and invite philologists to pluck part of the golden apples which you present for their acceptance. Your objects you seek also to promote by your annual gatherings—by various meetings of members held throughout the year; by the publication of your proceedings; by the co-operation of kindred societies; by the aid of the press—particularly the entire local press, every member of which has entered with more or less zeal into the cause; and by means of the *Celtic Magazine* published in Inverness—a magazine, I understand, of considerable ability, and intended for the diffusion of the Gaelic language and literature; last, and certainly not least, our friend, Professor Blackie—a man whose genius is as great as his energy is indomitable—has taken up the cudgels in our cause, and with a declaration as undoubted as if it had been an oath, determined that within a very short time there shall be established a Celtic Chair in the University of Edinburgh. These means are bearing good fruit, as is abundantly demonstrated by the report which has just been read by your indefatigable secretary. And is there any good reason why the Society, with its objects soberly understood, should not prosper? Is there any good reason why Gaelic, with its vast stores of unwritten literature, should be handed over to the public executioner, or left to die of starvation? We maintain, on the contrary, that there are the best reasons why it should live and flourish. Scottish Highlanders, although they have good heads, have still better hearts, and there is no channel by which those hearts can be so effectually reached and won as by the use of their mother tongue. It has a power and copiousness, and harmony and tenderness, not exceeded by any language on the face of the earth. It is the language of our forefathers, of our homes, our Highland homes, of the days of our childhood, in which was first conveyed

to us a father's and mother's love; which was spoken when Highlanders played with their little brothers and sisters, and kinsfolk and school-fellows. We all feel how tender are the associations of our earliest days, and how we would not barter them for the brighter prizes of after life. Then Gaelic is the language of the Highlander's traditions, and poetry, and music, and songs, in which he was first told of the valour and endurance, and chivalry and fidelity of those who went before him, and in which he was told of the grandeur of his mountains and the beauty of his glens, and in which, in a word, he learned to be a true patriot. It is, above all, the language of his devotions, in which he first heard a father of perhaps a severe aspect, but of a true and loving heart, open that holy book which carried a message from heaven to earth—the language in which his mother spoke to him when leading him by the hand from his humble dwelling, and to the old church where the good old minister from the old pulpit addressed him again in kind and holy words, and led him to ask in prayer that he might be a good boy, and eventually a good and God-fearing man, and a loyal subject. I need not speak of the valour of those men whose language in former times was the Gaelic. The world knows it; but I cannot let slip the opportunity for expressing my deep conviction that the way to induce Highlanders in the present day to become soldiers is not by sending among them recruiting English-speaking serjeants from Liverpool or Manchester for English or Lowland regiments. Send to them the Gaelic and the tartan, with an offer to enlist them in the regiments in which their forefathers fought, and you will still get abundance of men as distinguished as their famed ancestors. I am detaining you too long, but I must say a word about teaching in our Highland schools, and I heartily join those who think it not the best thing to exclude Gaelic from the teaching of children whose only language is Gaelic, and I venture to hope that the firm stand made by the Society on this subject is already bearing fruit. In a Highland parish, of which I am a member of the School Board, the question of teaching Gaelic was discussed only the other day, and we came to a unanimous decision that Gaelic should be taught. Gentlemen, I have condemned exaggeration in the statement of our objects and our means. I have not condemned enthusiasm, which many people set down as akin to exaggeration. There are, indeed, hot fits of enthusiasm, as there are cold fits of indifference. One cannot help loving the former with all its faults, while one hates the other. But there is also a warm, steady enthusiasm, springing from deep conviction, and deep-rooted in the ardent natures of the Celt, which gives

courage to the heart and strength to the arm, and inspires indomitable perseverance and earnestness in a good cause. You have already evinced that spirit of steady enthusiasm. Do not let it go, and it will lead you on to victory. (The speech was attentively listened to and frequently applauded.)

The Chairman said, after hearing such a stirring speech, they could not but all the more regret Mr Stewart's absence. He hoped, and he was sure they all cordially joined with him in the hope, that Mr Stewart would be able to be present at next meeting, and they would have great pleasure in listening to him. The Chairman then proposed "The Gaelic Society of Inverness," which was received with loud and continued cheering.

Mr Fraser then sung another Gaelic song, which was highly appreciated.

Mr Dallas, Town-Clerk, in a few jocular remarks, proposed the health of Lochiel and Mr Fraser-Mackintosh—the county and burgh members—which was heartily responded to. Thereafter,

Mr William Mackay, solicitor, proposed the toast of "Highland Education." After a few preliminary remarks, he said—In connection with this toast it may be interesting to inquire very shortly into the state of Education in the Highlands in days gone by. Before the Reformation, the little learning in the land was chiefly shut up in the monasteries, and although schools are known to have been in various Scottish burghs, including perhaps our own, as early as the thirteenth century, Highland children, we may safely assume, were, until a much later period, innocent of education as we understand the word. They were not, however, without their literature. Around their winter fires our forefathers were wont to recite beautiful tales, stirring ballads, and wise sayings, the expressive language and high moral tone of which such of us as can understand them are forced to admire even to this day. Judging from those of them which have come down to us, the great virtues which they inculcated were to reverence the memory of the departed, to respect the aged who had not yet gone, to emulate the valour of the brave, and to love freedom and manly truthfulness. It must be confessed that excellent as the teaching was, the old Highlander was not slow to "lift" the best cow of the Lowlander or of his neighbouring clan; but we must not judge him according to our standard of right and wrong. The Highlander looked upon a successful raid as noble and legitimate warfare, and gloried as much in it as the Prussians do in having defeated the French. And let it not be supposed, as is often erroneously done, that—

“The good old rule, the simple plan,  
 That they should take who have the power,  
 And they should keep who can.”

was confined to the Highlands. Old Cleland, who, in the 17th century, sang thus of the Highlander—

“If any ask *her* of her thrift,  
 Forsooth, her nainsell lives by thrift.”

was only imitating Sir Richard Maitland, who, at an earlier period, complained of the men of Liddesdale in the following strain :—

“Thay spuilze puir men of their pakis,  
 They leif them nocht on bed nor bakis;  
 Baith hen and cok  
 With reil and rok  
 The Lairdis Jok  
 All with him takis.”

Indeed, matters were in a worse plight in the Lowlands than in the Highlands; for while the great object of the cateran’s love was a good cow—and he scorned to take less—the moss-trooper of the South did not look askance even at a hen. After the Reformation several Acts of Parliament were passed, with the object of establishing schools in Scotland; but their provisions were not universally carried out in the Highlands. To illustrate the unsatisfactory state of education, even so late as 1682, I shall read to you the reports made to the Bishop of Moray, who personally visited the parishes of Croy, Daviot, Kirkhill, and Petty, in May of that year, Episcopalianism being then for a short time the creed recognised by the Government. Upon his inquiring at Croy “if they had a schoolmaster in the parish for educating children and reading the Holy Scriptures,” the minister replied, “that they had no fixt salary for one.” It was therefore strongly recommended to “take speedy commencing for settling one, and providing maintinance, conform to ye Act of Parliament.” To the Bishop’s inquiry at Daviot the minister answered, “That they could not, nor had any schoolmaster, because there was no encouragement for one, nor no mediate centraull place qr they could fix a schoole to the satisfaction of all concerned.” This attempt to please everybody must commend itself to such of our School Boards as have not yet agreed upon sites for their schools;

and it was enough to take the breath out of the worthy Bishop, for he left without making any recommendation. Things were better at Kirkhill, where there was “a schoole, and a fixt sallary for a schoolmaster” (Thomas Fraser), who was also precentor and clerk, and read the Scriptures publicly every Lord’s day betwixt the second and third bell. The salary was a chalder of victual, £20 Scots (or £1. 13s. 4d. sterling), out of the “box,” and the “baptisme and mariage mony.” At Petty, there was not only a “fixt schoolmaster,” but also what would make glad the heart of a modern Inspector, “a flourisheing schoole,” the master of which “carried diligently in his charge; Christianly in his life; and was a great help to the minister.” It will thus be seen, that while in 1682 education was attended to in some parishes, it was neglected in others; but in 1696 an Act was passed, the result of which was soon to establish a school in every parish. Highland parishes are, however, as large as German kingdoms, and, in many cases, children were not within twenty miles of a school. To remedy this state of matters, the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, about the middle of last century, established schools in remote districts, and appointed earnest and God-fearing men as teachers, preachers, and catechists. The influence of these men was marvellous. Before their time, Sunday was the great day for Highland sports, but under their teaching matters changed, and before the end of last century the other extreme was reached, and the Sabbath was so strictly observed that the food used that day was cooked on Saturday, or not at all. In more recent times, teachers were supported by the Gaelic School Society, and many excellent schools were established by the Free Church; so that the Education Act of 1872 found the educational wants of the Highlands pretty well attended to. Under that Act, it is supposed the proper education of the children will be further insured; but although it may work well in towns and in populous districts, its machinery is not suited to the large and sparsely-peopled parishes of the Highlands; and, notwithstanding the special grants allowed by Government, it is, and will, unless amended, I fear, continue to be an enormous drain on the slender resources of the Highland people. Under the good old parochial system, and the valuable schools of the Societies and the Free Church, the Highlands sent out men into the world who have been an honour not only to their native glens, but also to broad Scotland. What the new order of things will bring forth remains to be seen; let us hope it may be even as anticipated by its most sanguine supporters. The question of Gaelic in Highland schools has of late received

much attention, and is still being keenly discusssd. Time will not permit me to enter into it, and it is not necessary that I should. There is one striking feature in the controversy. On the side of the Gaelic are educated Highlanders, whose personal experience has taught them how absurd it is to endeavour to educate a child, and ignore the only language which he understands ; on the opposite side are able and well meaning gentlemen, but knowing not Gaelic, they are as qualified to discuss its merits as the Laplander is to appreciate the merits of the language of the Hottentot. Another matter, and I am done. It is one in which Highland young men, like myself, take a deep, though perhaps shy, interest. Our young ladies are now diligent students of music, I have no sympathy with those utilitarians who think that the time thus spent is lost. Where there is music there is peace; and I think it was old Luther who said that, with music, he could drive away the devil himself. Our fair musicians are, therefore, so far, doing well; but, nevertheless, I have somewhat against many of them. It is not, perhaps, necessary that every accomplished Highland lady should be able to strut along the mountain side discoursing music on the bagpipe, but if she can so well render German and Italian airs on the piano, she ought surely to play the melodies, and sing the songs, of her native land. Far birds have fair feathers ; but, to the ear of the Scotsman, there is no far bird that pipes so sweetly as our own lark or mountain thrush, plainly clad though they be. Mr Mackay concluded by asking the company to drink heartily to the toast of "Highland Education," which he coupled with the name of Mr Jolly, H.M. Inspector of Schools.

The toast having been heartily responded to,

Mr Jolly replied. He was proud that the toast had been so well received—it augured well for the cause of Highland education and the people, and the excellent remarks of Mr Mackay were a good prelude to the subject. He thought they had to congratulate themselves on the progress which had taken place in the cause of education in the Highlands since that time last year. There were several points as proving that increasing interest and progress to which he wished to direct their attention. At the last annual assembly of the Society, a very distinguished Highlander, Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, occupied the chair, and spoke well on the teaching of Gaelic in schools. Shortly afterwards, the same gentleman presided at a very interesting meeting of Highland School Boards. He (Mr Jolly) was present at that meeting, and felt the greatest pleasure in being so. It was the first meeting of representatives of the School Boards of the Highlands and the Outer

Hebrides, and the interest shown and the moderate concessions demanded by that meeting were excellent, which was proved by the many concessions that meeting had been able to obtain from Government. It was a meeting of honourable gentlemen connected with the Highlands met for an admirable purpose. He had spoken of concessions, and some of these connected with the Highlands merited their attention. There were many points in the present Act which required to be improved, so that the carrying on of school work could be made much less expensive than it was. One concession was of great value. They were aware that the Highlands were peculiarly unfortunate in having the parishes so extensive, and that each district, though thinly populated, had to provide its own school. The Government had formerly required Boards to expend at least double the sum given by them; but now Government was prepared to grant £400 for every Highland school, irrespective of what was expended by the Boards, and if they spent more than the amount of that grant, Government was prepared to pay one-half of the additional outlay. Thus, if a School Board were to expend £600, Government would be prepared to give £500, and the School Board would only pay £100! Then the education of outlying and sparsely populated districts required to be considered. To put schools in all these places was an impossibility, and Government had made another concession. To small schools, with an attendance of at least fifteen pupils, they were prepared to give an additional grant of £10 or £15. Further, where the population was very scattered they allowed itinerating teachers; and if, after being taught for sixty days in the year, the children were presented at the nearest school, and they passed, they got double the grant given in other schools! These concessions were of great value. One pleasing feature arising out of the Education Act was the number of very fine school buildings which were being erected all over the country. Of course, the pockets of the ratepayers were affected, and a good deal of grumbling went on, but as a whole the Highlands had shown a very admirable spirit in bearing the expense entailed on them by the carrying out of the Act; and although one was sorry to see in some parts of the Highlands detractors trying their best to work against the School Boards, still their number was gradually growing less, and instead of speaking much about such people, it was, perhaps, better to leave them to the obscurity they deserved. Another point was the teaching of Gaelic in schools. He had the honour of making some remarks on this subject last year, on which occasion a very excellent dis-

cussion took place. He regretted that his position with regard to Gaelic had been very largely misunderstood by the Society, by his very good friend the "Highlander," and by others. He was supposed to wish the extinction of the Gaelic language, while the very reverse was true; and the fact of his being put among the ranks of the enemy showed that good Highlanders did not know who were their friends. Although a Lowlander, he had every sympathy with those who desired to foster the Gaelic; and he held exactly the same views on the subject of Gaelic teaching as were held by such good friends of the language as Professor Blackie, the Rev. Mr Macgregor of Inverness, Dr Clerk of Kilmallie, and many others. In this dispute there were two camps—those who wished Gaelic to be taught, and those who wished it to be stamped out. Among the friends of Gaelic, however, there were two divisions, differing in tactics, or in the methods they proposed. Certain ultra-enthusiasts, as he might characterise them, wished Gaelic to be the first language taught to Gaelic children. But the larger number of the friends of Gaelic desired English to be first taught, and the Gaelic used for getting at the intelligence of the children when reading English; and afterwards they wished the Gaelic language and literature to be introduced to the children when they had mastered the mechanical difficulties of reading, and were able to enter into the meaning and spirit of what they read. He belonged to this class, and begged of his good friend the "Highlander," to put him in his proper place with regard to that question. He could not, like that journal, wield a claymore, but he still hoped to be able to use his dirk in the good cause. Then the position of the Government had been misunderstood. The Government was said to be an enemy to Gaelic, whereas the Code tended to foster the Gaelic language. In the second and third standards, intelligence could be tested in Gaelic and grants secured by this means; so that even the Scotch Code was a friend to the cause. The meeting of School Boards he had referred to did not succeed in making it a "specific subject" by which grants might be obtained for Gaelic as a special study. It was for them to continue the work commenced by that meeting, by deputation and otherwise, if they wished their very just and reasonable demands to be granted. If the teaching of Gaelic was to be fostered, he recommended its friends to adopt the suggestion of Professor Blackie, and to compile a book of Gaelic extracts, gathering into it choice selections of their literature, their poetry, their proverbial philosophy, folk lore, &c., for the purposes of education in schools. This would do more than anything else to foster Gaelic teaching, and it would be a

good work for the Society to take in hand. Another thing they could do was to offer prizes for the study of Gaelic, in conjunction with all the other Highland societies they knew, and with the assistance also of another Society whose business it was to foster Gaelic studies, namely, the Northern Meeting of Inverness, from all of whom they might get donations, which would enable them to offer prizes, not merely in one, but in almost every school in the Highlands. They might also conduct examinations in Gaelic all over the Highlands, similar to those held in ordinary subjects by the Inverness, Ross, and Nairn Club; let these examinations be general, and they would have taken a good step in the direction they wished to go. These hints he begged to throw out for their consideration, and he hoped the Society would continue to prosper and succeed in its various objects and efforts.

Mr Murdoch, of the "Highlander," in giving "The Immortal Memory of Ossian," remarked that, after all that had been written lately on the subject, he would steer clear of criticism; and, believing that the name of Ossian was engraven on the many hearts of the Gaelic Society of Inverness, he would merely refer to a few historical facts, which should stand clear above all the mists which have been raised about Macpherson. He would go back beyond the era of mere criticism and cavil. He had elsewhere endeavoured to draw "The Heroes of Ossian" out of that mist, and present them as distinctly before the mind's eye as Wallace or Bruce; and Signor Priolo, an Italian artist in London, had given to a large number of those heroes an imperishable place on canvas and on steel. He referred to Priolo's beautiful work, "Illustrations from Ossian." After so much criticism, Ossian himself would almost require to be drawn out afresh, and made to stand before us without Macpherson as his stepfather. It is true that that Goth, the English Edward, carried away the most of our early records, and we have little but tradition remaining to shed light on Highland themes. But what else were the oldest histories till they were written? We have our traditions; but an English education is busy finishing the Vandal work begun by Edward. Tradition tells us that Ossian was a great warrior bard; the son and father of warriors and bards; that he lived in the end of the third and beginning of the fourth century; that he was the son of Fionn and grandson of Cumhal; that he was the father of Oscar the brave, and of Fergus the sweet-toned; and cousin of Caoilte, famous for his fleetness, and known also as a bard. And although, as he said, we have no records of these facts, there are records in Ireland which bear out our traditions.

