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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for December 11th, 2015

To see what we've added to the Electric Scotland site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/whatsnew.htm>

To see what we've added to the Electric Canadian site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/whatsnew.htm>

For the latest news from Scotland see our ScotNews feed at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/>

Electric Scotland News

chokka blog

I came across this site quite by chance and would recommend you to bookmark it and visit regularly.

To me it provides a valuable counter to the SNP rhetoric. Here is what is said about him...

A hero taking on the SNP

This week I acquired a new political hero. His name is Kevin Hague, a self-made Scottish businessman and major employer in West Lothian. Recently Mr Hague has emerged as a political and economic analyst.

I urge everyone who cares about the British union — and, for that matter, the honest truth — to read his brilliant daily blog, which can be found online under chokkablog.blogspot.com.

In it, Mr Hague demolishes one by one the dishonest arguments employed by the Scottish National Party to make the case for independence.

The power and integrity of his work is remarkable. Mr Hague is a brave man because he is obliged as a result to endure malice and abuse from the cybernats.

In return, and with great courtesy, he demolishes their false claims He is a remarkable man indeed.

One such post is Full Fiscal Autonomy for Dummies at:

<http://chokkablog.blogspot.co.uk/2015/04/full-fiscal-autonomy-for-dummies.html>

Visit his blog at: <http://chokkablog.blogspot.co.uk/>

And now some news from the Scottish Press in the past week...

Nicola Sturgeon under fire over Forth Road Bridge

Nicola Sturgeon today faced claims that the Forth Bridge budget was hammered in recent years.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/fmqs-nicola-sturgeon-under-fire-over-forth-road-bridge-1-3972122>

Rise in women taking up grouse shooting

There was a major upturn in the number of women grouse shooting this year, according to sporting estates.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-35054076>

SNP government under fire over teacher numbers
THE SNP government has been accused of badly letting down our schools.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/education/snp-government-under-fire-over-teacher-numbers-1-3970727>

How to survive a night in a Scottish mountain bothy
Reaching them can be a challenging experience, especially with the added complication of having to cart in materials for repairs and renovation.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/2XRPRJYdd2HjIFiGRpsWCbp/fire-whisky-and-wolves-how-to-survive-a-night-in-a-scottish-mountain-bothy>

Shifting sand dunes reveal large Bronze Age settlement
Shifting sands have revealed a significant complex of Bronze Age buildings in Orkney

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-north-east-orkney-shetland-35049323>

No progress on Scottish diet, says Food Standards Scotland
Scotland's new food standards body has recommended tougher targets for healthy eating after finding little or no progress over the past 15 years.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-35050436>

How the fiddle landed in Canada from Orkney
THEY sailed to Canada to hunt for minks and Arctic foxes and left behind, in the frozen North, the power of fiddle music.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/heritage/people-places/how-the-fiddle-landed-in-canada-from-orkney-1-3965554>

Welcome to fair and equal Scotland
The gap between Scottish National party rhetoric and daily reality gets wider all the time

Read more at:

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/dec/05/scotland-health-fairness-politics>

Scots more physically active than people in rest of the UK
The analysis by the Global Observatory for Physical Activity showed 64% of adults took part in 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-35006679>

Advertising

Just thought I should mention that I decided to get rid of the InfoLinks double green underline adverts. Frankly they were starting to irritate me and the adverts seemed to mostly point to Facebook so didn't add anything to the site. So they are now gone!

I am trying to find a direct advertiser that would pay £500 a month for a banner advert in the header of the site and thus on all pages. However I'm also hoping to find one that would consider doing a series of weekly articles to go with the banner and thus add to our knowledge. It would certainly be ideal for a tourism type campaign. So if any of you can help me find one please get in touch.

I have noticed that my US visitors are pretty steady on 40% of our traffic but also a greater percentage from the UK which is now 32% of our traffic. Last year they were on or around 23% so that's a significant increase. Pretty much three quarters are from England and one quarter from Scotland.

Electric Canadian

Scottish Review

I came across this article about Canada in the Scottish Review and thought you might like to read it for a Scottish perspective on the election of Justin Trudeau. You can get to this at:

<http://www.scottishreview.net/MichaelElcock16a.html>

The Life of John Mockett Cramp, D.D.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

A word of explanation is deemed advisable. It was the hope of some members of the family that Thomas Cramp, Esq., late of Montreal, would prepare a brief sketch of his father's life for publication. So far as tender regard and needful information were concerned, no one else could hope to do it so well as he. He was old enough when the family left England in 1844, to be able, in after years, to call to mind many incidents of early life. Frequent visits were made by him, during the last few years of his life, to the home of his childhood. Correspondence was also kept up with the friends of the family in England.

