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## Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for June 26th, 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

Call for Papers - Scots and the Americas through time

The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland is the premier society in Scotland promoting an interest in archaeology, history and related study of the heritage of Scotland. It has been doing so since its foundation in 1780.

The Society has a significant number of Fellows in North America and is keen to encourage and promote further Scottish orientated research in the United States and Canada. For example in 2013 the Society published the successful book, Making for America, covering transatlantic craftsmanship, in Scotland and the Americas during the 18th and 19th centuries.

To encourage discussion and scholarship among North American Fellows, the Society is supporting Fellow Ian Greig who will be convening a meeting in Tampa on 9 January 2016, in collaboration with the University of Tampa, Florida. This will be the first Fellows' event in North America.

The main focus for papers will be Scottish links with, and interest in North America, from earliest times to the 18th century. There will also be a keynote paper on recent historical and archaeological research in Scotland.

Offers of papers and/or posters are invited, especially from scholars and researchers based in North America. Please provide a title and a brief outline of no more than 200 words, a short biography and full contact details. Details should be emailed to the President of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland ([president@socantscot.org](mailto:president@socantscot.org)) by Friday 31 July 2015 with the subject: Tampa Event. Each speaker will be allocated 40 minutes for their presentation, with time for questions and comments from participants. It is hoped that the proceedings of the conference will be published as a separate volume.

We will get back to you as soon as possible to let you know if you have been selected to present at the meeting.

Taylor Swift

I noted that in her concert in Glasgow her Dad emailed her to tell her to be sure to tell her audience that the whole family came from Scotland. I've emailed her to ask her Dad if he'd be willing to provide some information on the family history. A long shot but you never know.

You can read the article at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/what-s-on/music/taylor-swift-reveals-scottish-roots-at-glasgow-gig-1-3810933>

14-year Stirling Castle unicorn tapestry completed

The final tapestry in the series the Mystic Hunt Of The Unicorn was unveiled at Stirling Castle today.

"Whilst we may never know what happened to the original tapestries, the fact that we now have these fantastic recreations will provide visitors to the castle now and for generations to come with a real insight into how the palace may have been at the time of James V" - Peter Buchanan

The project was commissioned by Historic Scotland in 2001 as part of a wider bid to restore the interiors of the palace of the king to how they may have looked in the 1540s - when it was home to James' wife Mary of Guise and their young daughter, Mary, Queen of Scots.

It was known from royal inventories that when James V built the palace he owned over 100 tapestries, but there is no record of what happened to them.

The inventories, however, described a set of tapestries depicting "the historie of the unicorne".

You can read the full article at

<http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/heritage/14-year-stirling-castle-unicorn-tapestry-completed-1-3810476>

INEOS boss Tom Pickering answers your questions on shale gas extraction

This was an interesting article where I learned a lot and so thought I'd share this article with you which you can read at:

<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/fracking-facts-live-ineos-boss-5939506>

## Electric Canadian

Reminiscences of a Canadian Pioneer for the last Fifty Years

Continuing to add more chapters to this book.

We are now up to Chapter XVII and in Chapter XV we get a view of what immigrants experienced...

Sir John Colborne, as has been mentioned already, did all in his power to induce well-to-do immigrants, and particularly military men, to settle on lands west and north of Lake Simcoe. Some of these gentlemen were entitled, in those days, to draw from three to twelve hundred acres of land in their own right; but the privilege was of very doubtful value. Take an example. Captain Workman, with his wife, highly educated and thoroughly estimable people, were persuaded to select their land on the Georgian Bay, near the site of the present village of Meaford. A small rivulet which enters the bay there, is still called "the Captain's creek." To get there, they had to go to Penetanguishene, then a military station, now the seat of a Reformatory for boys. From thence they embarked on scows, with their servants, furniture, cows, farm implements and provisions. Rough weather obliged them to land on one of the Christian Islands, very bleak spots outside of Penetanguishene harbour, occupied only by a few Chippewa Indians. After nearly two weeks' delay and severe privation, they at length reached their destination, and had then to camp out until a roof could be put up to shelter them from the storms, not uncommon on that exposed coast.