“The Annals of the Four Masters,” the greatest chronological work at this day in Europe, confirms our traditions. So do several of the ancient MSS. now publishing by the Government—*Leabhar-na-h-uidhre*, the Book of Leinster; the Book of *Lecain*; the *Dinnsenchas*, to which you will find many references in the “Ancient Institutes of Ireland,” also now being published by the Government. Then the events and the characters which figure in the poems of Ossian, are positively historical; and now, we have in Dr Waddell’s “Ossian and the Clyde,” and in his letters since published, the most remarkable proofs of the topographical, and I hold of the historical accuracy, even of those poems which were given to the world by Macpherson. Dr Waddell has identified numbers of the places mentioned in the great epics, as clearly as Dr Porter has the topography of Joshua and Jeremiah amid the giant ruins of Bashan. The full value of this proof is not realised till we note that it comes out in some places contrary to what it is evident Macpherson himself intended! When speaking of the poems of Ossian, we must not forget that there are so-called “Ossianic poems” which bear the legendary stamp on the face of them. Among the most venerable of these are the dialogues between Ossian and St Patrick—persons who lived two hundred years apart. But these ballads are valuable; for in them are woven up the names, the events, and the scenes in the veritable Ossianic poems. As the people of Ireland would not relinquish their faith in Ossian, the clerics made use of him to convey useful information regarding their country. These instructors were wiser than those in this country, who tried to stamp out the poetry and the very language in which Ossian sang; and our youth will not have fair play, our literature will not have its proper place in our own land, and education in the Highlands will not be free from a large amount of sham, until Ossian, and *Donnacha Ban*, and *Mac Mhaighsteir Alastair*, shall have been assigned a place in our schools above that occupied by Scott, or Macaulay, or even Tennyson. But there is another value in the ballads; they show that there was an antecedent substance, of which they are the shadow, a genuine coinage, of which they are the counterfeits. I shall not wait to dwell on the other spurious compositions which were intended, after the bards had fallen into disrepute, to cast ridicule even on Ossian; but pass on to say, that setting these to the right and to the left of us, we see between the two that beautiful ray of poetic light which has come down through these 1500 years to us, and which, notwithstanding an objection here and a cavil there, is actually now assigned a place

in the great hall of English Literature! Yes; in the "Library of English Literature" now issuing from Cassell's establishment, in London, the first specimens of English literature are taken from the poems of Ossian; and thus that lamp which Dr Johnson was to have extinguished is now burning as a sort of sacred light on the altar of English literature itself! All honour to Professor Morley, who has had the candour to place the Celtic bard at the head of British literature! English, Irish, Scotch, and Italian, then, will join us Highlanders, in celebrating the "Immortal Memory of Ossian."

Mr W. G. Stuart recited Professor Blackie's spirited verses, "A Vision of Ossian and the Celtic Chair." Thereafter,

Dr F. M. Mackenzie proposed "The Ladies," and in the course of his remarks expressed a hope that at next supper they would have the happiness of having ladies among the company. He coupled the toast with the name of Dr Manee, who replied.

Mr A. Mackenzie, of the "Celtic Magazine," said—Mr Chairman, croupiers, and gentlemen, the toast which has been entrusted to me is one which I am delighted to propose; but no one feels more than myself how utterly incapable I am to do it justice. "Professor Blackie and the Celtic Chair" is a most appropriate toast at a meeting like this, and I am much mistaken if it does not become one which will be as regularly proposed at all future meetings of Celtic Societies as the "Immortal Memory of Burns" is now at all Saint Andrew's and other Scottish meetings throughout the world. "Professor Blackie" and the "Celtic Chair" have now become synonymous and inseparable terms. Great as the Professor is as a distinguished scholar, great as he is likely to become as a "Reformer of the Pulpit," admired as he is as a linguist and as a poet, he will be greater still, and more universally famous as a noble patriot. It is as the founder and able advocate of a chair of the Celtic languages in one of the Universities of Scotland that his name will go down to posterity. He, by his laudable and patriotic efforts, will wipe out for ever the disgrace so long endured by the Celt at the hands of his Anglo-Saxon rulers. As certain, however, as they on all occasions failed to conquer us with the sword, they will, now that we have the aid of Professor Blackie and such men, fail to crush us out of existence as a people, fail to obliterate our language, and fail to rob future generations of the chivalry, heroism, and ennobling sentiments preserved in our Celtic literature. Our soldiers and sailors have been imbued by these virtues, and, in consequence, their deeds have added lustre not only to the Highland character, but made the annals of the British people

illustrious throughout the world. Let us get fair play, then. Let our literature—our songs and our Ossian—go down to posterity in the healthy and invigorating light of a Celtic Professorship, and no one need fear that our successors will be less imbued than our ancestors were with the spirit of daring and devotion which has already added so much glory to our common country. Professor Blackie, not being a Highlander himself, is proof against the charges of negative Highland bigotry and local prejudice, which would have been so effectively hurled against one of ourselves; even had we one amongst us with the same ability, perseverance, and high-souled patriotism possessed by our redoubted Lowland champion. He had the courage to speak out for the Celt and his literature when many of ourselves who had influence, and who naturally might have been expected to exercise it in defence of the character, language, and literature of our ancestors, “sold their birthright for a mess of pottage” to south country newspapers and periodicals. When these men shall all have been forgotten, Professor Blackie’s fame will go down as the disinterested defender of the noble language of a chivalrous though despised people, and his name will be cherished and admired by future generations of Celts all over the world, second only to Ossian himself. In this connection, and at a meeting like this, it is worthy of note to remark how the wind has been veering round in favour of our great masterpiece of Celtic literature. In the past we had Highlanders defending Ossian against the Southron. We now have the tables turned, and find the three who are admittedly the first, ablest, and the most distinguished literary men of the age in Scotland—Professor Blackie, George Gilfillan, and P. Hately Waddell—not only defending the ramparts, but carrying the war into the camp of the enemy, who is supported, I regret to say, by deserters who had on previous occasions done good service for their country and kindred. Now, gentlemen, let there be no uncertainty as to the sound to be sent forth from this representative and influential meeting as to the duty of all to support the work that these men are engaged in. Let the Highland clergy, who have as yet done practically nothing to gather funds for the Celtic Chair in their official capacity, beyond according Professor Blackie an empty reception at their respective General Assemblies, when he waited upon them to secure their influence in favour of his patriotic scheme, bestir themselves on behalf of this Chair. Let us have collections in every church, in every parish, and make the reception accorded at the Assemblies a real one. Let the clergy here work in sympathy with their people, secure by so doing their hearty good-

will, and greater liberality even for the schemes of their respective churches will thereby be insured. Let the committee appointed in the town of Inverness go to work with a will, and canvass the districts allotted to the different sub-committees. Let the Town Council, on the motion of our *Clachnacuddin* Provost, show a good example to the citizens by voting a subscription from the Corporation funds of the Highland Capital.\* Let "Highlanders abroad" save their less enthusiastic and patriotic countrymen at home from this blot on the escutcheon of their native land, as "Scotchmen abroad" a few years ago, in consequence of an appeal in the *London Scotsman*, had done to their less patriotic countrymen at home, when they sent home over £3000 to complete the Wallace Monument, which for years had stood a standing monument to Scotland's ancient glory and modern Scottish niggardliness.—

"Now here's to the honest, and leal, and true,  
And here's to the learned and wise,  
And to all who love our Highland glens,  
And our Bens that kiss the skies,  
And here's to the native Celtic race,  
And to each bright-eyed Celtic fair,  
And here's to the Chief of Altnacraig,  
And hurrah for the Celtic Chair!"

"Professor Blackie and the Celtic Chair," gentlemen, with Highland honours. (The toast was then drunk with great enthusiasm.)

Mr Charles Mackay gave the "Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of Inverness," to which the Provost replied.

A Gaelic song was then sung by Mr Hugh Fraser.

Bailie Noble, in proposing the toast of "Kindred Societies," said his toast needed no introduction, no eulogium. I shall, he said, only mention the names of a few of them. In England there is the Gaelic Society of London, which has long stood forward as the champion of the Gaelic language, the honourable representative of the Celtic race in the great metropolis, and of which one of our own life members and best friends—the late lamented Dr Halley—was an ornament. (Applause.) Of the present members, the most honourable mention should be made of the present Chief, John Cameron Macphee; of the past Chief, Colin Chisholm; and

\* The Town Council has since unanimously voted £25, on the motion of the Provost, to the Celtic Chair Fund.

of the present excellent Secretary, John Forbes; and whilst among the members, I should not pass over the name of R. J. Tolmie. It is due from us to mention that long before any one else hoped to see the realisation of such a thing, the Gaelic Society of London laboured hard and intelligently for the establishment of a Chair of Celtic Literature; and it has worked vigorously since the movement has been taken up by Professor Blackie. (Applause.) The Club of True Highlanders, of which the veteran historian of the Celts, James Logan, was always a prominent member. In Birmingham we have an energetic Highland Society, with some of the best "Highlanders from home" as members. Speaking of kindred societies in England, we owe more than a mention of the various societies among our brethren the Welsh, who have done so much to preserve the language and literature of the Kelts, and who have set us so noble an example. In Glasgow, there are the Celtic Society, the two Ossianic Societies, and among those which have come to the front of the Celtic Chair movement, the Skye Association, the Islay Association; and the *Comunn Gaidhealach*, which has, among much good work, got up Saturday evening Gaelic concerts. In Edinburgh, we have the Inverness, Ross, and Nairn Club, which has given special attention to Highland education; the Sutherland Association there has done the same thing; and from year to year we have most gratifying reports of the examinations in the Highlands, and the distributions of the prizes given by these societies to Highland youths who exhibit proficiency in Gaelic and other branches. Coming near home, we have the Lorne Ossianic Society, which has shown itself to be animated by the true Highland spirit, and which has had the taste to introduce intellectual elements into its annual gala, and given prizes for the best poetical compositions. The Lorne Society has set an example in two respects which should be taken. Other localities should have their Celtic Societies, and Kingussie, Inveraray, Lochalsh, Portree, Stornoway, Lochmaddy, and so forth, should have similar organisations; and both the present and the future societies should, I venture to think, give more prominence to such literary objects as have claimed so much of the attention of our own Society. The language and the folk-lore of our race should have immediate attention; and the materials thus collected will, as Dr Maclachlan said the other night in Edinburgh, be the real means of solving the questions over which mere critics spill so much ink. Time would fail me to mention even the names of the many societies of which the Kelts can boast. So I shall conclude by asking you to drink the health of "Kindred Societies."

Mr Barron, of the Inverness Courier, proposed "The Highland Clergy," coupled with the name of Rev. A. C. Macdonald, Queen Street Church, and Rev. L. Maclachlan, Gaelic Church, Inverness. Mr Macdonald replied in suitable terms in English, and

Mr Maclachlan, who replied in Gaelic, said—*Fhir na cathrach*—Ceadachibh dhomh, aon an cainnt bhlasda mhilis ar duthcha fein taing a thoirt dhuibh air son an doigh shunndach, chridheil anns an d' òl sibh deoch slainte na cleir. Tha mi duilich nach euala mi ni's luaithe gu'n robh dleasnas de 'n t-seorsa so a' feitheamh orm, 's gu 'm feuchairn ri facal no dha a chur an eagaibh a cheile, ri'm b' fhiach dhuibh eisdeachd. Ach na their mi thig e o 'n chridhe. Tha mi ro-thoilichte a leithid do chuideachd uasal, ghasda fhaicinn a' cuartachadh a' bhuidir. 'S ann tha a Ghailig a' fas nis fasanta gach latha. Tre chaoimhneas na Ban Righ, 's le saothair an duine ionnsaiche agus fhiosarach, an t-Ollamh *Blackie*, tha choslas oirre eiridlh á luathire, agus a bhi beo n'is fhaide na bha duil againn. Saoghal fada dhi.

"Bu mhor am beud gu'm basaicheadh,  
A' chanain is fearr buaidh,  
'S is treis gu aobhar gaire,  
'S is binne 's is blaithe fuaim."

Agus tha mi smaointeachadh gu bheil coir aig a leithid so do choinneamh cuimhneachadh air a chleir Ghaidhealaich. Cha 'n ann a mhain do bhrigh 's gu bheil iad a' searmonachadh ann an Gailig, ach do blrig 's gu bheil roinn mor de na sgolairean Gailig is fearr a tha beo ri'm faotainn 'n am measg. Tha aon fhear marbh, ach ged tha cha'n urrainn dhomh gun iomradh dheanadh air ainm oir tha e fathast a labhairt ruinn—an t-Ollamh Urramach Tormaid Macleoid, Gaidheal gu ruig enaimh an droma, agus b' e "Caraid nan Gaidheal" gus an do ghlás a shuil sa bhás, agus an do scuir a chuisle air bualadh. Feudaidh mi cuid de na sgolairean Gailig 'sa chleir tha beo ainmeachadh :—Dr Macleod sa Mhorain; Dr Cleireach, Chille-Mhailidh; Stiubhardach, Bhun Lochabair; Dr Maclachlainn, Dhuneidein; Domhnall Mac Iomnhiuinn an Duneidin, neach nach eil a searmonachadh, ach a chaidh tromh gach ceum air son na dreuchd, agus a tha 'dearbhadh meud a bhuaidhean inntinn, eolas is sar bheairtas ar cainnt, anns na litrichean a tha e 'sgriobheadh do'n "Ghaidheal" air na Sean-fhocail. Dh' annichinn aon fhear eile, agus cha'n e bu choir bhi air dheireadh, Alastair Ruadh Sgitheanach, an t-ollamh Griogarach agaibh fein. Mar sin tha mi meas gu bheil coir aig a leithid so

do chomunn cuimhne chumail air a Chleir ; agus rinn sibhse sin gu h-asal air an fheasgar so, agus gabhaibh ri 'm bhuidheachas air son bhur caoimhneas. Mu'n suidh mi, tha mi guidhlibh gach beannachd do 'n chomunn so. Gun robh e fas ann an gliocas, an eolas, agus ann am meud, mar is sine dh' fhasas e. Thu 'n rann ag radh :—

“Tri aois coin, aois eich,  
Tri aois eich aois duine,  
Tri aois duine aois fireun  
Tri aois fireun aois craobh dharaich.”

Agus tri uairean tri aois craobh dharaich agus tuilleadh, ma thogras sibh, gu'n robh aois Comunn Gailig Baile Inbhirnis. Se run agus durachd mo chridhe gu'm mair e agus gu'm bi e falain an la chi 's nach fhaic.

The other toasts were—The health of the Chairman, proposed by Bailie Noble ; the Croupiers, by the Chairman, as also the Press, Mr Stewart of Biin, the Office-bearers of the Society, and Non-resident Members. This brought the toast list to a close, and the company broke up, having spent a very pleasant evening.

The following message was sent to Glasgow, in reply to the telegram received by the Chairman :—“Bliadhna mhath ur do Chomunn Gaidhealach Ghlaschu, a's moran diubh. Gu'm bu fada beo gach neach agaibh ! Air 'ur slainte ! An latha 'chi 's nach fhaic!”

#### 20TH JANUARY 1876.

At this meeting, Mr Jonathan Nicolson, Birmingham, and Mr P. G. Macdonald, Inverness, were elected ordinary members of the Society. Thereafter, Office-bearers for 1876 were nominated.

#### 27TH JANUARY 1876.

At the meeting on this date, the following gentlemen were elected :—Major Grant, Glen-Urquhart, honorary ; Hugh Shaw, Castle Street, Inverness ; Donald Macleod, Church Street, do. ; Rev. Lachlan Maclachlan, do. ; Archibald Macmillan, Kaituna, Havelock, New Zealand ; William Douglas, Aberdeen Town and County Bank, Inverness ; Donald Macdonald, Culcraggie ; Andrew Mackenzie, Alness ; Hugh Mackenzie, do. ; William Mackenzie, factor, Ardross ; William Mackenzie, solicitor, Dingwall ; Captain

Alex. Matheson, Dornie, Kintail; Christopher Murdoch, Kyleakin; Norman Macraild, Colbost; John Macraild, Laggan, Fort Augustus; and James Hunter, Glengarry—all ordinary members. Thereafter, the Office-bearers were balloted for.

## 3D FEBRUARY 1876.

At the meeting on this date, the following gentlemen were elected ordinary members, viz., Lachlan Ferguson, Guisachan, and Alexander Maclean, Abriachan; and after transacting some routine business, Mr William Mackay read an interesting paper in Gaelic, entitled “Na Laithean a dh’fhalbh ann an Gleann Gaidhealach.”

## 10TH FEBRUARY 1876.

At the meeting on this date Mr Donald Dott, Caledonian Bank, Inverness, was elected an ordinary member. Mr A. R. Macraild presented the Society with a copy of Blackie’s “Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotchmen.” The other business before the meeting was of a routine character.