Had he been permitted to undertake this work, doubtless many reminiscences, which give so much of life and interest to biography, would have been interwoven, and added great value to the record.

It required some time after his much lamented decease in 1885, before the work could be thought of or undertaken by another. This may explain why over six years have been allowed to pass without some permanent record of such a useful and instructive life, as that which is but too imperfectly exhibited in this small volume.

The work, such as it is, has necessarily been done at short intervals, as other pressing duties could be, for the moment, laid aside. If more time could have been devoted to it, the memoir might have been much more worthy of him whose record is given.

Nearly all the documents and papers left by Dr. Cramp, from which information could be derived, were in his own peculiar system of short-hand writing. This enhanced the difficulty of the work—While it was easily read by himself, it was sometimes difficult for others to decipher. And the writer wishes hereby to acknowledge his great indebtedness to Miss Cramp for her valuable assistance in this matter. Without her aid, the task, which has been an exceedingly pleasant one, would have been, to say the least, much more difficult, if, indeed, it could have been done at all.

Two chapters—the one referring to efforts in behalf of the Missionary cause, and the one headed “The last things,” were furnished entire by Miss Cramp, who was the constant companion of her father, during the latter years of his life.

Valuable assistance has also been rendered by the other members of the family. If any pleasure or profit is derived from the perusal of the book, it will be largely due to the aid thus received from those who justly revere the memory of so great and good a father.

The labors, as well as the attainments of the subject of the following sketch, were so varied, and touched the world's interests at so many points, that it has been found difficult to avoid some repetition. Thoughts, and even expressions and dates already found in one connection, may appear again in another.

The hope, however, is cherished that whatever defects may be discovered in the style of the work, the unselfish life described therein, may be found stimulating and useful to some who peruse it, and especially to the young student who is looking out upon life, and anxiously enquiring in what direction success may be found.

The compiler of the following pages will have failed in one prominent aim of his endeavour, if the reader fails to see, that whatever natural endowments one may possess, work, honest, persistent and persevering work, is the royal road to both usefulness and success.

T. A. Higgins
WOLFVILLE, N. S.,
February, 1887.

You can download this book at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/cramp.htm>

Electric Scotland

Snippets from the Glasgow Herald

This is the section we've created thanks to John Henderson who has gained access to their archives from 1800 to 1990.

Added Cricket as a new category.

Also added Editorial Diary during WW2 - 5th to 13th January 1940 to our War Stories section along with another two entries. You can get to these at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/snippets/>

The Topographical, Statistical, and Historical Gazetteer of Scotland (1865)

I found the second edition of this publication so have now made this available at the foot of our Gazetteer page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/gazetteer/index.htm>

MacDonald's Scottish Directory and Gazetteer

Accompanied with Railway Map and Plans and Gazetteer and County Supplement, 1925-26 Edition. Added a link to this publication to the Gazetteer page at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/gazetteer/index.htm>

Scotland and the Scotch

Or, The Western Circuit by Catherine Sinclair (1840)

It may probably be considered a somewhat presumptuous hope for the author to imagine she might add any interest to what is already familiarly known respecting past and present times in Scotland ; and certainly if the many who could succeed in this attempt better, had undertaken the pleasing task at all, she might have entirely refrained from adding her mite to the general fund of entertainment on those interesting topics. The mine is abundant, and requires only to be worked, but strangers about to explore the northern regions, vainly inquire for any recent work, to act as a clue in conducting them through the labyrinth of our Highland hills and glens, affording the general information, and local anecdotes, which add life and animation to that beautiful scenery. While the press abounds with interesting pages, describing the present state of the Pawnees, Zoolus, Red Indians, Thugs, London pick-pockets, New Zealanders, and other barbarians, hardly one stray journal has ventured forth, these many years, respecting the almost unknown tribes of Caledonia.

An excursion in Scotland wants the novelty and adventure of savage life; neither can it boast of anything to compare with the gorgeous paraphernalia of a continental tour. The traveller must here dispense with carnivals, operas, cathedrals, restaurateurs, brigands, improvisa-tori, arch-dukes, and ex-kings; nor can he fall into raptures about the Venus de Medici, or the climate, but to compensate for these lamentable deficiencies, we have in the Highlands old traditions, second sight, bagpipes, witchcraft, clans, tartan, whiskey, heather, muir-fowl, red-deer, and Jacobites!

