



ELECTRICCANADIAN.COM  
AGRICULTURE & WILDLIFE  
ARTICLES  
BETH'S FAMILY TREE  
BOOKS  
BUSINESS  
CHILDREN'S STORIES  
CLANS & FAMILIES

CULTURE & LANGUAGE  
DONNA'S PAGE  
ELECTRICSCOTLAND.NET  
FAMOUS SCOTS  
FAMILYTREE  
FORUMS  
FOOD & DRINK  
GAMES

GAZETTEER  
GENEALOGY  
HISTORIC PLACES  
HISTORY  
HUMOR  
JOHN'S PAGE  
KIDS  
LIFESTYLE  
MUSIC

NEWSLETTER  
PICTURES  
POETRY  
POSTCARDS  
RELIGION  
ROBERT BURNS  
SCOTS IRISH  
SCOTS REGIMENTS  
SERVICES

SHOPPING  
SONGS  
SPORT  
SCOTS DIASPORA  
TARTANS  
TRAVEL  
TRIVIA  
VIDEOS  
WHATS NEW

HELP TERMS OF USE CONTACT US

## Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for August 3rd, 2018

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

Continuing to have problems with the sites mainly due to Steve having health issues and having to spend time in hospital. For updates see <http://www.electricscotland.com/problem1.htm> where I also include Steve's posting on his Facebook page where he describes his health problems..

Because we are trying to move the sites to the new servers I've not been doing much of any additions to the sites as when I get all the material up on the new server it will likely mean that the new data I put up can be missed.

I've also lost access to ftp so can't get up the larger pdf files so all a bit of a pain. However once we get things sorted out things should be a lot better than they've been in the past.

Here is the video introduction to this newsletter...

<https://youtu.be/wmjllQNEip0>

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

Note that this is a selection and more can be read in our ScotNews feed on our index page where we list news from the past 1-2 weeks. I am partly doing this to build an archive of modern news from and about Scotland as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines. I might also add that in newspapers such as the Guardian, Scotsman, Courier, etc. you will find many comments which can be just as interesting as the news story itself and of course you can also add your own comments if you wish.

How The Beano survived war and web to reach 80

The Beano. Now close to publishing its 4,000th edition, the very first issue of The Beano came complete with a free whoopee mask when it was released on July 30, 1938.

Read more at:

<http://sceptical.scot/2018/07/beano-survived-war-web-reach-80/>

Poll: Only a quarter of Brits back Theresa May over Brexit

Some 72% of Britons lack confidence in her ability to reach a good deal with Brussels, the worst rating the Prime Minister has had in the Ipsos MORI political monitor. Her personal approval rating also hit a new low over the past month, with Mrs May achieving a net score of minus 32.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/uk/poll-only-a-quarter-of-brits-back-theresa-may-over-brexit-1-4775056>

The Scots firms transforming our legacy banking systems

Large financial institutions are investing in the fintech revolution - and small, innovative fintech businesses are finding new and exciting ways of delivering financial services

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/future-scotland/tech/video-the-scots-firms-transforming-our-legacy-banking-systems-1-4759516>

Should we not be re-assessing who we defend and why?

There has been considerable mission creep in NATO since the end of the Cold War. It has enlarged far beyond its original borders. It has taken on roles across Asia and is effectively now the military wing of the West, rather than an anti-communist defence pact.

Read more at:

[http://www.thinkscotland.org/thinkpolitics/articles.html?read\\_full=13621](http://www.thinkscotland.org/thinkpolitics/articles.html?read_full=13621)

How the smoking ban closed Scottish pubs

By Brian Monteith in Think Scotland

Read more at:

[http://www.thinkscotland.org/thinkbusiness/articles.html?read\\_full=13622](http://www.thinkscotland.org/thinkbusiness/articles.html?read_full=13622)

Australia just crushed the dream of a free trade deal

The ex-Aussie Ambassador has dealt another blow to the PM's plans, warning Britain can't join the TPP while tied to EU rules

Read more at:

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/6874734/australia-free-trade-deal-tpp-soft-brexite/>

It's time to relearn the geography of British power

The key to Britain's global reach is its acute understanding of networks

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/its-time-to-relearn-the-geography-of-british-power>

New flag expert appointed for Scotland

Scotland's heraldic authority, the Court of the Lord Lyon, has appointed its first honorary vexillologist.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-45005157>

100 Scots reveal why they left their home country behind

The voices of more than 100 Scots who left their home country during the 20th Century in search of a better life have been recorded in the first project of its kind.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/100-scots-reveal-why-they-left-their-home-country-behind-1-4775748>