## 17TH FEBRUARY 1876.

At the meeting on this date, the Secretary intimated that Professor Geddes, Aberdeen, made a donation of copies of his Lectures on Celtic Literature to the Society. Dr Farquhar Matheson, Soho Square, London, was elected an ordinary member. Mr Lachlan Macbean, Inverness, thereafter read a translation of

## C O N L A O C H .

The following is a translation from one of the Gaelic poems preserved since about the beginning of the sixteenth century in the Book of the Dean of Lismore. In that collection it is ascribed to Gillicallum Mac an Ollaimh, that is, Malcolm Macanolla or Macinally, or the son of the Doctor. The translation is as literal as possible, and more faithful to the original than any translation of this piece which I have yet seen.

The foundation of the poem is as follows. Cuchullin, when a young man, went to receive his training at a celebrated institution in Skye. While there, he gained the affection and confidence of a

native lady. His education being completed, he returned to his castle of Dundalgin, forgot his sweetheart of Skye, and married the daughter of a certain Forgan. Meanwhile, the deserted maiden gives birth to a child whom she names Conlaoch. Him she trains to the use of arms, and, charging him to tell no man who he is, sends him out to fight for his own right hand. It is thought that, like the mother of Hiawatha, her object in sending him out was that he might meet his father and revenge her wrong. The poem shows the sequel.

Mr J. F. Campbell of Islay mentions a MS. in the Advocates' Library which contains another, and I presume a prose, version of this story. He says it "sends Cuchullin first to Scotland to learn feats of agility from Doiream, daughter of King Donald, hence to Scythia [? Skia or Skye], where a seminary is crowded with pupils from Asia, Africa, and Europe. He beats them all, goes through wonderful adventures, goes to Greece, returns with certain Irish chiefs, arrives in Ireland, and is followed by his son, a half Scythian [? Sgiathanach], whom he kills at a ford." The chief incident is of frequent recurrence in Celtic poetry and folk-lore. The tale of Carthon given in Macpherson's Ossian is a good example. Signor Prioli, in his "Illustrations from Ossian," gives two pictures illustrative of that story. The first shows Clessamor's ship borne away by the heartless winds while his young bride is left wringing her hands on the shore. The second represents the fatal fight between Clessamor and his son, whom he had never seen before.

Dr Maclauchlan, editor of the Book of the Dean of Lismore, mentions a Persian tale, "Zohrab and Rustum," closely resembling the story of the "Death of Conlaoch."—

I have heard an ancient story,  
Heard a doleful, plaintive legend ;  
Now 'tis meet to tell it sadly,  
Though it fill our hearts with sorrow.

Firmly grasping sons of Ruri,\*  
Race of Connor and of Connal,  
Swift to take the field their young men  
In the Pentarchy of Ulster.  
None came to his house contented,  
None of all the men of Banva,†

\* *Ruri*.—"Clann Rughraiddh, a powerful race who occupied the province of Ulster at an early period after having expelled the Clann Deaghaidh or the Dalcessians, afterwards of Munster."—Dr Maclauchlan.

† *Banva* or *Banba*, according to Irish writers, was of old a name for Ireland.

For in trying one more battle,  
Ruri's race had been victorious.

Fierce of mien, there came a warrior,  
Came the dauntless hero, Conlaoch,  
Came to see our beauteous country,  
Came to Erin from Dunscaich.\*  
Connor thus addressed the others—  
“ Who will meet the youthful hero ?  
Who will ask him of his story ?  
Ask him, and take no refusal ? ”  
Then went Connal, arm of vigour,  
To demand the young man's story.  
Having met the hero's onset,  
He was seized and bound by Conlaoch.  
Yet the hero would not rest him,  
Fearless Conlaoch, fierce of manner,  
Till a hundred of our people  
He had bound, though strange to tell it :  
From the wise High-king of Ulster  
There was sent a message-bearer  
To the chieftain of the Connii,  
To the Knights' renowned chieftain ;  
To Dundalgan,† fair and sunny,  
The old fortress of the Gaél,  
That wise stronghold that we read of,  
And to Forgan's prudent daughter.  
Thence came he of deeds of valour  
To our country's generous monarch,  
To the people of green Ulster,  
Came the Cù-na-cruva-rua,  
Came the Red-tree Knight to see us.  
With white teeth and cheeks like berries  
Came he in our need to help us.  
“ Long,” thus to the Cù spoke Connor,  
“ Long has been thine aid in coming,  
While the lover of bold war-steeds,  
Valiant Connal, lies in bondage  
With an hundred of our people.”  
*Connal*—“ It is hard to be a captive,  
Thou that helpest friends in trouble.”

\* *Dunscaich* was a famous stronghold in Skye, said to have belonged at one time to Cuchullin. The ruins of it are yet to be seen.

† *Dundalgan* (Dan Dalgain) was probably Dundalk.

*Cù*—“T were not wise to meet his weapon,  
Seeing he has bound strong Connal.”

*Connal*—“Think not to refuse to meet him,  
Prince of keen, blue, gleaming sword-blades,  
Arm that never failed in battle,  
Think upon thy thong-bound patron.”  
When Cúchullin,\* Knight of Cullin,  
He of blades, thin-leaved and slender,  
Heard strong Connal’s lamentation,  
Then he moved with arm of power,  
To obtain the young man’s story.

*Cù*—“Tell us, now we’ve come to meet thee,  
Love, who fearest not the conflict,  
Smooth-skinned youth of blackest eyebrow,  
Tell us of thy name and country.”

*Conlaoch*—“Ere I left my home I pledged me  
That I’d never tell my story;  
Could I tell it to another,  
For thy love to thee I’d tell it.”

*Cù*—“Thou must meet me in the combat,  
Or, as friend, relate thy story.  
Take thy choice then, tender hair-lock,  
But ‘twere wise to shun my onset.  
Let us not then join in anger,  
Noble Leopard ! Pride of Erin !  
Arm of valour in the battle !  
I unbought would tell my story.”  
Then they bore against each other,  
And no feminine combat had they,  
Till the youth received his death-blow,  
The hard-handed, valiant young man.  
(Yet Cúchullin, Knight of Cullin—  
He of fierce and hard-fought battles—

\* *Cuchullin*’s name has been explained in various ways. Cu is the Gaelic for a dog or hound. One Highland story purports to be an account of the manner in which Cúchullin killed the watch-dog of a certain Cullin and had to act as watch-dog himself, whence he was called Cu-Chulainn, the dog of Cullin. It is more probable that this story was made to account for the name, and that *cú* here means not a dog, but is the old Gaelic word for a knight or champion, preserved in our word *curaidh*, a hero. There are Cullin mountains in Skye and in Ireland, after either of which the knight might be called, or, what is more likely, he might be called the knight of the holly (*cuilinn*) tree. The red-berried holly may have been the “red tree” after which an order of knights were then called, and it is certain that of this order Cúchullin was the head. Carbar who killed Oscar, the Ossian, is said to have been a member of this order. Cúchullin lived in the first century, and was thus two or three generations anterior to Ossian.

On that day was discomfited ;  
His one son by him had fallen,  
He had slain his son in anger,  
That fair bough, so brave and gentle)

“ Tell us,” thus the clever Cù spoke,  
Said the crafty Knight “ Inform us,  
Since thou’rt ever at our mercy,  
Tell us fully name and kindred ;  
Think not now to baulk our question.”

“ I am Conlaoch, son of Cu, and  
Rightful heir of high Dundalgin.  
It was I unborn thou leftest  
When at Skia thou wert learning.  
In the East seven years I tarried,  
Gaining knowledge from my mother ;  
And the only thing I wanted—  
Wanted yet of all my training—  
Was the pass by which I’ve fallen.”

Then the great Cúchullin thinking,  
While his dear son changed his colour,  
Thinking of his generous spirit,  
Mind and memory forsook him,  
And his sorrow almost severed  
Life and beauty from his body,  
Seeing, lying in the valley,  
The brave hero of Dundalgin.

Great and difficult to speak of  
Is the grief that is upon us !  
I have heard an ancient story !

24TH FEBRUARY 1876.

At this meeting, Peter Burgess, factor, Glenmoriston, was elected a life member of the Society; and Denis A. O’Leary, Charleville, Cork, and Peter Fraser, collector, Beauly, ordinary members. On the motion of Mr Murdoch, seconded by Mr Macraild, the Society unanimously agreed to the following resolution, and instructed the Secretary to send a copy thereof to Mr Dallas, clerk to Dr Bell’s Trustees, and to Provost Simpson :—“ The Gaelic Society of Inverness respectfully direct the attention of Dr

Bell's Trustees to the desirability of electing a gentleman to the office of Rector of Farraline Park Institution, now vacant, who (other qualifications being equal) is conversant with and able to teach the Gaelic language."

2D MARCH 1876.

At this meeting, Thomas O'Hara, Inspector of National Schools, Gort, Ireland, was elected an honorary member; Donald Ramsay, Academy Street, Inverness, and Wm. Macdonald, Hilton, do., ordinary members; and Alexander Packman, Church Street, do., a junior member. Thereafter, the Secretary, in behalf of Mr William Morrison, M.A., Dingwall, read the following paper, being

#### NOTES ON THE AFFINITY BETWEEN GAELIC AND GERMAN.

It requires no small amount of fortitude, even in the present day, to assert that Gaelic has even the remotest connection with the great group of languages termed by German scholars the Indo-Germanic. One must be prepared to withstand the ridicule not only of the learned but the affected contempt of the illiterate. The question of the antiquity of Gaelic has been popularly relegated to the region of amiable manias, valuable only as tending to excite mirth, even in the minds of the frivolous and vain. One of the strangest facts to explain is the contempt shown by men of undoubted scholarship regarding the claims of the Celtic tongues to rank as members of the great family of the European languages. One of these scholars, Dr Latham, asks in despair what can be the value of "Grimm's Law" as a principle in unravelling the tangled web of these European languages, seeing it admits the Celtic tongues into their community? Another, Max Müller, asserts dogmatically that "Celtic words may be found in German, Slavonic, and even in Latin, but only as *foreign words*, and their amount much smaller than is commonly supposed. A far larger number of Latin and *German* words have since found their way into modern Celtic dialects; and these have frequently been mistaken by *Celtic enthusiasts* for original words, from which German and Latin might in their turn be derived."

That we are not advocating a hopeless cause, we may learn from the fact that men quite as eminent, though not now so much heard of, have settled the question that the Celtic language has an

undoubted alliance with the Indo-Germanic stock. Dr Pritchard, in his profound treatise "On the Eastern Origin of Celtic Nations," has proved beyond doubt and above cavil, that the Celtic has the highest claims to rank as a member of the great Aryan family of tongues. Bopp, in his "Sanskrit Roots," gives long lists of cognate Celtic words; and the learned French philologer and antiquarian, Terzon, expressed his conviction that "the Teutonic is quite full of Celtic roots." To Dr Pritchard belongs the honour of being the first to originate a critical investigation of modern Celtic languages and their relationship to the other branches of the European stock. So strongly has the claim of affinity with the Teutonic family been asserted, that we find two eminent German scholars crossing swords on the question. A learned treatise by Von Adolf Holzman, entitled "Keltcn und Germanen, eine historische Untersuchung," published at Stuttgart in 1855, is met by one equally erudite from the pen of Dr H. B. C. Brandes, Leipzig, 1857. Dr Holtzman starts the strange theory that Tacitus and the other ancient writers upon the early German tribes were wrong in making the distinction between Germans and Celts. He holds that the Germans are Celts, that the Cymri and the Gaels are not Celts, and he maintains that the political complications consequent on the great French Revolution, gave rise to the opinion that the Germans and Gauls were essentially distinct nations, that both parties, in that time of fierce passion, affirmed that nations so antagonistic in feeling must have been ever dissociated in their origin. He is evidently forced to this hypothesis by the fact that the ancient geographers termed all Central Europe west of Scythia by the name *Celtica*. Dr Latham, in his anxiety to deny community of origin to the Celtic with other European tongues, is driven to the absurd theory, that the numerals in Gaelic, which have an uncomfortable resemblance to those of the other Aryan tongues, were imported by St Columba from Latin into Gaelic. This is really sheer drivel, and unworthy of a great man. However wide words expressive of other ideas may have departed from the primitive ones, yet the simplicity, or oneness of notion in our ideas of numeration, is surely a presumption in favour of the similarity of the vocables expressive of number to be found in almost all tongues.

The mist is gradually uplifting from off the history and philology of the Celtic language, and the bold rugged forms are looming on inquiring minds as the mighty fragments of an earlier world. The study of Gaelic has been criminally neglected, especially by those to whom it is known vernacularly; and now, per-

haps, that the sad fact is becoming more and more patent that the venerable tongue is about to be reckoned among the dead languages, some interest is excited in its study. The death of a language is the death of all that is distinctive in the people who use it. The strong individuality of Gaelic is well shown by its almost total rejection of exotic words, and as that characteristic arises, of course, from the mental idiosyncrasy of the people who speak it, the gradual abandonment of the language shows a corresponding obliteration of the features of mind finding expression in that language.

That the Celts—I take the Gaelic or Irish tribes as the advanced column of the Celtic host who swept over the plains of Europe from the East—have had a common origin in the great cradle of the Aryan nations is an indisputable fact. The question I propose is, what evidence have we of an affinity between nations so ethnographically distinct as the Celts and the Germans? A cursory view of the question is all that can be ventured upon, so as to avoid the reflection that a mere beginner should have his hardihood, in launching out on the tempestuous sea of etymology, tempered by discretion enough to acknowledge the difficulty of the undertaking and the frailty of his bark. In reading the *Germania* of Tacitus, one cannot fail being struck with the obscurity that hangs over the pages of that proverbially clear-headed man's book when he deals with the manners and situation of the German tribes.

We have no difficulty whatever in understanding how it happened that seas, rivers, and mountains should retain their Celtic names, after the Celts were either driven further to the west, or were absorbed in the German or Slavonic nations that subsequently occupied their territories. For example, in the opinion of competent scholars—Adelung for instance—the name of the Rhine seems only another form of Rhodanus, and to be connected with “Eridanus, Danube, Don, Tanais,” &c., and signifies in the Celtic “the water” or “the river.” The “Danubius” was commonly applied to that part of the river above Vienna; below that town it was called the Ister—the Dan (ister); both terms being equivalent to the Gaelic or Celtic “upper” and “lower” waters. The Celtic names of the German tribes are a sore puzzle to philologists. Dr Latham looks at the Celtic elements in these names with the strongest suspicion. Where Tacitus is explicit in using the word “Gallica,” for instance, as applied to a tribe called the “Gothini,” Latham, on account of his Celtophobia, attributes to Tacitus a gratuitous mistake in believing that the tribe was

Celtic at all, and not rather as Gallician or Slavonic. Again, he will not allow the possibility of Celtic remnants being left among the Teutons, as persistent pools, after the great tide of their Celtic brethren fell back ; for, in such an instance as that of those termed vaguely by Tacitus, " *Gentes Æstiorum*," dwellers on the coast of East Prussia, and of whom he expressly records that their language was like that of Britain, Latham hazards the theory that the " *Britannica* " of Tacitus was but a Latinised form of " *Pryttisce* " or " *Prutskaja* " in its Slavonic form, and, in fine, that these people were Lettish or Lithuanian.

When Latham meets names such as " *Treveri*," " *Triboci*," the Celtic forms of the words, perhaps, do not convince him altogether so much as the fact that St Jerome distinctly asserts regarding the Treveri, that they spoke the language of the Galatae of Phrygia, which we know to have been Celtic. These forms suggest the Cornish ones found in such names as Trelawney, &c.

The origin of the name " German " has been a problem and likely will remain so. Some would have the name from the Gaelic, " gairm," to call, as signifying men who shouted in battle. That could scarcely be distinctive of any people in the days when " every battle of the warrior was with confused noise and garments rolled in blood." A better etymology is " Wehr-men "—guards. We have the word in Anglo-Saxon, " *Wer*"—a man, and in Moeso-Gothic, " *aoir*"—a man, evidently the Gaelic " fear," and the Latin " vir."

That Tacitus used the word " bard," instead of the German, " *scop*" or " *skald*," as the name of the minstrels of those tribes inhabiting ancient Germania, is surely an undesigned proof of the prevalence of the Celtic language over Central Europe.

One of the greatest difficulties in the *Germania* of Tacitus, is to explain who were the Cimbri. That these people occupied the Cimbric Chersonnese is a settled point. That they were Celts is highly probable, geographically isolated though they were from their brethren. Their name being but a Latinized form of the great Cymric branch of the Celts, and the description of their manners by Plutarch, are surely sufficient to decide their identity as a Celtic people. What is remarkable is that the Celtic word " *Cumaraice* " means a place of valleys, and the name now given to the Cimbric Chersonnese is Denmark, a word in the Anglo-Saxon meaning " land of valleys," from " *denu*" and " *mark*." We need have no difficulty in understanding how completely the Celtic language once spoken in Denmark has disappeared. From the time of Tacitus until the Jutes and Angles appear on the stage of

history, a period of migrations, absorptions prevailed all over Europe. We have only to look back on our own country to see, even in our neighbourhood, how thoroughly the Celtic or Gaelic has been swept out of the district of Buchan, for instance, since the date of the "Book of Deer."