Should a single travelling carriage alter its course this year from Calais to the north, and trace out any part of this tour as it is described, with half the pleasure such an excursion is capable of exciting, the highest ambition of this volume would be attained, and the information afforded along the road will at least be found accurate. The author's chief perplexity has arisen from being too intimately acquainted with the country, as she finds great difficulty in compressing this work within portable compass, and she has also been deeply solicitous, not in a single instance to infringe the sacred privacy of society, nor the confidence of domestic life; therefore her pages resemble the catalogue of a picture exhibition—where landscapes only appear, they are described at full length, and historical scenes are drawn without disguise, but when an individual is accidentally introduced, he always preserves a strict incognito, being mentioned as the "Portrait of a gentleman," or "Likeness of an officer in uniform," or "Sketch of a chieftain in Highland costume."

The author wishes the pen may fall from her hand, before she writes a page not devoted to sound religion and strict propriety, or which can injure either the dead or the living. She believes, however, it must be conceded by every candid reader, that while occupying her own leisure, and endeavouring to beguile that of others, in sketching these recollections of Scotland's present beauty, and of Scotland's former greatness, she has recorded

"Not one line that, dying, I would wish to blot."

You can read this book at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scotch/index.htm>

Hale an Fere

A new song from John Henderson which you can get to at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerel600.htm>

Scottish Characteristics

By Paxton Hood (1883)

The advance sheets of this work have been sent to us by the Author as fast as they could be got ready. We have had several changes made in the body of the book adding an Index, and other improvements. We realized the fact that in the United States and in Canada there are almost as many Scotch, and people of Scotch descent, as there are in Scotland itself. They are indeed a grand and peculiar race of people, and Paxton Hood, we believe, is of all other writers the man to do them justice. We issue the volume with full confidence that it will take favorably with our readers.

You can download this book at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/books/pdf/scottishcharacter.htm>

Clan Leslie Society International

Got in the December 2015 Newsletter which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/leslieint/index.htm>

Reliques of Robert Burns

Original Letters, Poems, and Critical Observations of Scottish Songs Collected and Published by R. H. Cromek (1809) (pdf)

Here is part of the Preface...

ON an occasion of such delicacy as the presenting to the world another volume of the writings of Robert Burns, it becomes the Editor to account for his motives in undertaking the publication, and to explain his reasons for giving it in the form in which it now appears.

Whatever unhappiness the Poet was in his lifetime doomed to experience, few persons have been so fortunate in a biographer as Burns. A strong feeling of his excellencies, a perfect discrimination of his character, and a just allowance for his errors, are the distinguishing features in the work of Dr. Currie, who — With kind concern and skill has weav'd A silken web; and ne'er shall fade Its colours; gently has he laid The mantle o'er his sad distress. And Genius shall the texture bless.

The same judgment and discretion which dictated the memoirs of the poet, presided also in the selection of his writings in the edition by Dr. Currie; of which it may justly be said, that whilst no production of Burns could be withdrawn from it without diminishing its value, nothing is there inserted which can render his works unworthy of the approbation of manly taste, or inconsistent with the delicacy of female virtue. But although no reduction can be made from the published works of the poet, it will, it is hoped, appear from the following pages, that much may be added to them, not unworthy of his genius and character. Of these pieces many had from various causes never occurred to the notice of Dr. Currie; whilst others have been given by him in a more imperfect state than that in which they will now appear. These productions of the Scottish Bard extend from his earliest to his latest years; and may be considered as the wild-flowers of his muse, which, in the luxuriant vigour of his fancy he scattered as he passed along. They are the result of a most diligent search, in which I have used the utmost exertions; often walking to considerable distances, and to obscure cottages in search of a single letter. Many of them have been obtained from the generous confidence and liberality of their possessors; some from the hands of careless indifference, insensible to their value; others were fast falling to decay, their very existence almost forgotten, though glowing with the vital warmth which is diffused through every line that the hand of the immortal bard has ever traced. In this pursuit I have followed the steps of the poet, from the humble Cottage in Ayrshire in which he was born, to the House in which he died at Dumfries.

I have visited the farm of Mossgiel where he resided at the period of his first publication; I have traversed the scenes by the Ayr, the Lugar, and the Doon. Sacred haunts "Where first grim nature's visage hoar Struck his young eye;" —And have finally shared in the reverential feelings of his distinguished biographer, over the hallowed spot where the ashes of the bard are deposited.