Little progress made in improving the diet of Scots in last 15 years

Little progress has been made in improving the diet of Scots over the past 15 years, new research has found.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/health/little-progress-made-in-improving-the-diet-of-scots-in-last-15-years-1-4775989>

Map shows 400 British Army camps in Scotland after Culloden

The document has been drawn up following analysis of 270-year-old handwritten cantonment records held in the library at Edinburgh Castle.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/map-shows-400-british-army-camps-in-scotland-after-culloden-1-4776394>

Australia's drought is like a cancer eating away at farms and families

The worst drought in living memory is sweeping parts of eastern Australia, leaving farmers struggling to cope and many of them asking questions about the future.

Read more at:

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-australia-drought-widerimage/australias-drought-is-like-a-cancer-eating-away-at-farms-and-families-idUKKBN1KL35B>

City of London slashes Brexit job-loss estimate

The U.K. financial services sector could suffer as few as 5,000 job losses as a result of Brexit, according to a new estimate by the City of London Corporation - far lower than the industry had initially feared.

Read more at:

<https://www.politico.eu/article/brexit-fintech-finance-banking-jobs-city-of-london-slashes-brexit-job-loss-estimate>

A World Trade Deal under WTO rules is now the best option for the UK

That could hardly be the case since their examination of the available evidence about trading under WTO rules has been anything but exhaustive, expert, and disinterested, as we shall see in a moment.

Read more at:

<https://brexitcentral.com/world-trade-deal-wto-rules-now-best-option-uk/>

Japan backs Britain joining trans-Pacific trade group

Japan today backed Britain joining a huge trans-Pacific trade zone after Brexit in a boost for the UK's hope of signing new deals for exports.

Read more at:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6011785/Japan-backs-Britain-joining-trans-Pacific-trade-group.html>

Patriotic, optimistic and a world expert on trade deals

Why Theresa May must listen to top aide Crawford Falcone on Brexit (and not the rest of the defeatist civil service)

Read more at:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-6005377/Why-Theresa-listen-aide-Crawford-Falcone-Brexit.html>

## Electric Canadian

Engineering Journal

I discovered a lot of volumes of these transaction which are very detailed and note that they are very popular downloads so assume civil engineers are enjoying the details given in these transactions.

I've added the 1949 volume and will add others each week. You can view these at

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/industrial/index.htm>

Some of the topics discussed include Aeronautics, Aeroplanes, Airport Runways, Aggregates, Alberta—Natural Resources, Aluminum Bridges, Apprentices, Atomic Power, Boilers, Building, Business and Industrial Briefs, Chemistry in Canada, Coal, Consulting Engineers, Engineers, Erosion, Highways, Lumbering, Mines and Mining, Mineral Resources, Obituaries, Photography, Sanitary Engineering, Water Supply, etc.

Canada and its Provinces

A History of the Canadian People and their Institutions by one hundred Associates. General Editors: Adam Shorty and Arthur G. Doughty. Edinburgh Edition (1914) in 23 volumes. I will be adding a volume each week until completed.

Added Volume VIII. The Dominion: Industrial Expansion Part I.

You can read this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/canadaprovinces.htm>

## Electric Scotland

Commonwealth of Australia

Historical Records of Australia published in 1914 in 19 volumes. Intending to put up 1 volume a week until complete and now we have up the final volume in the set...

Added Volume 19 - July, 1837 — January, 1839

You can get to this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/australia/commonwealth.htm>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree  
Got in Section 1 of the August 2018 issue.

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

## The Story

This is a critical look at the Scottish Highlander from a Scot in Canada where some 15% of the population claims Scottish descent. There are more folk of Scottish descent in Canada than there are in Scotland and in some respects they are more true to Scottishness than the Scots that remained in Scotland.

### The Scottish Highlander

B J. L. Morison, Professor of History, Queen's University, Kingston, Ont., Canada

#### PART II.

"Will no one tell me what she sings?  
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
For old, unhappy, far-off things,  
And battles long ago:  
Or is it some more humble lay,  
Familiar matter of to-day?  
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,  
That has been, and may be again."