We had ourselves, along with others, taken up additional land on what was called "the Blue Mountains," which are considered to be a spur of the Alleghanies, extending northerly across by Niagara, from the State of New York. The then newly-surveyed townships of St. Vincent and Euphrasia were attracting settlers, and amongst them our axe-man, Whitelaw, and many more of the like class. To reach this land, we had bought a smart sail-boat, and in her enjoyed ourselves by coasting from the Nottawasaga river north-westerly along the bay. In this way we happened one evening to put in at the little harbour where Capt. Workman had chosen his location. It was early in the spring. The snows from the uplands had swelled the rivulet into a rushing torrent. The garden, prettily laid out, was converted into an island, the water whirling and eddying close to the house both in front and rear, and altogether presenting a scene of wild confusion. We found the captain highly excited, but bravely contending with his watery adversary; the lady of the house in a state of alarmed perplexity; the servants at their wits' end, hurrying here and there with little effect. Fortunately, when we got there the actual danger was past, the waters subsiding rapidly during the night. But it struck us as a most cruel and inconsiderate act on the part of the Government, to expose tenderly reared families to hazards which even the rudest of rough pioneers would not care to encounter.

You can read this at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/thompson/index.htm>

Enigma Machine

The whole collection can be found at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma>. We're currently working on puzzle 107.

Preceptory of Australia and New Zealand

Got in a copy of their Quarter 2, 2015 newsletter which you can read at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/kaustralia.htm>

## Electric Scotland

Stories in the Scottish Dialect

This is a collection of stories we'll be adding over time from the pen of Alexander (Black) Harley. We've added a section for these at the foot of his page.

Added "Oh! Christina." this week which you can read at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/harley.htm>

James Hutchison Stirling

Added this Philosopher to our Famous Scots section. Now added the final section of this book and also added links to three of his publications.

You can get to this at [http://www.electricscotland.com/history/men/stirling\\_james.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/history/men/stirling_james.htm)

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Got in section 1 of the July 2015 issue which you can download at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

Lucy Bethia Colquhoun

Added Chapter V. Strange Sights in the Hebrides to this book which you can read at:

[http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/sinclair\\_john.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/sinclair_john.htm)

The Scottish Gallery or Portraits of Eminent Persons of Scotland

By John Pinkerton (1799). Added a link to this book to our Art page towards the foot of the page.- item 41. You can get to this at

<http://www.electricscotland.com/art/artinscotlandndx.htm>

Clan Davidson

Got told of an article about the new chief and have added a picture of him and his wife and a link to the article which you can get to

at <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/dtog/davidso2.html>

Clan Wallace

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

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

Documents illustrative of William Wallace his Life and Times

Presented to the Maitland Club by Robert Rodger. Added a link to this pdf book on our William Wallace page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/wallace.htm>

Recipes

Got in two recipes this week, one a Bread Recipe at <http://www.electricscotland.com/food/visitors/bread.htm>

and the other Rhubarb Dream Bars at [http://www.electricscotland.com/food/visitors/rhubarb\\_bars.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/food/visitors/rhubarb_bars.htm)

I have to say that I really like Rhubarb so am going to have a go at that one!

The Domestic Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century

by Marjorie Plant (1952).

This book, is a fully documented description of the domestic life of all ranks of Scottish society in the eighteenth century. Among numerous other matters, it deals with family relations and the upbringing of children, housing, furniture, fuel, water-supply and sanitation, gardens, food and drink, cooking, servants, clothes, pastimes, etiquette, weddings, christenings and the like. Local variations and local prejudices receive due attention, and the shocked or approving comments of foreign observers bring out an occasional amusing contrast with conditions in other lands.

It is a work calculated to interest the general reader no less than the student of social history. The sources upon which it is based include parish accounts, diaries, household books, letters, family histories, records of travellers, and contemporary manuals of gardening and cookery, to all of which full references are given.

A notable piece of work which bears its learning lightly and is as attractive to the general reader as to the historian. It is one of the best studies of its kind.

—The Manchester Guardian

#### Foreword

The mode of life in the early eighteenth-century Scottish home was apt, in general, to be somewhat crude. The economic conditions of the time were not conducive to easy housekeeping. Although the housewife's familiar complaint of the scarcity and general "naughtiness" of servants might not now win her the sympathy which she would demand, she had far weightier problems which she

seems most of the time to have accepted as they came. It is often only through stray passages in her letters, or through the comments of incredulous visitors from the south, that we know of them. Those problems, we must bear in mind, were not the same everywhere. Each district had its own drawbacks and its own natural advantages. The bane of Edinburgh life was that all the water required in its lofty tenements had to be carried upstairs by hand; but the Edinburgh household could at least burn coal—there were places in the north and west where the only fuel was heath or dung.