So much for the historical connection of the Celts with the Germans on the Continent. That many words have found their way into German from the earlier Celtic settlers is highly probable, though of course what these are cannot now be determined very accurately. That there are numerous words common to both languages, modified indeed by the organic peculiarities of the races, is an undoubted fact. To a casual observer who compares the words found in a dictionary of each tongue, Gaelic, Anglo-Saxon, or Modern German, the number of cognate words cropping up on every page is striking, and deserves more than a mere expression of astonishment. Apropos, to one learning a new language, it surely is the most rational method, as well as the most pleasant, to observe a family likeness in words spoken by peoples separated by large lapses of time or vast tracts of space.

The etymology of words is not of itself a sufficient guide for perceiving an affinity between two or more languages. We must also have a comparison of their grammatical configuration. Unless attention be paid to that, we may be led into the wildest vagaries, and be even inclined to shout that we have made a discovery which, on further search, proves to be but a linguistic mare's nest.

The grammar of Gaelic—at least the accidente, being so like Hebrew, led inquirers, especially clergymen, for an obvious reason, to classify Gaelic with the Shematic group. Now, if words are taken, the resemblance will not carry us to that group. The fact that Gaelic, like the other Aryan languages, is characterised by an organic root, expressive of a general idea, to which inflectional additions give a specific meaning, and that such roots are not necessarily characterised as three consonants without vowels, as in the Shematic tongues, is sufficient to place Gaelic in the Indo-Germanic group. The following grammatical similarities may be considered :—

I. In Gaelic, as in German, the cases of nouns soften the radical vowel for the plural, or add "an," or a similar sound. The dative plural is characterised by adding a labial inflection—"ibh" in Gaelic; "um" in the old Norse and Anglo-Saxon.

II. In the comparison of adjectives, if we take the irregulars in Gaelic—for really they are the only adjectives compared—in the case of the vast majority of Gaelic adjectives, so called, we have nothing else than the genitive singular of the noun.

We have in Gaelic, as in Old High German and Anglo-Saxon, two forms in the comparative, and these ending in “ra” and “sa” for Gaelic; Old High German, “ro” and “za”; and in Anglo-Saxon, “or,” “re,” and “se.”

III. The pronouns, “me,” “thu” or “tu,” “bhur,” are no doubt from the same origin as the corresponding words in the German dialects, as well as those in the classic tongues. I venture with hesitation to classify the possessives under the two heads “ne” and “s,” as Latham does, though we have in Gaelic the “na” and “sa” used as possessive enclitics.

IV. The verb “bi” in Gaelic has this one feature, at least, of resemblance to the corresponding German verb, that the verb “be” in its different forms is, in the early dialects, according to Jacob Grimm, expressive of the future tense, and not of the present.

We need not be surprised at the number of prepositions, conjunctions, and other particles to be found alike in the Celtic and Gothic tongues, for these words being but abruptions of a primitive language, and expressive of the same modifications of ideas, remained the same through the current of ages, however much abraded and broken. Amongst the most striking are—

Gaelic, “ath”—again; “ed,” Anglo-Saxon; and “id,” Gothic. Gaelic, “do”—with difficulty; “tor,” Icelandic. The Anglo-Saxon “ed,” Latin “re,” we have in “ed-nivian”—to renew; the Gaelic “ath-nuadhachadh.” The Gothic “idreigos”—repentance; Gaelic, “aithreachas.” The Anglo-Saxon “to” (Latin, dis; German, zer; and Iceland, tor) is used as a prefix with much the same force as “do” is, do-labhairt—unspeakable.

The orthography of doubtful Gaelic words may be settled by a knowledge of cognate words; for example, whether it be “do” or “de.” Stewart, in his admirable Gaelic Grammar, holds that “do”—of, as in “do la,” “by day,” should be spelt “de,” and adduces the analogy of Latin in the phrase “de tertîâ vigiliâ and de nocte.” Now, in the northern languages, “to” and “at” mean the same; in fact, in Icelandic, “to call” is “at kalla,” so that the “de” in Latin may be rendered by “at” or “to”; hence analogy as well as logic is in favour of “do” instead of “de.” The translators of the Gaelic Scriptures were therefore right in the spelling of the particle “do.”

I beg to append a list of Gaelic words taken at random, with their equivalents in the German dialects.

| GAEILIC.  | ANGLO-SAXON.  | GERMAN.   |
|---|---|---|
| Bagh—a bay  | Bigē  | Bai   |
| Balg—a bag  | Baelg   | Balg  |
| Ball—a ball   | ...   | Ball  |
| Báta—a boat   | Bat   | Boot  |
| Beic—a courtesy   | Big-an  | Bogen   |
| Beic—a peak   | Pic   | Pick (provincial)   |
| Beir—to bear  | Ber-an  | Ge-burt—a birth   |
| Beum—a stroke, a stream, a knell; e.g. beum sleibhe, beum sgeithe, beum soluis  | Beam—a post, a wind instrument, a trumpet, a ray of light | Baum  |
| Biceir—a cup  | ...   | Becher  |
| Blath—fruit   | * Blaed—a leaf  | Blat  |
| Brug—a fort   | Brug. Burg  | Borh (Icelandic)  |
| Clag—a bell   | ...   | Glocke  |
| Carcair—a prison  | Care—a house of care                                      | ...   |
| Casa—a cough  | Host  | Husten  |
| Corn—a horn   | Horn  | Horn  |
| Car—a turn  | Cyr   | ...   |
| Crog—a book   | Cric—a crook  | ...   |
| Croch—saffron   | * Crodh   | ...   |
| Ceap-adh—to catch   | Cep-an—to catch   | ...   |
| "Deas"—right or south   | ...   | O. H. German, } right<br>"Zeso." Go- } or<br>thic, "taisho" } south |
| Dragh—draw, drag, trouble   | ...   | Er-trag-en  |
| (Here it may be observed that the aspirate "h" in Gaelic is no necessary part of the root, as it probably was unknown in early Gaelic.) |   |   |
| Deachd  | Teach   | Zeichen   |
| Doire—wood  | Treowa (a tree)   | ...   |
| Gruaim—a frown  | Grim  | Grimmig   |
| Gin-eadh—to give birth  | Acenn-an  | ...   |
| Glan—clean  | Claen   | ...   |

\* Blowian—to bloom, different from blawian—to blow (as a wind)

\* Greek, *Kρόκος*—the crocus.

|  |   |                |
|--|---|----------------|
| Geall—a pledge   | Geld—a fine   | Gelt-en        |
| Fill—a fold  | Feald   | Falte          |
| Gne—kind   | Kin, cen  | ...            |
| Im-lich  | Lick  | Lichen         |
| Stad—to stop   | Stand   | Stand          |
| Sluagh, or rather<br>sluadh (judging<br>from Welsh)                | Leod  | Leute          |
| Laoidh—a song  | Leoth   | Lied           |
| Slige—shell  | Scylle  | Schell         |
| Scallag—a servant  | Scalē—a servant   | Schalk—a rogue |
| Goirid—short from  | Scort—short   | Kurz           |
| Gearr—to cut   | Seoran—to cut   |                |
| Gaidheal   | Weallas (foreigners)  | Welsch         |
| Goil   | Weallan—to boil up  | Wellen         |
| Uilinn—the elbow   | Elna  | Ellen-bōgen    |
| Teach—a house  | Thaec   | Dach—a roof    |
| Reachd—a statute   | Riht  | Recht          |
| Radh—to speak  | Raed  | Rath—counsel   |
| Run—mystery-secret,<br><i>e.g.</i> , run-chleirach—<br>a secretary | Run — secret letter,<br>the runes or hiero-<br>glyphic letters of<br>the Norsemen | ...            |
| Tapaidh—brave  | ...   | <b>Tapfer</b>  |

9TH MARCH 1876.

At the meeting on this date, a number of books, presented by Mr Craigie, Brechin, were produced. The thanks of the Society were accorded to Mr Craigie for his valuable present. Mr Hugh Rose, solicitor, read the following paper on

### HIGHLAND MINSTRELSY.

So much has been written during the last eighty years on the poetry, music, and literature of the Celtic race in general, and of the Highlands of Scotland in particular, that it is impossible to treat a subject such as this with any pretence to originality; and, accordingly, I can only claim to have arranged in a somewhat methodical form the gleanings of a course of reading in this and kindred topics, in a form which may not be uninteresting to many

whose tastes incline in the same direction, and to have brought into prominence certain local traditions and historical incidents touching Highland minstrelsy, which may have escaped the notice of some, and may be new to others.

When and by whom the melodies peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland were composed, and how long they continued to be handed down by tradition, are questions not easily answered. Many of the airs were doubtless formed upon models of an early period, probably from chants, choruses, and intonations of church service. But whatever changes in the course of time may have taken place in their form, it was undoubtedly from certain early models that our Highland melodies derive their essential and peculiar character. Apart from the poetry and the marked associations connected with it, there is something striking in the music of the songs. It is like no other music—its very strains betoken antiquity.

It is an interesting but by no means an easy question to answer whether the ancient melodies of Scotland were chiefly the invention of an order of men who conjoined music with poetry, who sung verses of their own composing to the harp; or whether they were composed and performed by mere instrumental performers on the violin, the harp, the cruit, or three-stringed harp, and such kind of instruments as were common throughout the Highlands; who, like the Troubadours of old, wandered up and down the country eking out an existence by reciting romances, singing songs and ballads to the harp, violin, &c., or whether they originated among shepherds tending their flocks, who felt the sentiments of which pastoral songs are so expressive. Whatever may have been the source of inspiration, it must be observed that a certain similarity is readily traced more or less perfect between the melody and the words, and that the spirit and genius of the one must have inspired and awakened that of the other.

The rhythm and measure of a verse, together with the sentiment, often seem to carry intonation or *air* along with them, for we never can commit the words of a song or ballad to memory with the same naturalness and ease as when we have first become familiar with the melody or air which re-echoed the words; and, on the other hand, it may be asserted with considerable show of reason, that a favourite air is more likely to suggest or help one through with the words.

Mr Tytler, in his History of Scotland, states that there can be little doubt that in Scotland, as in France and England, the profession of a minstrel combined the arts of music and recitation,

with a proficiency in the lower accomplishments of dancing and tumbling; and in the reign of David the First, at the Battle of the Standard, fought in 1138, minstrels, posture-makers, and female dancers accompanied the army. Further, he relates that during the royal progresses through the kingdom, it was customary for minstrels and singers to receive the sovereign at his entrance into the different towns, and to accompany him when he took his departure. The country, he says, from a very early period, maintained a privileged race of wandering minstrels, who eagerly seized on the prevailing superstition and romantic legends current at the time, and wove them into rude, but sometimes very expressive, verse, who were welcome guests at the gate of every feudal castle, and fondly beloved by the great body of the people.

It is generally believed that the distinctive characteristics of Highland music three or four centuries ago were not very different from the traditional music of England, Ireland, and Wales, but since that time the national music of those countries has undergone considerable change in consequence of the introduction of harmony and chromatics, while that of the Scottish Highlands has retained all its ancient peculiarities down to the present time.

Little is known of the structure and origin of these ancient Highland melodies. Nearly all the songs composed for many generations have been to airs of great antiquity, and we know that when the bard betook himself to the composition of a song, he invariably mentioned the name of some well-known popular song and melody, in accordance with which the new song was to be sung. It is thought that very few airs of any merit have been composed in the Highlands for at least two hundred years, but many old airs are believed to have been lost since the time when emigration commenced. But in the present time every style of musical composition, regardless of merit, is committed to the press and preserved, while formerly, musical compositions, unless they possessed great merit, or had a local interest connected with them, were soon neglected and forgotten.

It is related by the Welsh Bishop Cambrensis, who flourished in the 12th century, that standard models of poetry and music were adapted by the bards and harpers to every circumstance of importance in social life. These have existed for unknown ages in the country, and the rhythm and measure of them have served to guide the successive generations of minstrels; and though the native harpers became extinct more than a century and a half ago, the pipers have since contributed to preserve some of the ideas which were associated with the use of the harp. For in-

stance, they used to say, "Ceud phort na h-Alba"—the first model tune in Scotland; "Dara port na h-Alba"—the second best tune in Scotland, until all the models had been numbered and named. In allusion to the keys in music, the old pipers used to say *Nan robh na h-iuchraichean agam shiubhlain an domhain le buaidh*, that is, If I knew the keys, I could travel the world and win every prize. There is hardly any distinction of keys on the bagpipe, and these ideas must have been adopted by the pipers from the harpers, whose music is found to be in the regular keys and modes of ancient tunes.

Again, the uniformity and strict similarity of the modes and metres of many of the ancient Highland laments and elegies, and other popular productions, composed at great intervals of time and at places remote from each other, clearly demonstrate that in Highland minstrelsy there was nothing done at random, but that there was a design and system established at a remote period, which we continue to recognise at the present day, and still adhere to, even after the extinction of the bards.

Until within the last 300 years, it is believed that Scottish music was but rarely committed to paper, but it has been ascertained that among pipers and harpers, probably for many centuries previous, a mechanical system of notation prevailed, though not in writing sufficient to preserve the cadence and expression of certain airs, and this system again tended greatly to preserve and recall the melody itself.

But I pass from this part of the subject for the present, to consider the scope of the instrumentality by which the music of ancient Caledonia was fostered and transmitted to us, at least such of it as has survived the turbulent periods of war. So far, then, as minstrelsy had to do with the preservation and careful transmission of original airs, there were three classes of musical performers, who mainly, if not exclusively, treasured and kept alive the favourite airs of the people—first, the harpers, with their vocal airs; second, the pipers; and third, the performers on the violin, or fiddlers, and their accompaniments. A few remarks on the first of these, with special reference to the position assigned to the harper, will probably illustrate this assertion.

The frequent mention of the harp in the older poetry of the Highlands leads to the inference that the instrument was in high esteem, and much cultivated among the people; for such was the estimation in which the harpers were held, that they were supported by the voluntary contributions of communities, and often were put in possession of certain portions of land as a reward for their services.

Nearly all the music in the Highlands appears to have at one time been composed for the harp, the cruit or three-stringed harp, and the voice; but from the period of the harp's cessation, before the middle of the last century, it is probable that Gaelic songs and recitations have not been sung with that truth and precision which a musical accompaniment would have ensured to the singer. In regard to common songs and elegies, &c., a succession of bards of no mean ability has kept the spirit of song alive till our own day. A great quantity of their poetry has been published, but much of the music to which they were sung has not. The veil of obscurity hangs over the early history of the harp in Britain, as well as in the adjoining countries, and though it is stated by Roman authors that instruments like lyres were in the hands of the Celtic bards in Gaul, yet, as the lyres assumed so many forms in different ages and countries, the only certainty is their having been stringed instruments of music. Diodonis Siculus (A.D. 45) records that "the bards of Gaul sang to instruments like lyres, praising some and satirising others;" and Ammianus Marcellinus (A.D. 390) informs us that "the bards celebrated the brave actions of illustrious men in heroic verse, which they sung to the sweet sounds of the lyre." And on the authority of contemporary Roman authors the British bards were said to be similarly engaged. The harp is frequently mentioned in some of the oldest Gaelic poetry extant, that of Ossian, for instance. The inartificial style of the poems was adopted by many other ancient bards, it being a combination of the heroic, hymnic, odic, dramatic, and narrative styles, sung either as recitative or song, and all except a few susceptible of being sung to the harp, and to different permutations of one form of melody. St Columba and his clergy (A.D. 565) are said to have been performers on the harp, but as Ireland claims them as her sons, though residing in Iona, I merely mention the fact without setting up a claim for them as native Highlanders. Bede gives us to understand that, in the 7th century, the harp was so generally played in Britain, that it was customary to hand it from one to another at entertainments; and he speaks of one who was so ashamed he could not play upon it that he slunk away for fear of exposing himself. The harper invariably accompanied his lord or patron, whether on a mission of war or peace, and it would appear that such was the confidence reposed in him, that he was permitted to enter the private apartments of his master. This intimacy was, however, on several conspicuous occasions seriously misplaced, for we are informed by the historian Buchanan, that Eocha, one of the early Kings of Scotland, ~~was~~ killed by a harper who lay in his bed-

chamber. That must have happened in the end of the 8th century. From a Gaelic MS., containing memorabilia of Inverness, and quoted by Sir Walter Scott in the "Lord of the Isles," we learn that Donald, Lord of the Isles, was murdered by his own harper at Inverness, in the year 1385, after the memorable misfortune which followed his incursion into Athole. It is said by the historian of King James I. (Meagor) that, "on the harp, he excelled the Irish or the Highland Scots, who are esteemed the best performers on that instrument." Again, he says of the Highlanders, "For instrumental music in the accompaniment of the voice they make use of the harp, on which they perform most sweetly." Queen Mary's harp and the Caledonian harp, which were discovered in the possession of the family of Robertson of Lude, in Perthshire, in 1805, are supposed to be favourable specimens of such instruments as were in use centuries previously. The latter of these was brought by a lady on her marriage into the family of Lude about the year 1460, and it remained there until presented, along with the former instrument, by their possessor, Robertson of Lude, to the Highland Society of Scotland early in the present century. John Garve Maclean of Coll, who lived in the reign of King James the Sixth and that of his successor, was a performer and composer on the harp, and two of his compositions are still extant. James Grant of Sheugly, in Glen-Urquhart, the author of a song describing a contest between the violin, pipe, and harp, for superior claims to public favour, lived in the 17th century. He was a performer on all these instruments, and a poet, but few of his compositions are extant, or even mentioned. Very few of the Highland lairds or high churchmen in the 15th and 16th centuries but retained harpers. The following is an extract from the will and testament of John Campbell, Bishop of the Isles, of date 4th October 1585, preserved in the archives of Cawdor Castle. After a number of other legacies occurs the following, viz.:—

"I laif to David Macfeye, harper, by (besides) his hundred pounds I aweht him with the fye (fee) Sax lib.