THE intellectual and aesthetic record of the old Highland community the external observer is perhaps less competent to criticise than its history. There are the obstacles of a strange language, and new rules of art; and the involutions and eccentricities of the Highland brain demand an expert in national psychology. It is easy, and useless, to indulge in such sweeping judgments as that of the prince of dogmatists on the "Erse" language: "The rude speech of a barbarous people, who have few thoughts to express, and were content as they conceived grossly, to be grossly understood." But it seems not unfair to trace, in these esoteric matters, a line of argument parallel to that outlined above:—that the true Highland genius is something primitive, traditional, which it is almost impossible either to continue or to reproduce; that the onsets of the modern and alien world must, in the long run, conquer and destroy old things; and that the contribution of the Highlands to the modern world, apart from the individual genius of her sons, which is always valid and modern, must be sought in indirect influences, quaint eccentric eddies of the spirit, reversions to conservative, or even primæval, thoughts and imaginations.

To begin with, the Highland mind strikes the alien critic as instinctive rather than rational; poetic, not scientific. As is the case with other primitive folk who boast an intellectual inheritance. Highland imagination has been developed at the expense of prose and reason. I do not mean that Highland powers of mind are in any sense despicable. Dr. Johnson, not once, but many times, paid sincere tributes to the culture of the Highland gentlemen and the ministers whom he met: "I never was in any house," he witnessed of the islanders, "where I did not find books in more languages than one, if I stayed' long enough to want them." And if Norman Macleod's enthusiasm for Highland love of learning might suggest doubts in Lowland minds, the history of that distinguished family, to which he belonged, must quickly put them to flight. If one excepts the regions round Aberdeen (where light springs more readily than sweetness), I doubt if self-improvement proceeds anywhere so easily, and so rapidly, as in the Highlands and Islands. That the Highland mind is apt in learning the mental habits of other peoples, is a proposition easily demonstrated. Yet this is only another proof that the road to fortune for the Highlander lay, and lies, away from the Gaelic world. It is hardly too much to say that the logical thinker or scientific observer, who would be true to Celtic tradition, will find himself in an impossible dilemma, for Highland culture has produced no philosophic treatise of importance, has helped to further no great scientific discovery, indeed has composed no single volume of real weight in prose. In the Bodleian copy of Martin's Description of the Western Islands, there are some quaint criticisms, inscribed by bland, the eighteenth century Deist (I wonder if anything fades so fast as self-appreciative Illuminism?). In one place he is constrained to exclaim, "The author wanted almost every quality requisite in an historian . . . except simplicity, if even this may be allowed him." Martin was a Highlander. From first to last, his fellows in literary thought have found it difficult to think coolly, and one of the latest of them—he follows the novelist's art—has lately discovered, in what is really Lowland humour, a convenient way of escape from the antique domination of his own world. One and all, they are children crying for the light, and with no language but a cry.

Without a rational philosophy, or a systematic theology. for Highland Protestant orthodoxy is a frenzy, not a system, the Highland race has made its weightiest contribution to thought in the great mass of its traditional beliefs, and' primitive religious imaginations. Macculloch may brush it all aside with a contemptuous gesture: " Fashion, ignorance, idleness, credulity, superstition, falsehood, dreaming, starvation, hypochondriasm, imposture, will explain all"; and Johnson, inquiring earnestly but sceptically, concerning second

sight, may depart with, at best, a will to believe, but the fact remains that this Highland supernaturalism is the richest possession of the Highlander. and his most potent means of influencing the outside world. Thanks to the fidelity of Highland records, the salient facts are known to all, and I shall simply give them in brief outline, for the purposes of my argument, grouping them under three headings—Celtic belief in a spirit-world; Celtic use of charms, magic, and witchcraft; and the Celtic pantheon of little gods and uncanny monsters.

What impressed early observers, and what still astonishes those who know "the Highlander, in literature and out of it, is in the first instance his obsession by a spirit-world, where space and time seem to have lost their limits, and the dead ignore the bonds of the grave. It was a natural habit in old writers to devote a section to Second Sight, and phenomena related to Second Sight, among the Islanders; for nothing seemed to them so conspicuous and unique in the islands they were visiting. Even the sceptical Macculloch contributed a scornful chapter on the subject, and if he attributed the miraculous facts to "the condition of the Highlanders: unoccupied, subject to hypochondriacal disorders, dozing away their time in tending their cattle, nationally and habitually superstitious, and believing that which it was the fashion to believe," at any rate he thought the phantasy worth refuting. The Gaelic difficulty, apparently, was, not belief in dreams and visions, but means of escaping happily from seeing them. Martin tells us of a certain John Morison of Bernera of Harris, who "wears the plant called fuga dachionunz sewed in the neck of his coat, to prevent his seeing of visions." The cure, we are told, was effectual. But Second Sight, no matter how eery, was humane and comfortable compared with the uneasy energy of the Highland dead. For them the grave was no prison house, and they haunted fords and houses, and obtruded themselves on quiet sleep with their messages of doom. The Maclain-es had their "Hugh of the Little Head," dressing his weird by riding his black steed with the white spot on its forehead, to give warning when any of his race was about to die; and every great family had some similar grisly spiritual companion.