The exceedingly primitive state of agriculture limited the greater part of the population to a meagre and monotonous diet. There were few vegetables and only salt meat, if any, for the winter months. The monotony was increased in that, throughout the Highlands and in many remote districts elsewhere, the individual household had to fend almost entirely for itself. The nearest shop might be fifty miles away. Food, clothing, soap, candles and all else had to be produced at home. The country housewife who needed a new gown had to spin the wool for it from sheep which she had probably tended herself; she herself grew the flax for her sheets and table-linen. It was a busy life and a lonely one. Visitors were few and far between. Sudden illness, far from medical aid, was a constant dread. It was the inadequacy of means of communication which was largely to blame.

The state of the roads at that time could hardly have been worse. Few of them would take wheeled traffic. Goods, wherever possible, were carried by sea; otherwise there was a slow delivery by pack-horse. Although some improvement was made from 1726 onwards, when a few good military roads were built in the Highlands, it was not until some thirty years later that much attention was paid to road construction elsewhere. Then began a systematic development of turnpike roads, and enterprising coach proprietors soon inaugurated services to link the principal towns. In addition to the obvious economic advantages of this, social gatherings became possible on a scale hitherto unknown.

People in Edinburgh and in other districts within easy reach of the east coast ports had always had an advantage over the rest: supplies of food and household utensils came by sea from other parts of Scotland and also from London and the Continent. But in the early eighteenth century Scottish manufactures and foreign imports alike were at a low ebb. The fairly successful development of industry during the preceding century had taken place behind a protective tariff. One of the immediate effects of the parliamentary union with England in 1707 was to remove this barrier, and it was some time before the benefits of free trade, and of the Union generally, overcame the resulting dislocation of economic life. In due course, however, as the American trade expanded, Glasgow rose to importance as a port, and Scottish manufactures of various kinds were stimulated to meet the new demand for exports.

By the middle of the century new forces and new developments were beginning to affect all walks of life. Soon Scotland found herself well on the way to prosperity, with a well-established linen manufacture, a number of minor industries, better communications and the beginnings of an efficient banking system. It needed only the technical inventions of the next fifty years, introduced with the aid of English capital, to bring about a more rapid expansion.

By 1800 the calico manufacture had attained an importance far beyond that of linen; factories had arisen for such subsidiary processes as bleaching and dyeing; and iron and steel production was about to enter upon a period of intense activity.

Progress was not confined to manufactures. Agriculture, too, entered on a new phase. From the 'twenties onwards enthusiasts up and down the country formed themselves into societies for the discussion of agricultural methods, and tackled the problems of estate management with extra zest. Later, in the second half of the century, came a rapid increase in population, to act as yet another stimulus. Not the least of the new achievements was the introduction of the potato into Scotland as a regular field crop, bringing it for the first time to the table of the ordinary man.

By the end of the century these various changes had led, directly or indirectly, to greater comfort in the home. Food was fresher, more varied and more palatable. It was more tastefully served, on pewter or china plates instead of on the old wooden platters. There were more shops, selling a wider range of goods. The housewife had no longer to spend hours at her spinning-wheel, for there were more attractive materials to be bought than she could make at home. Her husband, in any case, now scorned to wear homespun; he wanted the best English cloth, and a watch to put in his pocket. The wages of domestic servants, among others, had doubled, and the maids who used to go about barefoot and ill-kempt could now dress in the best of style.

The ministers of the kirk, as we shall see, deplored the new trend towards luxury and ostentation, sighing for the return of austerity and a more sedate way of life. But it was still far from being a frivolous age. Philosophical and theological argument, which had flourished during the more austere decades, now admittedly had fallen a little out of fashion, but instead there was a growing enthusiasm for literature and the arts. If, in addition, the younger generation had discovered some of the lighter joys of leisure, who was to grudge them their fun?

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Added this book to the foot of our Domestic Annals of Scotland page at:

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

Bute

Came across a couple of books on the Earls of Bute which I've added to our Bute page in the Scottish Nation. You can get to these at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/bute.htm>

## THE STORY

This article is based on "A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland" By M Martin (1716)

A description of the Western Islands of Scotland: Containing a full account of their situation, extent, soils, product, harbours, bays, tides, anchoring places, and fisheries. The ancient and modern government, religion and customs of the inhabitants, particularly of their druids, heathen temples, monasteries, churches, chappels, antiquities, monuments, forts, caves, and other curiosities of art and nature. Of their admirable and expeditious way of curing most diseases by simples of their own product. A particular account of the second sight, or faculty of foreseeing things to come, by way of vision, so common among them. A brief hint of methods to improve trade in that country, both by sea and land. With a new map of the whole, describing the harbours, anchoring places, and dangerous rocks, for the benefit of sailers. To which is added a brief description of the Isles of Orkney, and Schetland.