(Signed)      "Jo. B. of Ihyles."

This Bishop was successor to the memorable Bishop Carswell, who had, in the dedication of his catechism, complained that the Highlanders paid more attention to idle tales, and songs of Fin MacCuthaill and Goll MacMoirne, than to the Word of God.

The family of Mackenzie of Gruinard, in Wester Ross, were

celebrated performers on the harp for many generations. The family of Mackenzie of Applecross not only were performers, but famed as patronizers of that instrument. In the 17th and 18th centuries, when the harp was beginning to decline in Scotland, Irish harpers continued to make their appearance. One of these paid a visit to Mackenzie of Applecross, who was so pleased with his performance that he gave him a handful of gold out of his right hand and a handful of silver out of his left. On returning to Ireland, and being asked whose was the most liberal hand he had found in Scotland, he said the right hand of Applecross, and being further asked whose was the next best, he said—"the left hand of Applecross." John Macdonald, the Keppoch bard, otherwise called Iain Lom or Manntach, composed a song on the Duke of Gordon during the exile of Charles the Second, in which the following lines occur :—

"Bha mi eòlach a'd thalla,  
Bha mi steach ann ad sheòmar  
Bhiodh ann iomairt air thaileasg  
A's da chlarsach a' co' stri.

"I was acquainted in your hall, and have been into your chamber. It was customary to play at chess, and to have two harps playing in emulation." One of our last harpers was blind Lachlan Mackinnon, of Skye, who died only in the 18th century. Many of the Highland Lairds were not only patrons of the harpers, but they themselves excelled in the performance of that instrument. For instance, some of the Lairds of Macleod had a practical knowledge of the instrument. The ancient family of Rose of Kilravock have been distinguished for their musical taste from time immemorial. At what period they adopted the harp as their family crest is unknown, but our oldest heraldic records exhibit it as such, and we may infer that the instrument was held at one time in high estimation and cultivated in the family. In a song, made in various metres, by the bard James Macgregor, complimentary to the Laird of Grant, before the disuse of bows and arrows, he says it was customary in the evenings to have the music of harps in his mansion. In the accounts of the Lord Treasurer for Scotland, from 1436 to 1548, a period of 112 years, it is recorded that over 50 payments had been made to individual harpers whose names are given, besides payments to whole groups of minstrels.

The following is a list of noblemen and others in the Highlands,

three centuries ago, who retained harpers :—The Duke of Argyll retained two harpers, 1503 ; the Laird of Balnagown, one, 15<sup>th</sup> 2 ; a harper at Glenluce, 1505 ; the Thane of Calder, one, 1502 ; two harpers at Strathfillan, 1502 ; one at the Kirk of Balquither, 1502 ; a harper at Dingwall, 1506 ; Maclean of Lochbuie's harper, 1506 ; the Bishop of Ross's harper, 1506 ; the Bishop of Caithness's harper, 1506 ; the Earl of Sutherland's harper, 1507 (whose name was Donald Maclean).

In the poems of Ossian, and frequently in Gaelic songs, we find frequent mention made of the harp and the estimation in which harpers were held. There was a vast mass of Gaelic poetry composed before the extinction of the harp, which speaks with rapture of the delight the people took in that instrument. The poetry and the song of the bards, and the harmonious tenderness of the music of strings which accompanied the rehearsal of their verse, were highly conducive to that generosity of sentiment and susceptibility of feeling so conspicuous in the poetry of Ossian.

It may be interesting to know that there are many memorials of the former existence of harpers in different parts of the Highlands. In the Isle of Skye occur the following—"Baile 'chlarsair," or the harper's town ; "Inneal a' chlarsair," the harper's instrument, a hill in the parish of Waternish ; "Gualainn a' chlarsair," the harper's shoulder, the shoulder of a hill in the parish of Snizort ; "Cnoc a' chlarsair," on the estate of Kileoy, or the harper's knoll. There is a field in Mull called Fan mor nan clàrsairean—the harper's field—and a window in Duntulm Castle called the harper's window. The tradition about the place is that a harper dwelt there. There is an inn in Ross-shire called the Tarradale Inn. The site on which it is built is called Carn a' Chlarsair, the harper's cairn. A cairn of stones formerly stood there, said to have been raised to commemorate the death of a harper who was murdered by a band of robbers whom he accidentally met in the night time. It is said they were urged to this cruel act by fear that he might give information against them. This happened at a period when small water-mills were being introduced into the Highlands. The story goes that " Ian Dubh a' ghiubhais," or Black John of the Fir, who was an ancestor of Mackenzie of Ord, took umbrage at the Laird of Tarradale, and resolved to do him an injury. He proceeded at midnight with a band of gillies to Tarradale, and stole the apparatus of a mill, and, coming along with their spoil, they overtook the wandering harper on their way, near where the inn of Tarradale now stands, and cruelly murdered him on the spot. It is further said that "they planted the ap-

paratus of the mill where the mill of Ord stands at the present day, and there never has been a mill at Tarradale since." This incident may lead to a knowledge of the period. The field adjoining the site of the cairn is called *Achadh a chlarsair*, the harper's field, it is supposed from its proximity to the scene of the murder. There is a stone pillar at Nigg, in Ross-shire, said to be of ancient erection, having the figure of a harp engraved on it. There is another pillar near Brechin having the figure of a harp. There is another figure of a harp on Dupplin Cross, in Perthshire, where the harper is represented as sitting on a chair behind the instrument in the act of performing.

Roderick Morrison, or Rory Dall, a blind man, was, perhaps, the last harper of any note or respectability. He was bard and harper to the Laird of Macleod at Dunvegan Castle, and died early in the eighteenth century. He was the son of the Rev. Colin Mackenzie, Episcopal minister in the Island of Lews; and Mr Macdonald, in his essay on Highland music, observes that he was born a gentleman, and lived on that footing in the family of Macleod. He was well-educated, but having lost his eye-sight from small-pox when at school in Inverness, he betook himself to the harp, and became an excellent performer. Murdoch Macdonald, a pupil of Rory Dall's, was afterwards bard or harper in the family of Maclean of Coll, where he remained till 1734. Six of Morrison's songs and elegies have been published, and are said to possess great merit. The airs of these songs are well-known in the Highlands and Islands. They differ from the vulgar tunes called "Ports," some of which are ascribed to Morrison, to procure popularity and sale for them, but it is doubtful whether he ever composed any of them. A brother of Roderick's, named Angus, once Curate of Contin, in Ross-shire, was born in the Lews about the year 1651, and died at Contin. His grave is still shown near Strathpeffer.

The three-stringed cruit was also at one time common in the Highlands, but the violin, from its superior power and capacity as an accompaniment, has long superseded it.

In an old Gaelic poem, "Sitheal Caoilte," from the recitation of Allan Dall Macdougall, we have the following lines:—

"Cruit bhuidhe fhonnmhór air thri teud,  
Clar liomh fo shoillse na 'n seud."

"The yellow tuneful crowd with three strings,  
The harp resplendent with glancing gems."

In Mackenzie's report on the poems of Ossian, we have the following observation on the cruit or crowd :—

“Cruit is the name of a stringed instrument, used of old in Scotland and Ireland, which was the same with the Welch *erwdd* or *erwth*.

“For a long time past it has been confined to North Wales, so that the people of that part of the Principality have been accustomed to consider it as being exclusively their own.”

“Bu lionmhor cruit agus clar,  
B'iomadh bard a sheinneadh sgeul.”

“Many were the crowds and harps,  
Many the bards to sing the tale.”

In the parish of Urray, Ross-shire, there is a farm called *Cruit-ach*, or the crowder's land. In Perthshire there is a corrie mentioned by the Bard Duncan Macintyre, in two of his songs called *Coir a chriutear*—the crowder's corrie.

The Macmhuirichs were bards and seanachies to Clanranald for three hundred years, and had been employed in the same office by the Lords of the Isles long before the family of Clanranald arose. *Achadh nam bard*, the bard's field in Trotternish, was held by Duncan Macruari, from Sir James Macdonald. His successor was John Maccodrum, many of whose compositions are extant. A rock in the vicinity of Dingwall is called *Craigabhaird*—the bard's rock.

With reference to the modes of tune adopted by the Highland harpers, it may be observed that “teud,” a musical string, meant or represented a mode, tone, or tuning. It is believed that a certain string was selected as the most suitable for each song or melody; for frequent allusions are made in Gaelic poetry to “Teud an dàn,” the string of the song or poem, and also to “Teud a chinil,” the string of the melody or music, just as we speak of keys. A bard calls his lover —

Leigh mo cheille 's teud mo dhan—  
Restorer of my reason and string of my song.  
Mo theud eivil 's gach ait am bithinn—  
My string of melody wherever I am.  
Bu bhinne na teud chiuil a guth—  
More melodious than the string of melody her voice.

The harpers again were fond of exercising on what is now termed the major mode or key, as distinguished from the minor. From a preference given to the former, it was called "Lur-ghleus," that is the string or sound of power. The practice of adducing variations from tunes in that mode is alluded to by the bard in the following quotation :—

" Am bricein beth a's lub air,  
'Se gleusadh lù a theud—  
" The linnet with curved neck,  
Playing on *lù* his string."

On a future occasion I shall conclude my observations on the harp, and refer to the change in Highland minstrelsy by the introduction and continuance of the bagpipe as a national instrument, &c.

30TH MARCH 1876.

At the meeting on this date, Mr John Mackay, of Ben-Reay, Montreal, read the following paper on

### ROB DONN.

In the extreme North of Scotland there is a large district of country which, from a period beyond the reach of history, has been inhabited by the Clan Mackay, and in common parlance is known as the Reay country. It took this name from Sir Donald Mackay, one of the most celebrated Chiefs of the Clan, who was raised to the peerage in 1628, as Lord Reay. This territory is upwards of sixty miles in length, and of an average breadth of about twenty-four miles, and comprehends the extensive parishes of Reay, Farr, Tongue, Durness, and Eddrachillis. In other words, it occupies about three-fourths of the county of Sutherland and a small part of Caithness, its area being over 900,000 acres.\*

In the very heart of this country, there was born in the year

\* Although the whole of this extensive district passed into the hands of the Sutherland family about forty years ago (in 1837), it is still called, and probably will continue to be called the Reay country for ages to come.

1714, a man, who is better known in the North Highlands at the present day than any other individual who has appeared in the country during the past two or three hundred years ; and who was to the North Highlanders, as his contemporary Duncan Ban Macintyre was to the South Highlanders, what, half-a-century later, Robert Burns became to the Lowlanders of Scotland—the poet of the people.

Robert Mackay (the individual referred to), or *Rob Donn* as he was commonly called, was the son of a humble but worthy couple, Donald and Janet Mackay. His father rented a small farm at Alt-na-Caillich, where Robert was born, and is said to have been a man of great piety, of quiet and retiring disposition, but not distinguished by any special talent. His mother, however, is said to have been very clever, and to have had some poetic skill. Her memory was remarkable, and she was able to recite long poems of Ossian and other ancient minstrels of the Highlands; for at that time, when few could read and books were scarce, the recitation of poetry was practised by all; but her knowledge of this lore was more than ordinarily extensive. She lived to a very advanced age, and was a woman of singular fortitude. It is recorded of her that at the age of eighty-five, when tending her sheep at a considerable distance from home, she had the misfortune to fall and break her leg, but she bound it up and contrived to get home unassisted; and, while afterwards enduring the operation of getting the fracture set, soothed the pain by crooning a Gaelic song.

The parish of Durness, in which Alt-na-Caillich, the birth-place of Rob Donn, is situated, is one of the grandest in the Highlands ; and a more fitting spot for the nursery of a bard of nature could scarcely be found. The strath lies embosomed in lofty hills, terminating at the upper extremity in a mass of mountains piled together as if nature wished to exhibit the rude but majestic grandeur of mountain, rock, cataract, corrie, and glen. At the lower extremity Ben-Hope rises in abrupt and towering magnificence, lifting its head far above the wilderness of mountains all around, and presenting a series of giant cliffs which rise towering in succession to the very summit. On the northern side Loch-Hope washes the foot of the mountain and stretches onwards for about five miles, its banks decked with groves of birch, divided here and there by little spots of the brightest green, which give variety to the scene, and provide excellent pasture to the flocks of sheep to be seen all through the glen.

The first verse Robert is said to have composed was when he had attained only his third year. He had got a new dress (a kilt and jacket in one), such as little boys still wear in some parts of the Highlands, not unlike a short petticoat, with a body fitting closely round the waist, but instead of buttoning in front, his was made to fasten at the back. His mother and the whole household having been summoned early one morning to some out-door pursuits, he, left alone in the house, became anxious to get abroad in his new garb, but found himself defeated in every attempt to button it on. He therefore sallied forth in his little night-shirt, when, being met by his mother, coming towards the house, he was scolded by her for being seen out of doors in such a state. The little fellow replied in a verse in which he reproaches the tailor for the trick he had played him in placing the buttons behind.

When about seven years old, a gentleman then living in the neighbourhood (John Mackay, Musal, but better known as *Iain MacEachainn*), prevailed on Robert's parents to allow him to come into his service. The precocity of the boy, his quickness and wit, were sources of frequent amusement and wonder to Mr Mackay and the younger members of the family, with whom he soon became a favourite. Mr Mackay was an extensive grazier and cattle-dealer, a business then followed in the North Highlands by few; and those few persons of superior intelligence and attainments. Robert's first employment was to herd calves, and when he had advanced sufficiently in years and strength, he assisted in guiding droves of cattle to the markets in the South of Scotland and North of England. Thus he became known wherever the herdsmen could carry an anecdote or recite a verse; and at Falkirk Tryst or Kendal Fair, his witty sayings, satires, elegies, and love songs were soon famous.

In this family he remained till the time of his marriage. The sincere and unvaried kindness shown him, and the liberal manner in which he was treated in this household, were never forgotten; and he ever retained lively and grateful feelings towards all its members—especially to his master. It is no trifling praise to both, that though they now and then had a difference, the bard's esteem and affection returned when the casual excitement had passed; and even while it lay upon his mind, he was never known to have given it the least utterance, in any shape bordering upon disrespect. On the death of Mr Mackay our poet composed an elegy to his memory, which combines a forcible, energetic description of character and conduct, with as pure poetic power as can be found in any poetry of its kind. This poem is entitled, *Marbh-*

*rann do Iain MacEachainn*, and has been put into an English dress by a young clansman, a son of the late Angus Mackay, piper to her Majesty the Queen, from which the following verses may be given :—

*MacEachainn*, now that thou art dead,

O ! whither shall we go to find

A man to stand us in thy stead,

As large of heart, as true, as kind ?

It were a hard experiment

To find a man of years like thee :

If, in the future, one be sent,

How few shall live that day to see !

Thy life was, ah, how different

From that of him still spared by fate—

Increasing land and hard-wrung rent,

Which strangers' hands will dissipate ;

Who shall be called to join the dead,

And in Death's narrow chamber laid,

The only words by poets said—

“ Behold the misery he made !”

The letter of the law some keep,

And yet hard creditors are they ;

What legally they can, they reap,

What the law *makes* them, that they pay.

Though want and poverty they see—

Not less through pity grows their sum ;

Shut eyes and purse alike will be

Against the poor and needy one !

O man, that hast thy day of power,

And fain would'st well-remembered be,

Seize swiftly on the passing hour !

*Now* is thy opportunity !

Thou art on Death's grim battle-field ;

He won his laurels 'mid its din :

Shame on the coward who would yield !

Fight as *he* fought and ye shall win !

Though there be some who laugh to scorn

The man of liberal heart and hand,

This prayer to Heaven should be borne

From all the quarters of the land—

That that blest day we soon may see,  
When man shall love his brother men,  
Nor barter all eternity  
For selfish three score years and ten !

Who needs advice must want it now,  
And see the prosperous times depart—  
All clouded is the poet's brow,  
With none to reverence his art,  
None seek to make the sad rejoice—  
And when I ask why joys are fled,  
They answer me with tearful voice,  
“Alas, is not MacEachain dead ?”

I see the gathering of the poor—  
Now poor, indeed, since thou art dead—  
And closed for aye the open door,  
Where love consoled and bounty fed !  
And strangers now are praised to me  
As lib'ral—I know only one !  
But, ah, the wandering stars we see  
After the setting of the sun !