It must not however be supposed that the present volume constitutes the whole, or nearly the whole of the writings of Burns, which have come under my eye, or fallen into my hands; much less have I thought it justified to reprint those exceptionable pieces, in prose and verse, which have been surreptitiously published, or erroneously attributed to him, and which in every point of view ought to have been consigned to oblivion.

Notwithstanding the vigour which characterises all his productions, perhaps there is no author whose writings are so difficult to select with a view to publication as Burns; and the very strength and exuberance by which they are marked, are in no small degree the cause of this difficulty. Whatever was the object, or the idea, of the moment, he has delineated, or expressed it, with a force and a vivacity that brings it before us in all its beauty, or all its deformity. But the subjects of his pen were almost as various as nature herself; and hence it follows, that some of his compositions must be discarded, as inconsistent with that decorum which is due to the public at large. In his early years. Burns had imbibed a strong attachment to the unfortunate House of Stuart which he seems to have cherished as a patriotic feeling; and as whatever he felt, he felt strongly, his prejudices occasionally burst forth in his writings; and some compositions of his yet remain, the publication of which, although in these days perfectly harmless, might render the Editor obnoxious to the letter, though not to the spirit of the law. If the affections of Burns were ardent, his animosities were scarcely less so; and hence some of his pieces display a spirit of resentment, the result of the moment, which it would be unjust to his memory, as well as to the objects of his satire, to revive. These and various other causes, on which it would be tedious to dwell, have imposed difficulties upon me from which I have endeavoured to extricate myself according to the best of my judgment.

If on the one hand, with the example of the former Editor before my eyes, I have rejected whatever I conceived might in any point of view be improper for the public eye, I have on the other hand, been anxious not to deprive the author, through too fastidious an apprehension of indecorum, of those peculiar marks, and that masculine freedom of thought and expression, which so strongly characterise his works.

Nor have I in this respect trusted wholly to my own judgment and feelings. Several persons, some of them most nearly connected by the ties of relationship with the poet, others distinguished by their literary attainments, and their well known admiration of his works, have also been consulted. But though I have availed myself of this assistance to the utmost of my power, and though I love the man, and do honor his memory on this side idolatry as much as any, yet as on many occasions I must exercise my own judgment and discretion.

You can download this book at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/burns/reliquesofburns.pdf>

Scottish Society of Indianapolis

Got in a copy of their December 2015 newsletter which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/indianapolis/index.htm>

Life of James Crichton of Cluny

By Patrick Fraser Tytler (1819).

CRICHTON, JAMES, commonly styled the *Admirable Crichton*. The learned and accurate Dr Kippis, editor of the Biographia Britannica, was the first, we believe, who thoroughly sifted and critically examined the truth or consistency of those marvelous stories which had so long attached to and rendered famous the name of the Admirable Crichton. Many had long doubted their credibility, and many more had been deluded by them. It fell to the lot of this keen critic, by a minute and candid investigation of the truth, to confirm and rectify the minds of both. Biography is but a part of history, and the chief value of both most always rest upon their veracity; and it is no unimportant service rendered to letters, to disabuse them of those apocryphal portions which deteriorate the worth, or render suspicious the quality of what is really genuine. It is but an ungrateful task, we allow, to destroy in the mind its favoured prejudices or delusions; yet these can never be allowed to stand in the way of investigation; and we make no doubt of showing, before the end of this article that inquiry, in the present case, has not been without its advantage.

Added this book to the foot of his page in our Significant Scots section at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/crichton_james.htm

Clan Munro Australia

Got in their December 2015 newsletter which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/munro/index.htm>

The Scots Worthies

By John Howie (1870). Added a link to this book on our Howie page in the Scottish Nation at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/howie.htm>

This covers some 80 biographies.

A journal of a voyage of discovery to the polar regions, in the year 1824

In the year 1824, in His Majesty's ship Griper, G.F. Lyon, captain [microform]: with a particular account of the proceedings during that perilous voyage by Paton, John (1825)

Some really excellent information on how sailors were dressed and fed and some insight into the Intuit people.

You can read this book at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/htol/lyon.html>

THE STORY

This is a long story but excellent in its information so have given you the start of it to read here and you can click on the link to read the rest of it.

The Social Progress of the Highlands since 1800

From the Transactions of the Gaelic Society

PRIZE ESSAY

The prize of ten guineas offered by The Mackintosh of Mackintosh, under the auspices of the Society, for the best essay on "The Social Progress of the Highlands since 1800" was won by Mr A. Poison, teacher, Dunbeath. Mr Poison's essay is as follows:—

THE SOCIAL PROGRESS OF THE HIGHLANDS SINCE 1800.