As this is an old book it does provide a bit of a challenge to read it as the letter s is printed as the letter f but it shouldn't take long to get used to it. The content is exceptional and well worth some perseverance.

You can download the book at <http://www.electricscotland.com/books/pdf/descriptionofwes00mart.pdf>

I note in this article it says eating lots of Dulse promotes good eyesight. The earliest record of this species is of St Columba's monks harvesting it 1,400 years ago. You can learn about Dulse at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palmaria\\_palmata](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palmaria_palmata)

## Old Highland Remedies

RECENTLY a limited edition of a very rare book — Martin's Western Islands of Scotland—has been published. It contains many curious things, among them an account of the remedies used in those days (1695), previously, and to some extent since, in the Highlands and Islands of the West, for all kinds of ailments to which man or beast was liable. It is thought that a brief reference to some of these, with a few examples taken from other sources, may prove interesting to the reader. We shall first deal with those remedies used for the ailments of the people themselves, after which we may have something to say about those applied for the cure of cattle, and other animals.

Two or three hundred years ago, such a person as a professional doctor was unknown in the Highlands. The people were naturally healthy, and the little ailments which affected them were quickly relieved by some simple concoction of herbs. They found healing in the roots, stones, shells, and other objects of nature which lay close at hand, and although at times their remedies showed traces of superstition, in general they served their purpose well enough. Some of these remedies are used in the Highlands to the present day, and their efficacy is in many instances undoubted. What, for example, can be better for a cough than plenty brochan or gruel and butter, which was and is still the sovereign cure for that complaint in the Western Isles? Nettle roots and the roots of reeds boiled in water with yeast was also used. Speaking of the men of Lewis, Martin says, when the uvula falls they cut it in this curious manner —“They take a long quill, and putting a horse-hair double into it, make a noose at the end of the quill, and putting it about the lower end of the uvula, they cut off from the uvula all that is below the hair with a pair of scissors; and then the patient swallows a little bread and cheese, which cures him. This operation is not attended with the least inconvenience, and cures the distemper so that it never returns.” He tells us that John Campbell, the forester of Harris, when he had caught a cold, walked into the sea with his clothes on, and then went to bed in his wet garments, but well wrapped up in the bedclothes, and the perspiration thus induced cured his cold by the next day.

Another common remedy for a cold was a decoction of colt's-foot. A cure for coughs and hoarseness was to bathe the feet in hot water, and then to rub some deer's grease to the soles of the feet in front of a good fire at bed-time. The following recipe for a cold is taken from Nether-Lochaber;— "Take a pint—say a tumblerful—of sea water that has been heated to the boiling point, without having been allowed actually to boil. Sprinkle over it some pepper, rather more plentifully than you do in your soup; drink this as hot as you can bear it as you step into bed at night" This is said to be even yet a popular cure in Lochaber.

Fresh wounds were dressed with a salve made of golden rod, mistletoe, and fresh butter. A broken limb was first rubbed with the white of an egg mixed with barley meal, and tied up in splints for a day or two. An ointment composed of betony, St John's wort, and golden rod, all pounded together, in butter or sheep's grease, was afterwards applied. Sometimes the fat of a sea bird was made into a pudding, and being placed in the stomach of the bird, was applied as a kind of poultice to fresh wounds. This was called "Giben of St Kilda." The plant called shepherd's purse was applied to cuts to arrest the flow of blood, but yarrow was considered the best remedy for that purpose. The latter plant was used also for headaches, the leaves being pushed up the nostrils until the blood sprung, from which very likely it took its Gaelic name of na, or the blood-weed. In the Island of Gigha nettles were used to stanch bleeding, and also the common fungi called puff-balls. Ribwort, wood mercury, herb Robert, and bloody cranesbill were all used for the same purpose, the Gaelic name of the last-mentioned plant, according to Cameron, being creachlach dearg, the red wound healer.

The following amusing cures for the jaundice among the Lewis men are taken from Martin:—"The first is by laying the patient on his face, and, pretending to look upon his back bones, they presently pour a pailful of cold water on his bare back; and this proves successful. The second cure they perform by taking the tongs and making them red-hot in the fire; then pulling off the clothes from the patient's back, he who holds the tongs gently touches the patient upwards on the vertebrae of the back, which makes him furiously run out of doors, still supposing the hot iron is on his back, till the pain be abated, which happens very speedily, and the patient recovers soon after." In Shetland the remedy for this disease was to mix powdered snails in the patient's drink.