Rob Donn married Janet Mackay, daughter of a respectable small farmer in his native parish, and in her he found a help-meet worthy in every respect. She is said to have been, in her humble sphere, a woman of ready wit, much good sense, and of most amiable disposition. She had a musical ear, and voice unrivalled in the country; and an ordinary pastime of their winter evenings was for the whole family to join their voices in song. On Sunday evenings psalms took the place of the secular songs sung on the other nights; and it was Rob's practice to wind up each day's doings by asking the family to kneel, while he led their devotions in a simple, earnest, and heartfelt prayer. They had thirteen children. One of his sons was a corporal in Macleod's Highlanders, now the 71st Regiment, and to quote General Stewart, “frequently revived the spirits of his countrymen, when drooping on a long march, by singing the humorous and lively productions of his father.” After his marriage Rob resided for a short time on a farm belonging to his late employer. But Donald “Lord Reay, a true hearted chief, resident constantly amidst his ‘children,’ and participating in all their affections, frequently claimed for himself the care of the rising bard, . . . and Rob was invested with an office which more than satisfied his ambition, and carried with

it abundant respect in the eyes of his fellow-mountaineers." He was appointed Bo-man, or head cattle herd, at Balnakiel, a position at that time of considerable responsibility and trust. In this situation he remained for the greater part of his after lifetime. His wife at the same time had charge of the dairy.

When the first regiment of Sutherland Fencibles was raised, in 1759, Rob joined as a private soldier, being urged by several of the gentlemen holding commissions in the corps, to accompany them. The admiration of his talents, joined to his own respectable and becoming demeanour, had, long previous to this, procured him admittance to the society and family circles of all the better and higher classes in the county. In the regiment he was not asked to do duty as a soldier, excepting in a way that left him, with the consent of the officers, master of his own time. He was, in fact, the bard of the regiment; and while his companions were at drill, he was at large enjoying himself. In one of his rambles he was met by a Major Ross, who had just joined the regiment, and to whom he was not yet known. The Major, imagining he had made a clandestine escape from duty, stopped him, abruptly demanding, "To what company do you belong?" "I belong to every company," retorted the bard, who did not relish being dealt with so magisterially. The Major next asked him, "Your name?" The bard replied in a verse of four lines, which can only be fully appreciated by those acquainted with the county of Sutherland and its history. What he said may be translated as follows:—"I am a Sutherland, among the Sutherlands; a Gordon, among the Gordons; a Gunn, among the Gunns; but at my own home I am a Mackay!" He then walked off, waiting no further questions, with as proud a step as the Major himself could assume. The Major was very angry, and complained to the Colonel about his gross breach of military law; but the latter explained that the poet was a privileged man, and begged him to pass over the apparent want of respect; and when he had made the bard's acquaintance he would feel still more inclined to forgive him. Major Ross and Rob, however, were never on friendly terms, and the bard composed several songs in which this over-strict officer is very sarcastically handled.

Rob remained with the regiment during the four years it was embodied, and when it was disbanded in 1763, returned to his home at Balnakiel. While Rob was with the regiment in the South, Donald Lord Reay died. The bard was very much attached to his Chief, who also had a deep respect for his faithful vassal. His elegy on the nobleman sets forth his excellent

character, describing the life of beneficent and useful retirement he spent among his peaceful and affectionate Clan, at once their father, their friend, and their pride—the patron of industry, honesty, and worth. The following are from a translation of the elegy on Donald Lord Reay:—

Mine eyes have ne'er beheld a Christmastide  
 So full of tears and pain! Alas, my Chief,  
 The old year has removed thee from our side,  
 The new year but recalls us unto grief!  
 He that was chiefest where the tale was told,  
 Where music breathed, and poets' songs were sung,  
 Dwells in Death's lowest room beneath the mould—  
 For ever stilled beside the church of Tongue !

Full oft relentless Death has wounded thee,  
 O noble House of Reay, with cruel thrust—  
 Nor spared the topmost branches of the tree,  
 But strewn its goodliest blossoms in the dust ;  
 But ne'er before within my memory  
 He chilled so warm a heart within the clay—  
 A heart so full of Christian charity—  
 As thine, O Donald, noble Lord of Reay !

I know my praises cannot swell thy fame,  
 Nor dost thou need them on that heavenly shore !  
 For like a fruitful branch is now thy name,  
 Where blossoms cluster ever more and more—  
 But if the great that shall come after thee  
 In daily life thy deeds do not rehearse,  
 No satire slight upon their lives shall be  
 The slow and mournful music of my verse.

The man with bounteous appetite for wealth—  
 Who seeks to feed his soul with yellow ore,  
 And lives to heap up riches for himself—  
 Will blame thee that thou left no miser'd store.  
 Then out his gathered treasure will he bring,  
 And praise himself, and bid his soul be gay--  
 But this is he whom Heaven's Almighty King  
 Shall call the great fool on the Judgment Day !

If one should search from first to last God's Book  
 And read the history of the saints therein,  
 Though sometimes they the narrow path forsook,  
 And for an instant gave a place to sin,

Though oftentimes they stumbled in the race,  
 And oft were lured astray by Satan's art,  
 Yet of this little *meanness* not a trace  
 Shall there be found in any godly heart!

Persons devoid of faith are fruitless weeds,  
 Their boisterous words are many and untrue,  
 But in that higher speech whose words are deeds,  
 There one shall surely find their words are few;  
 'Tis with the rich man as with him in need,  
 If they are faithless, they are bare of fruit—  
 Alike a soulless body is their creed  
 And all their virtues flowers without root!

Had'st thou by nature been a man of greed,  
 How soon had grown the tempting glittering hoard!  
 If thou to Pity's tears had deigned no heed,  
 And hard-wrung rents with human curses stored!  
 But no! for when the rents to thee were paid  
 It was more joy to thee a thousandfold,  
 To see a glad face in God's image made  
 Than the King's image on the yellow gold!

Poets there are among us who will praise  
 Men high in power for the hope of gain;  
 And others will a tim'rous strain upraise  
 For fear their lord should frown did they refrain.  
 And so that goodness is proclaimed in verse  
 Which in their acts not even *bards* could see;  
 Such oft the songs of praise that bards rehearse  
 But such is not this elegy of thee.

There have been lofty men among thy sires,  
 In mind and wisdom, courage and renown,  
 Who in the proud pursuits of their desires  
 Have acted like the wearers of a crown!  
 Yet far less praise than thee they must receive  
 For Christian grace, and faith, and charity;  
 It is less hard to *hope* than to *believe*  
 That better men will e'er come after thee!

After Lord Reay's death, Colonel Hugh Mackay, a son of the bard's early employer, came to reside at Balnakiel. He retained Rob in his employment; nor were the fond associations of boyhood and early days forgotten by either, notwithstanding the

difference of rank that age now more plainly showed to be between them. The bard composed several songs in honour of the Colonel, of whom he was very fond, but he did not like the Colonel's wife. She was of a penurious disposition, and is referred to frequently, but always with a sharp sarcasm on her meanness.

The bard continued with Colonel Mackay till his wife, feeling the infirmities of age, found she was no longer able to undertake the duties connected with the management of the dairy. They then removed to a small farm in the neighbourhood, called Nuybeg, but had not been long there when she, whom he so tenderly loved, died. He grieved after her very deeply; his greatest earthly treasure was gone; and a few months afterwards he was laid beside her in the churchyard of Durness. He died on the 5th August 1778, being then about sixty-four years of age. The death of the bard caused a univeral feeling of sadness over the whole county; and, it may be said, there was no individual but mourned for him as a friend, those only excepted whose immoralities or failings had rendered them objects on whom he exercised, with severity, the powerful lash of his satire. He was honoured with a funeral like that of a chief, the proudest and simplest of the clan standing together, with tears in their eyes, when he was laid in the grave. In 1829 a monument was erected over his remains, at the expense of a number of his clansmen, with suitable inscriptions in Gaelic, English, Greek, and Latin.

The majority of Rob Donn's poems are of a humorous or satirical character, and with few exceptions they are admirable. Both characteristics are interwoven in many of his songs, and the acuteness with which he lays open the motives of action, is excelled only by the power of ridicule he brings to bear upon those who have done wrong. He seems, with true dignity, to look more at the offences committed than at the persons committing them. But he was no regarder of persons, and spared neither peer nor peasant, when he thought they required censure; his own employers coming in for a share of his satire on several occasions. While in Lord Reay's employment he composed a very severe satire on Lady Reay, because she had tried to screen a favourite waiting-woman from the censures of the Church, using her influence with the clergyman for that purpose. Rob tells her in the poem that when the influence of high rank is used to shield sin or crime from punishment, then we must expect that such example will be imitated in the different grades of society, and a state of moral turpitude be the result.

Of purely descriptive poetry, he composed but little. Two

of his songs, which come under this denomination, are very beautiful. One is a description of Winter, the other a contrast between the pleasures of a town and a pastoral life. The latter is a dialogue between two young ladies—daughters of his first employer—one of whom, just returned from town, where she had been at school, praising a city life; the other, yet ignorant of town, upholding the pleasures of rural retirement, and the beauties of the bard's own native glen. Of course, the advocate of the pastoral life has the best of it.

Love is a never-ending theme with almost every poet, and our bard having a tender heart, gave expression to his feelings in many a love-song. One of these was composed on his return from the south, where he had been with his master's cattle, and going to see his sweetheart, "the fair-haired Annie," learned that she had forsaken him and pledged herself to another! In the song he urges his suit, and tells Annie of his great love. She replies that he has been long away, and must have a very high opinion of himself if he thinks that she could wait an indefinite time for him, when six others were daily urging their suit, and begging her to make them happy! He ends by saying that though the light of his life would thus be gone, yet it was impossible for him to tear her image from his bosom. The air to which the song is sung is also his own composition, and is sad but very beautiful.

I have already given two specimens of his elegies, and it is in these compositions we have the best specimens of our bard's talents. All over the Highlands, until days not long gone by, every district had its bard or bards, and when any celebrated individual died, it was customary for his death to be followed by an elegy, to perpetuate the remembrance of his virtues. That such praises should always be justly bestowed, and not partake of poetic exaggeration, is not to be expected. But of Rob Donn it is positively asserted that his elegies were the result of genuine feeling; that they conveyed the truth; and also, that on such occasions his verse could never be hired or enlisted by any prospect of self-interest or advantage. In the last verse of his elegy on his first employer—Iain MacEachainn—he refers to this, and says—

“ I flatter not—but speak of things  
And virtues which mine eyes beheld.”

His most celebrated poem of this description is *Marbhrainn Eoghainn*, or Ewen's Elegy. The circumstances under which it was composed were as follows:—Rob was benighted on a deer-

stalking expedition, near the head of Loch-Eriboll, and took shelter in a hut belonging to an old man named Ewen, whom he found stretched on his pallet, apparently at the point of death. He had heard that morning of the death of Pelham, then Prime Minister to King George the Second. The idea of his death, called away from the summit of ambition and worldly greatness, contrasted with poor Ewen's state, set him to the invoking of his muse. Ewen was unable, through weakness, to converse with the bard, who kindled a fire, sat down, and having composed his poem, hummed it over. But although too exhausted to speak, Ewen had still a keen sense of hearing, and also of pride; for when Rob came to the last verse, which referred to the lowly condition of the dying man, he felt so incensed that, summoning his remaining strength, he crept out of bed, seized a club, and wielded a blow at the poet's head! Rob had barely time to jump aside and avoid the stroke, and had some difficulty in pacifying the old man. The following is the poem:—

'Tis thou that dost instruct us Death!  
 That we should learn ere yet too late  
 The longest lives are but a breath—  
 Thou callest hence both small and great !  
 But these thy latest actions, make  
 Us ope' at once our slumb'rous eyes--  
 Thy sudden leap from Britain's Court  
 To this low nook where Ewen lies!

Long time, O Ewen, yes long time,  
 Has dread disease foretold thy fate,  
 Now nigh Death's door dost thou repine,  
 With no one to compassionate !  
 If unimprov'd the time has pass'd,  
 And many a crime been done therein,  
 Yet hope remains while life shall last,  
 Oh ! yet repent thee of thy sin!

If we believe thy word, O Death,  
 These lessons we shall ne'er let slip ;  
 There is no mortal drawing breath  
 Too vile for thy companionship !  
 This solemn truth when will we learn,  
*Death's vision is both high and low—*  
 From Ewen's sores thou dost not turn—  
 Great Pelham felt thy mortal blow !  
 Long time, O Ewen, &c.

Thou makest grief in Court and Hall,  
 When at thy touch Earth's glories fade !  
 The ragged poor man thou dost call,  
 For whom no mourning will be made !  
 All men, O Death, thy face shall see,  
 And all be forced with thee to go !  
 Watchful and ready should we be,  
 'Twixt Pelham high and Ewen low !  
 Long time, O Ewen, &c.

And all around thy victims fall,  
 Unseen thy sudden bullets fly ;  
 The voices round us loudly call  
 That we should be prepared to die.  
 Thou that art lowest in the throng,  
 Hast thou not heard that Ewen dies ?  
 And thou by God made great and strong  
 That low in dust great Pelham lies ?  
 Long time, O Ewen, &c.

Friends of my heart ! And shall not this  
 Make all our thoughts to heaven tend ?  
 Society a candle is  
 That flames away at either end !  
 In Scotland, where's a humbler man,  
 O Ewen, than thy father's son ?  
 And in all Britain, greater than  
 This Pelham, save the King, was none !  
 Long time, O Ewen, &c.

In this elegy the subject is made a general one, the uncertainty of time, and the calls to preparation for death, sounded to mankind, in the simultaneous fall of high and low, rich and poor, and the circumstances which led to its composition, certainly show a poet's mind. An anecdote regarding it was related by the Rev. Murdoch Macdonald, minister of Durness. One very stormy Sunday morning he had doubts as to the propriety of holding service in the church, as he did not wish to detain the congregation ; and he knew, if he once began to preach, he might forget himself, and detain the people longer than was desirable. A friend, who was staying with him, said, "I think it necessary to hold a short service, and I'll tell you what to do—just go to church and sing *Marbhrainn Eoghainn*, for it will be greatly more instructive than any sermon you can give !" Mr Macdonald adds his appreciation of the elegy did not go quite so far as to induce him to adopt this advice.

Our bard and Mr Macdonald were great friends, and, at the end of the year in which the latter died, he composed a monody on him, of which the following is a translation :—

O, mouth of eloquence ! O, lib'ral heart !  
O, mind with wisdom stored and soul of grace !  
Hand without stint or meanness to impart,  
A smile of loveliness, and frownless face.  
In grief's sad wilderness I tarry long ;  
Amid the gay I shed the secret tear ;  
No more I care for wisdom or for song—  
No song can please me which thou canst not hear !  
They changed their manners now since thou art dead,  
No more they care the heavenly crown to win ;  
They heed no more what thou in love hast said,  
And God has given them over to their sin.  
Some, when thou first departedst, wept for thee ;  
But grief grows old, no longer now they sigh ;  
But not so soon will grief depart from me,  
Here, at the year's end, sad, O sad, am I !  
  
I love thy little ones, I love thy kin,  
I love thy fame, which ever shall abide,  
I love the songs which thou wert wont to sing,  
The very churchyard ashes at thy side !  
Oh, that two generations we had had  
Of thee ! My sorrow for thee cannot die ;  
The year departing, leaves me no less sad ;  
Here, at the year's end, sad, O sad, am I !

But Rob Donn was celebrated for his witty sayings and ready answers, as well as for his poetry, as the following anecdotes will show :—He was on one occasion in the north of Argyllshire, and meeting a gentleman asked him some questions relative to his way. The gentleman addressed (a Mr Macdonald) said—"I perceive, my man, by your dialect you belong to the North—what part there?" "To Lord Reay's country." "O, then, you must know Rob Donn." "Yes, I could point him out to you in a crowd." "Pray, then, tell me what sort of person he is of whom I have heard so much?" "A person, I fear, of whom more has been spoken than he well deserves." Mr Macdonald, who, it is said, was no mean poet himself, did not like the reply, and thought he had met with a rigid censurer of the Northern bard. After a

pause, pointing to Ben-Nevis, Mr Macdonald asked—"Were you ever, my man, at the summit of yonder mountain?" "I never was." "Then you never have been so near to heaven." "And have you, yourself, been there?" "Indeed, I have." "And what a fool you have been to descend," retorted the bard, "are you sure of being ever again so nigh?" Macdonald replied—"I'll be shot, if thou be not thyself Rob Donn." The bard did not deny it, and a cordial friendship was formed between them.

A vacancy having occurred in the parish church of Durness, the Rev. John Thomson was appointed to the charge. He was not very clever, but was a good man, and of retiring habits. Rob being in Thurso, was met by the Rev. Dr Nicolson, a man of great talents, but very lazy in his calling, and neglectful of his duties. Expecting to be entertained by one of the poets sallies at Mr Thomson's expense, Dr Nicolson said—"Well, and how does Mr Thomson, now-a-days?" "Mr Thomson," replied the bard, "is doing what you never did, or will do—he is doing his best!"

The poet, a sketch of whose life I have here recorded, was a simple Highland drover, and perfectly unlettered, for he never knew his alphabet; but the habits of oral recitation were in vigour all about him, and "ere he marked himself man" he had laid in a prodigious stock of such lore as from time immemorial had constituted the intellectual wealth of the country. His knowledge of Highland traditions, legends, and ballads of all sorts, is reported to have been quite extraordinary. The Sundays in that quarter were days really devoted to religion; and while yet a mere youth, he mastered a more intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures than perhaps falls to the share of many persons with the greatest of modern privileges. This Bible knowledge he acquired through extempore translations, made by his first employer and other educated people in the parish, for in those days the Gaelic Bible had not been printed.