For people and nations a period of one hundred years is generally regarded by students of sociology as rather a short one for the

purpose of contrasting and comparing the social state at its beginning and end. The progress made by the Highlands is, however, quite a marked exception to this general rule. To old people still alive, and more especially to students of Highland history, it is abundantly evident that the social condition of the people, as well as the face of the country, has undergone extraordinary changes within this comparatively short period. Up to the middle of last century the Highlands of Scotland was as much an unknown land as many parts of the interior of Africa still are.

Lord Macaulay, in writing of the period immediately succeeding the Revolution, and depending for his information on Captain Burt's letters from Scotland and other documents written in the early part of last century by Southrons, who had themselves never seen the Highlands, says, that if an observer were to pass through the Highlands then—"He would have to endure hardships as great as if he had sojourned among the *Æquimeaux* or the *Samoyeds*. ... In many dwellings the furniture, the food, the clothing, nay, the very hair and skin of his hosts, would have put his philosophy to the proof. His lodging would sometimes have been in a hut of which every nook would have swarmed with vermin. He would have inhaled an atmosphere thick with peat smoke, and foul with a hundred noisome exhalations. At supper, grain fit only for horses would have been set before him, accompanied by a cake of blood drawn from living cows. Some of the company with which he would have feasted would have been covered with cutaneous eruptions, and others would have been smeared with tar like sheep. His couch would have been bare earth, dry or wet as the weather might be, and from that couch he would have risen, half-poisoned with stench, half-blind with the reek of turf, and half-mad with itch." Several of the particulars of this dark picture of the conditions under which Highlanders had to live are repeated by other writers, but there is grave reason to doubt that it ever could apply to the whole Highlands, or even to any part of it in its entirety. But notwithstanding what must have been the rather hurtful influence of some such surroundings it had even then to be admitted that Highlanders possessed a superiority of general character. Macaulay further on says, regarding them, As there was no other part of the island where men sordidly clothed, lodged, and fed, indulged themselves to such a degree in the idle sauntering habits of an aristocracy, so there was no other part of the island where such men had in such a degree the better qualities of an aristocracy, grace, and dignity of manner, self-respect, and that noble sensibility which makes dishonour more terrible than death. A gentleman from Skye or Lochaber, whose clothes were begrimed with the accumulated filth of years, and whose hovel smelt worse than an English hog-stye, would often do the honours of that hovel with a lofty courtesy worthy of the splendid circle of Versailles. Though he had as little book-learning as the most stupid ploughboys of England, it would be a great error to put him in the same intellectual rank with such ploughboys." This estimate of Highlanders has since then been endorsed by many a writer who has had opportunities of knowing them well, and no later than 1884, such an eminent authority as the Royal Commission sent to enquire into the crofters grievances said, "The crofter and cottar population of the Highlands and Islands, small though it be, is a nursery of good workers and citizens for the whole empire. In this respect the stock is exceptionally valuable. By sound physical constitution, native intelligence, and good moral training, it is particularly fitted to recruit the people of our industrial centres." This superiority of character has stood not only Highlanders themselves in good stead, but the whole nation as well, for had they been less noble than they are, it is extremely unlikely that they could have quietly borne the privations, hardships, insults, and wrongs which they have so often been called on to endure, or would have borne themselves with so much valour when the empire was imperilled.

In considering this people's social progress it will conduce to clearness to trace the progress made in each branch of what constitutes their social condition, and it is, therefore, necessary to show—

I. How those depending on the soil and the surrounding soil— farmer, crofter, labourer, and fisherman—have had their lot ameliorated.

II. How in religion and morals, superstition and ignorance have given place to an educated and efficient pastorate and high ideals of Christian duty on the part of the laity.

III. How in education, in place of a people among whom a century ago persons who could sign their names were rare, and among the older of whom a prejudice to learning existed, the young are now attending schools in an increasing ratio, and the older people are willing to sacrifice much for the sake of the education of their children.

IV. How in politics, a people who had then no voice in the making of the laws by which they were governed are now virtually self-governed, and how they who were precluded from taking an interest in anything beyond their village commune now take a keen and patriotic interest in the affairs of a great nation.

V. How in such matters as sanitation, care of the poor, <fec., changes for the better have been made.

You can read the rest of this story at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/social.htm>

And that's it for this week and hope you all enjoy your weekend.

Alastair