Diarrhoea and dysentery were treated in Lewis with a beverage composed of what Martin calls "the kernel of the black molocca beans," ground to powder, and mixed with boiled milk. Moderate doses of strong whisky and juniper berries were also taken for these ailments. In Harris powdered cuttle-fish bone was given to the patient in boiled milk; and in Uist the great cures were to eat seal, and drink plenty whisky in which a hectic stone had been quenched. Another remedy for diarrhoea was red coral and a roasted yolk of egg.

In cases of fever, whey, in which violets had been boiled, was given as a cooling drink. Distilled raspberry and whortleberry juice were used for the same purpose. For what Martin calls "spotted fever," probably measles, they drank freely of brandy; and for scarlet fever the same remedy was used in smaller quantities. In the case of infants, the nurse drank the brandy, to qualify the milk; and, it is feared, the nurses of those days frequently discovered symptoms of scarlet fever in the infants under their care.

Serpent bites were cured in a variety of ways. The people followed the old proverb—"Take a hair of the dog that bit you for Martin states that in Skye the principal cures for serpent bites were to wash the wound in water in which the forked tongue of the serpent had been steeped, and to apply the head of the reptile which gave the wound. Another was to place the hind part of a living cock to the bite, which was thought to draw out the venom. New cheese, promptly applied, was found effectual; as were also juniper berries, ground ivy, and decoctions of oak bark, acorns, and ash leaves.

In Harris the remedy for gravel was an infusion of wild garlic. In Skye it was cured by taking broth made of dulse, or sometimes of the large, pale whelk, pounded in its shell, boiled and strained. Another remedy was water gruel without salt.

For sleeplessness after fever the patient washed his feet, knees, and ancles in a warm infusion of chickweed, and on going to bed a poultice of the same plant was applied warm to his neck and between his shoulders. A poultice of chopped nettle-tops and raw white of eggs applied to the forehead and temples at bed-time was also used to induce sleep. A kind of heath called *Erica baccifera*, boiled in water, and applied to the crown of the head and temples, and the green sea plant, called in Gaelic *lin-nearach*, were remedies for sleeplessness, and an infusion of thyme was a certain preventive against nightmare and horrible dreams.

To raise a blister the Highlanders bruised spearwort, and applied it in a limpet shell to the spot where the blister was required. This very soon took effect, and when the blister burst the wound was healed with *linnearach*. Another blister they used was groundsel, applied much in the same way.

For consumption a common remedy was the broth of a lamb in which the plants lovage and Alexanders were boiled; another being milk or water in which a red-hot hectic stone had been cooled, to which they sometimes added yarrow. In Skye they used an ale composed of hart's-tongue and maiden-hair ferns boiled in unfermented beer, and sometimes also brochan without salt. Lungwort was a very common cure. In Black's Folk-Medicine, it is stated that "In the county of Moray the people were formerly in the habit of paring the nails of the fingers and toes of persons suffering from hectic and consumptive diseases. The parings were put in a rag cut from the patient's clothes, and waved three times round his head, with the cry *Deas soil* [*Deas-iuil.*] After this the rag was buried in some unknown place."

The cure for fluxes in Uist was dried seal's liver, pulverised, and taken with milk or whisky. In Skye a syrup extracted from blackberries was used, and a decoction of plantain in which hectic stone had been quenched.

For sciatica the Uist men bound a girdle of sealskin round the hips, to which was also applied the fat of a sea-bird which Martin calls a "bonnivochil."

Megrim and headache were cured by applying the sea-plant linnearach to the side of the head affected, and also by a plaster of cold dulse.

Colic was relieved by taking broth made of dulse, and for stitches the Skye-men, if bleeding was ineffectual, applied an ointment composed of camomile, or brandy and fresh butter, or a poultice of raw scurvy-grass chopped fine. It was cured in Jura by a vapour-bath formed of the fumes of ladywrack and redfog boiled in water, the patient sitting upon the vessel which contained the herbs.

To expel worms the Highlanders took dried bruised dulse, or an infusion of tansy in whey or brandy, taken fasting. Bog-myrtle tea and the powdered roots of shield fens in water were also used with success. Worms were expelled from the hands by washing them in salt water in which the ashes of burnt seaweed were mixed.