Besides being a poet, he was also a musician, and composed the airs to which many of his songs are sung; and, it is said, he did not on any occasion take more than two hours in the composition of even his longest poem.

It speaks a great deal for the worth of his personal character, that although he was dreaded as a satirist throughout the North Highlands, quite as much as Burns was in the Lowlands of Scotland, he was promoted in due time, with universal approbation, to the dignity of ruling elder of the church in the parish where he resided, and continued to hold that responsible office without reproach to the end of his life. This was no small honour in those days.

"The satirist, in short, was dreaded, but only by the vicious; and the poet respected and beloved by all whose esteem he desired to possess—vice was the mark of his satire, but virtue the favourite theme of his muse."

A number of his poems and songs were collected and published by the late Rev. Dr Mackintosh-Mackay in the year 1829. The volume, which contains upwards of two hundred of Rob's compositions, made some stir in literary circles at the time of its appearance. Sir Walter Scott reviewed it in the "Quarterly," and in his criticism places our bard "among the true sons of song." Sir Walter concludes his review in these words:—"There is little time to be lost if the, as yet, unprinted literature" of the Highlanders "is to be preserved at all. In spite of all that can be done . . . the language of the Gael, like their peculiar manners, must ere long disappear from this island. Even of their blood, if things go on as they have been doing for the last forty years" [this was written in 1830] "there will, at no distant date, be more in Canada than in Scotland. But no semblance of their old system of society is at all likely to be built up in the Transatlantic wildernesses to which they are so rapidly removing themselves; and we fear but little of the more poetical part of their character will survive through more than a single generation those ties of patriarchal attachment and devotion which foreign violence could never disturb," . . . but "which the avarice of vanity has not hesitated to sever."

Surprise has often been expressed how such a man as Rob Donn, without a grain of what is commonly called education, should be able to compose pieces embodying such pure and refined sentiments as those contained in his elegies and other poems. But the state of society in the Highlands in those days was very different from what it is now. Then, the ties of clanship were strictly observed; there was a close friendly feeling between its various members—from the Chief to the lowliest cottager—and, further, there was a constant fraternal interchange of ideas between rich and poor, which gave a polish to the speech of even the humblest among them, not to be found in people of the same social scale among the Lowlanders or English. Hence, in a measure, that purity of expression found in the works of all the Gaelic poets. Nobility of sentiment, a high sense of honour, the ridiculing of vice, and the praise of virtue, were the natural results of such a system, and these were themes to which the poets delighted to give utterance. These feelings still linger in some districts of the Highlands at the present day. But, "alas! how fallen, how

changed" is the "country" Rob Donn made vocal with his song. The straths and hill-sides which, in his day, and for a couple of generations after, sustained a happy, contented, and industrious population in "peace and plenty," are now solitary as the desert—sheep and deer have supplanted men!

As an illustration of the state of society in the Highlands in Rob Donn's time, I may state that an aunt of my father's told me repeatedly she remembered well that almost every evening her father (my great-grandfather) considered it a duty to go into the kitchen of his house, where his servants and a number of the small tenants would be assembled, and read aloud to them. That is, he would put into Gaelic what he found in the few books and newspapers which at that time found their way to his remote locality, as few of the servants or small tenants could understand English. Then remarks were made on, and conclusions drawn from, what had been read. And, the old lady would add, it was surprising how acute and pointed many of the remarks were. This was practised all over the Reay country, as well as other parts of the Highlands. The superiors regularly informed and explained to their dependants all that was going on, it being then considered no small part of the duty of the higher classes to elevate the mind, as well as assist in increasing the means of their humbler relatives and clansmen. With such habits, it is not to be wondered that the people of the country were of refined and moral character. "A dishonourable action excluded the guilty person from the privileges enjoyed by his equals; grievances of every kind were inquired into and redressed; and the humble orders of the community had a degree of polish, and a manly mildness of deportment, in domestic life, to which few of the present day have attained, much as has been said of modern improvements." The imprint of this is still seen in the superior bearing and speech of the Reay country peasantry, even after the lapse of nearly a century.

In conclusion, Sir Walter Scott's warning has not been altogether in vain, for the labours of Mr J. F. Campbell in collecting the Gaelic tales and poems he has already published were, I have been told, first suggested by reading the criticism on Rob Donn in the "Quarterly Review." But much remains to be done, and the members of a Society such as this can help greatly in rescuing many a literary gem from oblivion, by collecting poems, songs, and ballads they have heard in their younger days, but which have never been printed. Every glen in the Highlands, almost every village has its local poet; and our Society would be a fit repository for such

fugitive pieces as I have hinted at. May I, a stranger, take the liberty of directing the attention of the Council to this, more especially as we are soon to have a Chair in Scotland (thanks, above all, to Professor Blackie) for Celtic Languages and Literature. Every scrap that can be gathered will be of importance.

6TH APRIL 1876.

At this meeting, Mr Robert Macleod, Leuchars, Fife, was elected an ordinary member. The Secretary, on behalf of Mr C. S. Jerram, M.A., Windlesham, Surrey (an English gentleman who, by study, has acquired a knowledge of the Gaelic language), read the following paper, entitled—

#### SOME CAUSES OF THE IMPERFECT APPRECIATION BY ENGLISHMEN OF THE OSSIANIC POEMS.

Before beginning my remarks, I would beg leave to draw your attention to the *wording* of my title, in explanation of the method I propose to follow in treating the subject I have chosen for our consideration this evening. The terms I desire to define and explain at the outset are three in number, “Englishmen,” “Appreciation,” and “Ossianic.”

Under the appellation of *Englishmen* I intend to include all those who are not by birth and language “children of the Gael,” whether actual natives of Scotland, or of the non-Gaelic-speaking districts of Scotland and Ireland; all, in short, who cannot be supposed to have any national or patriotic bias to start with, in favour of Highland literature in general, or of Ossianic poetry in particular. The neglect of this distinction, as shown in the indiscriminate confounding of all the inhabitants of Scotland, as though they were one in race and language, is a fertile source of error.

Secondly, I mean to use the word *appreciation* in its legitimate sense by derivation, of *putting a due price or value* upon a thing, that is to say, praising its merits when they exist, but not, on the other hand, being blind to its defects.

Thirdly, by *Ossianic* poems, I understand, not only the celebrated collection purporting to have been made by James Macpherson, but also the poems contained in other similar collections,

especially in the *Sean Dàna*, published by Dr Smith, of Campbelton, in 1780, to a portion of which I happen to have devoted my own more particular attention. But I shall, of course, give the first and chief place to Macpherson's *Ossian*, as being the larger and better known collection of poems, which profess to treat of the exploits of Fion, the son of Comhal, and of the other heroes known and designated as the "Fingalian."

I can scarcely hope to achieve anything like a complete or consistent treatment of my subject, without involving myself to some extent in the celebrated controversy respecting the authenticity of the aforesaid poems; nevertheless it is not my intention to conduct you through all the mazes of this dispute, which bids fair to continue, at least for some time yet to come. This I desire to avoid for two reasons; first and chiefly, because, though I have studied the question with much interest, I do not feel that I have as yet come to what I can call a definite conclusion upon its main issues; and secondly, because the controversy has lately been begun afresh, with some amount of newly discovered material, to which I shall have occasion shortly to refer, but whose value I do not wish to judge prematurely. For the present, therefore, I will simply crave for indulgence, while I briefly enumerate some of the leading facts of the case, and give you a summary of the principal arguments which have been adduced on both sides of the question.

About 120 years ago, Jerome Stone published his translation of a Gaelic poem entitled "Albin and Mey." I mention him particularly, because he was not a Highlander, but an inhabitant of Fifeshire, who, having a school at Dunkeld, took advantage of his residence there to learn the Gaelic language, and make the aforesaid translation. I venture therefore to claim him as the first "Englishman" (in the sense I have already explained) who showed his "appreciation" of Gaelic poetry. His rendering is described by Mr J. F. Campbell, in vol. iv. of "Tales of the West Highlands," p. 79, as "a paraphrase, but faithful."

James Macpherson was born in 1738, and was first a student at Aberdeen. In 1759 he met with John Home, with whom he held a conversation, which led him to translate and publish two specimens of ancient Gaelic poetry. Then, by the advice of Dr Blair, he was induced to translate others, and in 1760 he published a volume entitled "Fragments of Ancient Poetry, collected in the Highlands of Scotland," now rather a rare book. The professed original of these Fragments was never published, and has not been discovered; the English version is paraphrased in

the same peculiar style with which we are all familiar in the *Poems of Ossian*. In 1762 and 1763 appeared the English of *Fingal* and *Temora*, with an appended Gaelic text, professedly the original of the seventh Duan of the latter poem. (Hence it appears that it is not quite correct to say that Macpherson never published any Gaelic at all, till he was forced to do so long afterwards by the pressure of public opinion; for he seems to have brought out this fragment in 1763 of his own accord.) The other poems of the collection—*Cathloda*, *Comhala*, and the rest—were published about the same time, and gained an immense reputation, so that in a short time they were translated into nearly every language of Europe. Of these the Italian version, by Cesarotti, is perhaps the one most generally known. In Britain, however, they began to be denounced as manifest forgeries, by many men more or less eminent in the world of letters, among whom the names of Dr Johnson, Mr Laing, and Mr Pinkerton, were most conspicuous, and will most readily occur to all who are conversant with the subject. Of the criticisms of the two last named gentlemen I do not propose to speak, except by way of a passing observation. Mr Laing mainly contented himself with depreciating assertions concerning the inability of a barbarous people to produce such specimens of literature; while Mr Pinkerton devoted his industry, with some apparent degree of success, to the proving a charge of plagiarism against Macpherson, who, as he alleged, had stolen numerous ideas and expressions from the Bible, from Homer, Virgil, and other ancient sources. But with Dr Johnson we are very much more concerned; for I venture to regard his influence as a prime moving cause of the result we are considering—the unreasoning opposition to the claims of the Ossianic poems at this period. I mean that at the time of their first publication an unfavourable bias was given to public opinion through the influence of the man who was undoubtedly able to turn its current in almost any direction he pleased. He was certainly in the proper sense of the word a *great* man, and one to whom we all, Englishmen and Scotchmen alike, owe an immense debt of gratitude; but there was withal much of the bigot in his character. Prejudiced he was and overbearing in his behaviour towards those who differed from him; impatient of contradiction, and a genuine hater of all imposture, or what he believed to be such. He did not always condescend to assure himself of the truth of his facts, and on this ground, if on no other, he by no means appears to advantage as regards the part he took in the Ossianic controversy of his day. He roundly stated his conviction that the Scottish people

were so barbarous and ignorant, that it was simply impossible that they could ever have produced any poetry worth preserving, with a great deal more to the same effect; and he ended with the bold assertion that no Gaelic MS. existed one hundred years old! The first statement was, of course, tantamount to assuming the very thing he had set himself to prove, the second was the result of pure ignorance, and not perhaps a deliberate falsehood; yet the English public took for granted that what the great man said was true, and believed accordingly. With such ingredients in his mental composition as I have described, it is easy to imagine what Dr Johnson's feelings must have been, when he heard that one James Macpherson, belonging to a nation against which he had always been strongly prejudiced, and whose character for veracity he was always disposed to question, had published what purported to be a genuine collection of ancient Gaelic poetry, of which he offered no more than an English version of his own, the originals, if ever there were any, being (as it appeared) studiously kept out of sight. The doctor at once denounced the whole business as an impudent attempt at imposture, and considered himself to be the proper person to expose it. "Where are the MSS?" he exclaims. "They can be shown if they exist. So far as we can find, the Erse [Gaelic] language was never written till very lately. A nation that cannot write has no MSS. None of the old Erse families had a single letter in Erse that we heard of. You say that many can remember parts of Ossian. I believe all those parts are versions of the English; at least there are no proofs of their antiquity." And then see his final letter to Macpherson, the last of a correspondence, conducted with unusual acrimony and violent abuse on both sides. It runs as follows:—"MR JAMES MACPHERSON! I received your foolish and impudent letter. Any violence offered me I shall do my best to repel; and what I cannot do for myself the law shall do for me. I hope I shall never be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat by the menaces of a ruffian! What would you have me retract? I thought your book an imposture; I think it an imposture still. . . . Your rage I defy; your abilities are not so formidable, and what I hear of your morals inclines me to pay regard, not to what you shall *say*, but to what you shall *prove*." This last allusion to "morals" is an insinuation of untruthfulness against Macpherson, and agrees very well with what Dr Johnson had said, in a previous letter to Boswell, of the Scottish people generally:—"I am surprised that, knowing as you do the disposition of your countrymen to tell lies in favour of each other, you can be at all

affected by any reports that circulate among them." That the man who wrote in this fashion was terribly in earnest there can be no reasonable doubt; yet there is nothing in all that he says which is worthy of the name of *criticism*, nor anything pertinent to the matter in dispute, except the just and proper demand for the production of the alleged originals. That Macpherson did not produce them at the time, if he had the power to do so is, to say the least of it, an unfortunate circumstance. The rest is mere unverified assertion on the part of Dr Johnson, combined with prejudice as narrow as it was violent; but coming as it did from the foremost literary man of the age, and a recognised leader of public opinion, his criticism gained celebrity, and carried with it a weight which is distinctly felt in its effects upon the popular mind of Englishmen even to the present time.

The other day I got hold of a little book, published in or about 1810, entitled "True Stories from Ancient History," and designed for the use of children. From this book I have taken the following extract:—"Fingal, King of Morven, died about this time (A.D. 280.) The poems that describe his actions are called 'Ossian's Poems,' as it was pretended they were written by Ossian. But it is generally believed that they were chiefly composed by Mr Macpherson, the gentleman who published them. Why he should not acknowledge having written pieces of so high beauty and merit is a riddle difficult to be explained. Why any rational person should assert the thing that is not true must ever be inexplicable." I am afraid this last is far too common a phenomenon to call for extreme surprise; but what I wish to draw attention to is the very loose manner in which the main results of the Ossianic controversy are stated in the extract above quoted, which, being intended for the instruction of children, may be supposed to embody in a condensed form the current belief upon this subject at the time the book was written.

I have taken Dr Johnson simply as the originator and most conspicuous example of those who have indulged in this unreasoning style of criticism (falsely so-called), upon the claims of Macpherson's *Ossian* to authenticity. It would be tedious to enumerate even the names of others who followed in his wake, but I will conclude this portion of my subject by a citation from Lord Macaulay, who was too eminent a man to be passed over entirely without notice. In his biography of Samuel Johnson, the only remarks he has condescended to make with respect to the Ossianic question are as follows:—"Macpherson, whose *Fingal* had been proved to be an impudent forgery, threatened to take vengeance with a cane.

The only effect of this threat was that Johnson reiterated the charge of forgery in the most contemptuous terms [see the letter quoted above], and walked about during some time with a cudgel, which, if the impostor had not been too wise to encounter it, would assuredly have descended upon him, to borrow the sublime language of his own epic poem, ‘like a hammer on the red son of the furnace.’” It has been the fashion, in some quarters, to single out the name of Macaulay for special reprobation, because, being himself a Scot by birth, he chose to vilify one of his own compatriots, and to treat the professed liberator of his country with contempt and scorn. I see no justice in this complaint; the question is one of fact, not of patriotism; and if Macaulay had chosen to support his view of that question by a fair course of argument, based on an intelligent examination of the alleged facts, he ought not to have been deterred from doing so by any national considerations whatever. What we have to complain of is that he does not descend to do anything of the kind, but merely reiterates in his own forcible style assertions which others had made before him, and which we cannot by any stretch of imagination suppose to have been intended by him as arguments at all.

We now come to what I will designate as the second cause of the opposition of Englishmen and non-Highlanders generally to the claims of the so-called poems of Ossian during the lifetime of Macpherson. They were published at a time when the hostile feeling between the supporters of the ill-fated house of Stuart and the Hanoverian Government was almost at its height. Long before these days, as Macaulay tells us (this time without much exaggeration), “a Highlander was synonymous with a thief;” and those of them who had retained the Gaelic customs and language (the *dress* had been absolutely proscribed), were the objects of suspicion and contempt to the English-speaking public in both countries. Sir John Sinclair (quoted by Dr Clerk in the preface to his edition of *Ossian*) says—“In 1762, when *Fingal* was published, there existed both in England and in Scotland a great spirit of hostility to everything connected with the Gaelic language, on account of the zeal with which the Highlanders of 1745 had supported the house of Stuart. Hence many were induced to decry the beauties of Ossian.” Can we then suppose that at such a time, and under such circumstances as these, the “appreciation” of the Ossianic remains should have been otherwise than “imperfect.”

Hitherto we have been dealing solely with the English paraphrase by Macpherson, concerning the date and authorship of which there has never been any dispute, and in which, as all

competent judges must admit, there are many passages of rare excellence and beauty. The history of the Gaelic text which professes to be its original is a curious one; and it is upon the degree of authenticity which can be allowed for this text that the whole "Ossianic controversy" is founded. It is admitted on both sides that Macpherson did collect a number of Gaelic ballads in the Highlands; the question is—What were these? and how much of genuine material is contained in the Gaelic text of 1807, the only one which we now possess? I shall recur to this subject presently; meanwhile I will briefly sum up what I have been able to collect respecting Macpherson's proceedings. It appears that instead of publishing his MSS. when first requested to do so (with the exception of the Seventh Duan of *Temora*, which we have seen was published in Gaelic in 1763), he deposited them with his London publishers, where they remained for a whole year, without anyone taking the trouble to examine them. Incredible as this may seem, it is asserted as a fact beyond all possibility of contradiction. It is further said that Macpherson would have published the MSS. then, if he could have got a sufficient number of subscribers to defray the expenses; but it was not till about 1790 that £1000 was subscribed for the purpose, and he then set about preparing a copy, but unfortunately died before the work could be completed, in 1796. The MSS. had been already sent to Mr John Mackenzie, of the Temple, who was Macpherson's executor; he soon afterwards died, and his son delivered them to the Highland Society of London, who finally published the book in 1807. Now it must be remembered that these MSS. had passed through the hands of more than one editor, not including Macpherson himself; also that Dr Ross, of Lochbroom, to whom the task of editing was chiefly entrusted, re-wrote the whole work, having had special instructions to adapt the orthography to the received standard of the Gaelic Bible of 1801. And when, in addition to these facts, we consider what the original collection is likely to have suffered at the hands of Macpherson and his coadjutors during those five or six years of preparation, we shall find it difficult to believe that the Gaelic of 1807 is a true and faithful transcript of those originals, even if there were no internal evidence pointing to a similar conclusion. Thus much, I think, I may safely assert respecting the general question of the authenticity of this Gaelic text; what more immediately concerns the subject of this paper is the belief, which I hold most strongly, that the said Gaelic text cannot be in its entirety a translation from the English of Mac-

pherson. I will not go so far as to say that no portions of it are so, but I am speaking of the work as a whole, and of its best parts especially. These are in many ways superior to the English version; simpler in diction and grander in style than the latter, which, admirable as it is in many respects, and decidedly a work of genius, does nevertheless often produce the effect of something "akin to bombast," as Mr J. F. Campbell truly says in his popular Tales of the West Highlands. I am sorry to be compelled to differ from this eminent authority with regard to his latest assertion on this point, in a letter to the "Highlander," dated September 1875; but as he there gives no reasons for it, whereas he has given very good and sufficient reasons for the opposite view on p. 144 foll. of the work I have just referred to, I hope I shall not be thought presumptuous if I exercise my own right of judgment in favour of Mr Campbell's earlier opinion, that the notion of the Gaelic Ossian being a translation from English is "something almost absurd," and that "it is impossible that it can be a translation from Macpherson's English." The very imperfections and in some cases positive errors, which are to be found in the latter, show that the translator had before him a text not greatly differing in those portions from the Gaelic of 1807, and yet that he has in several instances quite missed its meaning. I subjoin one or two specimens of the Gaelic with the two versions of Macpherson and of Dr Clerk in his lately published edition of Ossian, italicising those portions in which the former has given an incorrect or imperfect rendering. In *Cathloda*, line 42 foll., the Gaelic is :—

“ Thusa chòmh'n'cheas am measg nan clàrsach,  
*A sgiath bhallach druid-sa gu m' làimh* ;  
 Till an sruth mòr so o m' thaobh,  
*No ri m' thaobh* bitheadh do thuineadh fo lär.”

This is the address of Fingal to his shield, which Dr Clerk thus translates :—"Thou that dwellest amid the harps, thou spotted shield, close on my arm; turn this torrent from my side, or by my side lie under ground." Macpherson's paraphrase has very little sense, if any—"Come down, thou dweller between the harps! Thou shalt roll this stream away, or waste with me in earth."

In the fourth Duan of *Temora*, the spirit of Cairbar appears to his brother Cathmor, and foretells the issue of the war in these terms—

“ Tachradh sòlas do d’ anam féin ;  
 Chualas caismeachd *o threun* air magh ;  
 Thug am bàrd an dàn le feum,  
 Tha astar mo cheuman ‘s a’ ghaoith ;  
 Tha mo chruth ‘an talla ciar,  
*Mar dhealan nan sian fo fhuath,*  
*‘Nuair a bhriseas e claoen air sliabh,*  
 Stoirm oidhche a’ triall *o thuath*,  
 Cha bhi am bàrd air chall o d’uaimh ;  
*‘Nuair a thaigear thu suas ‘s an ùir,*  
 Tha siol nan dàn mu thréin *a luaidh* ;  
 Tha d’ainm mar *fhuaim* o ghaoith tha ciùin,  
 Tha *toirmé tròm a’ bhròin* ‘s a’ gheann ;  
 Tha guth *fada thall* air Lubar.”

Dr Clerk’s version is—

“ May happiness betide thy soul !  
 I heard the voice of *the brave* on the field,  
 The bard gave forth the song *with power*,  
 The path of my steps is on the wind ;  
 My form is in the *dusky* hall,  
*Like dreaded lightning of the storms,*  
*When it bursts and scatters on the hill,*  
 And the night tempest *travels from the North*.  
 A bard shall not be wanting at thy grave ;  
 When thou shalt be laid in dust,  
 The sons of song sing of the brave.  
 Thy name is as *the sound of a gentle wind* ;  
*The heavy moan of grief* is in the glen ;  
 A voice is *far away* on Lubar.”

Observe how much Macpherson has missed in his rendering of the above passage. “ Joy meet the soul of Cathmor ! His voice was heard in Moilena. The bard gave his song to Coirbar. He travels on the wind. My form is in my father’s hall, like the gliding of a terrible light, which darts across the desert in a stormy night. No bard shall be waiting at thy tomb, when thou art lowly laid. The sons of song love the valiant. Cathmor, thy name is as a pleasant gale. The mournful sounds arise. On Lubar’s field there is a voice.”

There is a celebrated passage in the first Duan of *Fingal*, de-

scribing the chariot of Cuchullin. It begins with the line (in the Gaelic of 1807)—

“Carbad, carbad, garbh a' chòmhraig,”

and for ten lines onward Macpherson's translation is highly spirited and in the main correct. But the eleventh and twelfth lines are not so successfully rendered—*e.g.*, “The sides are *replenished* with spears, *the bottom is the footstool* of heroes.” Now, as the Gaelic has no equivalent for the words in italics, but may be literally rendered, “It is the *dwelling-place* of spears, of shields, of swords, and of heroes,” it might be supposed that Macpherson had here a different text from that of 1807, especially as we find quite another version of the whole passage given in the Appendix to the Report of the Highland Society's Committee. This I should really be inclined to believe to be the case, were it not for the evidence which presents itself on nearly every page of the English *Ossian*, of the translator's propensity to improve upon the simplicity of his original, by inserting what he imagined to be ornaments, in the way of metaphors and flowery additions of his own. Several examples of this are given in the Society's Report, and their opinion is that in Macpherson's translation the clearness of the original is “frequently lost in words, of which the sound pleases the ear, but which are of a general indeterminate sort, that might belong to any other place or object of a similar kind.” Therefore I do not feel by any means sure that Macpherson did not insert the phrase, “footstool of heroes” in the passage in question, in preference to simply giving the literal translation. But the best, or rather the worst of the story (as affecting Macpherson's credit as a translator), remains to be told. The passage continues with a fine description of Cuchullin's steed, too well known to need citation, and the last two lines of the Gaelic run thus—

“Bu shoilleir a dreach 's bu luath  
'Shiubhal; Sith-fada b'e ainm.”

*i.e.*, “Shining was his form, *speedy his pace; his name Si-fada*” (or “Long-stride”). But Macpherson has actually blundered so far as to take the name *Siubhal* for a part of the horse's name; and so, disjoining it from the clause to which it belongs, he has favoured us with the memorable rendering—“His name is *Sulin-sifadda!*” Will anyone maintain that the Gaelic of *this* line was composed after or from the English as its original? By whom and when

the Gaelic itself was written (whether the actual text of 1807 or an earlier one) is a different question altogether. That it could not have been the work of Ossian, or of any bard of the third or fourth century A.D., in its present *epic* form, ought to be obvious to all, and there are sufficient grounds for asserting that Macpherson could not have done it for himself. The question, though one of great interest, is not material to the subject before us, all I am now concerned to prove being that the Gaelic is on the whole *not a translation from the English*, that it is vastly superior to it, and lastly, that it has suffered very much at the hands of the translator. The third cause then which I assign for the "imperfect appreciation by Englishmen of the Ossianic poems" is their ignorance of the Gaelic language, and the consequent necessity imposed upon them of reading these poems in a version often incorrect, and in most points inferior.

The defects of such a paraphrastic rendering appear still more prominently in Dr Smith's *Sean Dàna*, in the English version of which he has imitated Macpherson's peculiar style, and on the whole imitated it badly. In his introduction he makes no secret of the principle upon which he worked, and he is so far more candid than his predecessor; for he tells us plainly that after collecting his specimens of ancient Gaelic poetry, he arranged them as seemed best to himself, and that "a few lines are sometimes thrown in to join episodes together." The unsatisfactory nature of his translation induced me to attempt a new one, which, notwithstanding several errors discovered since the publication, is at any rate more literal than Dr Smith's, and does not aim at enlarging or improving upon the professed original. Allow me to cite two instances of the Doctor's version from my Introduction, and to compare them with my own. Both are from the First Part of *Dàn an Deirg*.

Line 9—"San là ud bha Comhal nam buadh  
Le cheòl a's le shluagh air an leirg;  
(Ge h-iosal fo chluainein an fhéidh  
An diugh an laoch treun ann am feirg,  
A leaba fo chòs nan clach,  
Am fasgadh na daraig aosda)."

This I have rendered thus:—

" On that day was Cual the glorious [lit. 'of victories.' ]  
With music and with his host upon the plain ;

(Though low beneath the pasture of the deer  
 To-day lies the hero, once terrible in wrath,  
 His bed under the hollow of the stones,  
 In the shelter of the aged oak.)"

Dr Smith's paraphrase runs—"Comhal *sat on that rock*, where now the deer graze on his tomb. The mark of his bed are *three gray stones* and a *leafless oak*; *they are mantled over with the moss of years*." All this last sentence comes out of the single word *aosda*.

Line 47—"A Dheirg sin am bàrra nan crann,  
 Is fann an iall ris an d'earb thu ;  
 Mòr-bheinn cha 'n fhaic thu gu bràth.  
 Tha d'fhalt àrnach air tuinn 'g a luasgadh ;  
 Is mòr do bheud, a dhoinionn !  
 Togaibh, a thaibhse, leibh e !"

This is addressed by Cual to the supposed ghost of his lost comrade; it forms a highly poetical apostrophe. I will not trouble you with the literal translation, but Dr Smith has turned it into a plain prosaic narrative by paraphrasing it thus—"Dargo climbed the mast *to look for Morven*, but Morven he saw no more. The thong broke in his hand, and the waves, with all their foam, leapt over his *red* wandering hair. *The fury of the blast drove our sails, and we lost sight of the chief. We lost sight of the chief*, and bade the ghosts *of his fathers* convey him *to his place of rest*." There is indeed another version of the fourth line—"Dh'fholuich tonna bàite uainn thu," which may represent, "We lost sight of the chief"—but otherwise the italicised portions have no equivalent whatever in the Gaelic text. In this then, as in the case of the more famous collection, a want of acquaintance with the Gaelic must prove a serious drawback to the due appreciation of these poems.

Here I might conclude, did I not feel that a certain recent addition to our Ossianic literature demands something more than a passing notice. I refer to Dr Hately Waddell's "Ossian and the Clyde," lately published in Glasgow, whose main object and scope I cannot better describe than by giving an extract from a letter which I received from him last year. After mentioning some of the causes of the general lack of interest in the Ossianic poems, which I have already stated, he continues—"The geographical obscurity was so gross and impalpable, that nobody could

realise a single scene with certainty; and thousands were induced to believe that the obscurity itself was the surest proof of imposture. If the scenes had been distinctly recognisable, the poems would have had a sort of permanent interest, even though they had not been believed; but being neither believed on the one hand nor understood on the other, popular interest began at last to fail. The object of my work is to localise and identify every scene described to such an extent of minuteness, that any intelligent reader at this hour may set his own feet where Ossian and Fingal once stood 1500 years ago." The object he here proposes to himself he has certainly carried out with extraordinary elaboration, and in many cases with much apparent success. I can only refer you to the book itself for his identification of Lutha and Torlutha with the Blackwater and Drumadoon in Arran; of Cromla, Jura, and other places renowned in *Fingal* and *Temora*, with corresponding localities in the north-east of Ireland; of the Lake of Lego with Lough Neagh; of Ithona, Inishuna, and Lumon, with the district about the Rhinns of Galloway and the Solway Firth, and many more too long to enumerate. I have neither space nor the requisite independent information for a criticism of this remarkable work; that every reader will rise from its perusal with a conviction that the geographical and topographical difficulties have in every single instance received a full and complete solution, is more than the author himself would probably expect; that he has collected a vast amount of material, both interesting in itself and calculated to throw much light upon the subject he has undertaken to investigate, may, I think, be freely admitted. And as Dr Waddell is the only person who has ever thought of adducing this particular kind of evidence in support of the authenticity of Macpherson's *Ossian*, it is but fair that he should enjoy the credit of having done so.

The causes, then, which I have adduced for the comparative neglect of Ossianic literature, are four in number—1. The paramount influence of Dr Johnson, and other literary men, at and after the time of Macpherson's publication of his *Ossian*, combined with other unfortunate circumstances in connection with the early editions; 2. The hostile feeling between the two political parties in Scotland and England about the middle of the last century; 3. The inability of most Englishmen to read the poems in the Gaelic language, assumed to be the original; 4. Certain geographical obscurities, which gave an air of unreality to the narrative, and confirmed the disbelief in its historical accuracy.

The result of all this has been a comparative neglect of the

national language and literature in the very quarter where they ought to have been most carefully fostered, that is, among the Highland people themselves. Long ago many ministers of religion thought fit to discourage the recitation of the ancient tales and ballads in the long winter evenings, as a misemployment of time which might be better and more profitably spent; while at other times an exaggerated notion of utility has led many of the Gaelic-speaking people to neglect, if not to despise, the cultivation of their own language, and thus practically to further the *anti-Celtic* influence which has been doing its work elsewhere with alarming effect. But there are signs of a better state of things already approaching—nay, even already come. When classical scholars, at home and abroad, are beginning to think the Celtic language, and the remains of Celtic literatures worth their serious attention; when Professors in Scottish Universities are devoting their time and labour to the same object; and when a great movement is being made for the establishment of a Celtic Chair both in Edinburgh and in Oxford, there is surely ground for hoping that the treasures of Ossianic lore will not be suffered to lie unheeded and forgotten. In the matter of the Ossianic controversy, much may be done, if both sides will only submit to hear an unprejudiced statement of *facts*, where these are known, and to draw an unbiassed conclusion from them. But whoever was the author of these poems, they are full of beauties, and will richly repay the trouble of the student who learns the language in which they are presented.

I have only to add that, if my own labours shall have tended in any degree to this result, by introducing certain of these poems to a larger and more intelligent circle of readers, and increasing the interest that should be felt in them, as specimens of Gaelic literature, I shall not feel that the work has failed of its reward.

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| An Gaidheal for 1873.....                   | The Publishers                     |
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| Sailm Dhaibhidh Ameadreachd (Ed. 1659).   |                       |

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| Philologic Uses of the Celtic Tongue, by<br>Professor Geddes (1872).....                          | The Author                     |
| Philologic Use of the Celtic Tongue (1873)..  | ditto                          |
| Poems by Ossian, in metre (1769).....   | Mr Alex. Kennedy,<br>Inverness |
| Proceedings of the Historical and Archaeo-<br>logical Association of Ireland (1870-3).The Society |                                |
| Shaw's Gaelic Dictionary (1780).....  | Rev. A. Macgregor              |
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| Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness, vols. i., ii., iii., and iv..... |                        |
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| Orain le Rob Donn.....  |                        |
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## N O T E.

With reference to the foot-note on page 149 of the last volume of Transactions, Mr Jolly writes to the Society that, when speaking on the teaching of Gaelic at the annual supper of the Society in 1875, he referred, amongst other matters, to the fact that Highland schools could be successfully taught by Lowland teachers who did not know Gaelic, for the purpose of showing that the area of selection of teachers for Highland schools need not be narrowed to Gaelic-speaking teachers only. In proof of this he named certain schools he had visited, which were amongst the best schools in the North, which were taught by Lowland teachers, ignorant of Gaelic when appointed, and regarding which he had noted the very high general intelligence of the pupils. The schools he then mentioned were — Lochcarron, Eddrachillis, Portree, Duirinish, Benbecula, and Kingussie, all which were taught at the time he referred to by non-Gaelic teachers. None of the teachers of these schools had written to the newspapers on the subject, with the exception of the teacher of Portree, who had written to the opposite effect to the "*Highlander*." The only teacher of all those he had spoken of, who had acquired Gaelic since settling in the Highlands, was the teacher of Duirinish, who had written a sensible letter, in reply to one from Mr Jolly, to say that though he had acquired Gaelic he would not begin with it in school.