Regarding ringworm, Nether-Lochaber informs us that, "There is a very wide-spread belief over the West Highlands and in the Hebrides that ringworm can be readily cured by rubbing it over and around once or twice with a gold ring—a woman's marriage ring, if it can be had, being always preferred."

Martin describes several methods which the Islesmen had for inducing perspiration. In Skye, the patient boiled his shirt in water, and then put it on, and this soon had the desired effect. Another way was to pile live peats upon an earthen floor until it became sufficiently hot, when the peats were removed and a quantity of straw substituted. Water was then poured upon it, and the patient lay down upon the steaming straw until the perspiration came on. When it was desired to make any particular part of the body perspire, a hole was dug in an earthen floor and filled with dry sticks and rushes. A red-hot hectic stone was placed upon these, and water being poured over the whole, the patient held the special part of his person over the vapour evolved until he obtained the desired result. A bowl of hot gruel and butter was taken at bed-time to produce a copious perspiration all over the body—a remedy common to this day.

Their cure for faintness of spirits cannot be better described than in Martin's own words. It was performed by a blacksmith in the parish of Kilmartin as follows :—" The patient being laid on the anvil with his face uppermost, the smith takes a big hammer in both his hands, and making his face ail grimace, he approaches his patient; and then drawing his hammer from the ground, as if he intended to hit him with his full strength on the forehead, he ends in a feint, else he would be sure to cure the patient of all diseases ; but the smith being accustomed to the performance, has a dexterity of managing his hammer with discretion, though at the same time he must do it so as to strike terror in the patient; and this, they say, has always the designed effect" -

For costiveness there were a number of remedies, one of the most common being to boil a quantity of dulse in water, and drink the infusion with a good-sized piece of butter in it Some of the Skye people took an infusion of spearwort in melted butter, but as this was rather a violent remedy it was not generally used. Wood mercury and horehound were often found effectual. In St Kilda the natives drank the oil which the fulmar, a species of petrel, spouted from its bill when alarmed, and which contained valuable laxative properties.

For bloodshot and inflamed eyes, the Skye people applied a poultice of yellow fern and white of egg laid upon coarse flax. An infusion in milk of the plant called eyebright, applied with a feather, was also used with success, and dulse eaten in liberal quantities was thought to improve the eyesight.

In cases of toothache, spearwort was applied to the temples, another remedy being to heat a turf and place it to the side of the head affected as hot as it could be borne. In Folk-Medicine it is stated that " to go between the sun and the sky to a place where the dead and the living cross (a ford), and lift a stone from it with the teeth, is thought in the North-East of Scotland a cure for toothache."

The iliac passion was treated by giving the sufferer a drink of cold water and oatmeal, and then suspending the patient by the heels for some time, poultices of hot dulse being applied to the abdomen, until relief was obtained.

To ripen a tumour or boil they used a warm poultice of female jacobea, cut small, and mixed with fresh butter on a hot stone, and this was also applied to hard and swollen breasts.

Benumbed feet were scarified with a lancet, and when swollen and blistered with walking long distances they were bathed in a decoction of alder leaves. Rheumatic pains were relieved by rubbing the affected parts with fulmar oil, and the juice of the crab-apple was considered good for sprains and cramps. For flatulency the people ate the roots of knaphard and lovage, taking nothing else, however, the same day.

In Colonsay, the people had a curious custom of fanning the sick with the leaves of the Bible. Martin states that while he was there the loan of his "book" was thrice requested and given for that purpose, and he was informed next day that the patient had benefited considerably by the use of it.

The remedies for the ills which afflict man have hitherto been entirely dealt with. We shall now give a few of those used for the diseases of cattle, sheep, and horses.

In Harris, the sheep which fed upon sandy ground became afflicted with a film which grew over their eyes and caused blindness, and to cure this the eyes were rubbed with chalk or powdered cuttle-fish bone. Lovage was a sovereign remedy for sheep troubled with cough.

To cure cramp in cows, the part affected was bathed in water in which a curious kind of stone found in clay banks had been steeped for some hours. These stones were called cramp-stones. For blindness, chewed wild sage was put into the animal's ears.

Costiveness was cured by giving the sea-plant slake, boiled with some butter.

Horses troubled with bots were washed with water in which a peculiar stone, called by the Skye people bot-stones, had been steeped. Wild sage chopped small, or an infusion of it, were given to horses to kill worms, the animal being kept from drinking for at least ten hours after the dose.

These are some of the most curious remedies given in Martin's work, which contains a valuable store of information regarding the life, manners, and customs of the Western Islesmen two hundred years ago.

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

Alastair