[Nothing could be found contrasting more amusingly the Highland way with Scott's shrewd Lowland common--sense than the novelist's account of his sleep in the haunted chamber at Dunvegan. "An autumnal blast, sometimes clear, sometimes driving mist before it, swept along the troubled billows of the lake which it occasionally concealed, and in fits disclosed. The waves rushed in wild disorder on the shore and covered with foam the steep pile of rock. . . The voice of an angry cascade was heard from time to time mingling its notes with those of wind and wave. Such was the haunted room at Dunvegan; and, as such, it well deserved a less sleepy inhabitant. . . . In- a word, it is necessary to confess that, of all I heard or saw, the most engaging spectacle was the comfortable bed in which I hoped to make amends for some rough nights on shipboard, and where I slept accordingly, without thinking of ghost or goblin, till I was called by my servant in the morning."—Lockhart's Life of Scott, Vol. IV, p. 206.]

In an atmosphere so overcharged with spirit, it was natural to believe in witchcraft and magic, and to rely on charms, and an elaborate ritual of primitive paganism, to effect what more orthodox means seemed impotent to do. Highland witch-tales are too familiar to require restatement, but it is not often enough realised that Christianity itself finds self-expression in the Hebrides in most unorthodox practices. There are baptisms and sacraments, unknown to the strict authorities of the faith, and the charms in Carnzina Cadel-ica prove how recently the western islanders still offered tribute to the unknown god's. "Three days before being sown, the seed is sprinkled with clear cold water, in the name of Father, and of Son, and of Spirit, the person sprinkling the seed walking sunwise the while"; and in harvest, "the father of the family took up his sickle, and, facing the sun., cut a handful of corn. Putting the handful three times round his head, the man raised the 'lollach Buana, T or reaping salutation." It is still possible, in the Highlands, to serve two masters, and nowhere are all forgotten far-off things so intimately connected with our modern mysteries of faith. What, for example, could be at once more genuinely Christian, and at the same time Pagan, than this charm, with which they guarded their cattle from harm:

"The prosperity of Mary Mother be yours;  
Active and full may you return.  
From rocks, from drifts, from streams,  
From crooked passes, from destructive pits,  
From the straight arrows of the slender ban-shee,  
From the heart of envy, from the eye of evil."

There is, lastly, what I have called the pantheon of the Celtic minor gods and horrid monsters, who beset mankind beings not only of the spirit, but apparently endowed with natural substance. Hobgoblins and fairies have played much the same part in the northern story that tyrant kings and unruly barons have done in England. So concrete is it all that one is half surprised to find no branch of Scottish law dealing with the conveyancing of fairy territory, and no constitutional practice evolved from their domination over men. But we are less concerned here with the mere details than with their meaning in the Highland character and their influence, through the Highlands, on the outside world.

It is a repetition of the wayward, incalculable power of Highland caprice and enthusiasm, relating itself to the more utilitarian civilisation of the South through curious reactions and indirect influences. Yet, as in the world of history and politics, even the influence actually exerted by the North has meant loss of vitality—virtue has gone out with it—and to trace the modifications introduced by Highland superstition is also to trace the disappearance of Highland beliefs.

In one sense, these Celtic and pre-Celtic relics have a modern value, which must continue to increase. Cool as modern science is, its

anthropologists find the fossil remains they are investigating, curiously ready to come to life once more, and no field in anthropology has so infected the explorers with sympathy and romance as the North and West of Scotland. The Highlander, indeed, has himself undertaken to investigate his own mysteries, and no names in folklore are more honourably distinguished than those of J. F. Campbell of Tiree, and half-a-dozen others of the same stock. Not only have the Scottish collectors done more in detailed collection than those of Wales or Ireland—I set the Arthurian legend aside for the present for obvious reasons—but the tales, myths, and songs have been wooed from their owners with a courtesy and gentleness in keeping with old Highland manners. The sentence with which Carmichael closes the introduction to his great collection, *Carmina Gadelica*, is both an unconscious tribute to the writer and a revelation of the secret of his success as a discoverer. "These notes and poems," he writes, "have been an education to me. And so have the men and women reciters, from whose dictation I wrote them down. They are almost all dead now, leaving no successors. With reverent hand and grateful heart I place this stone upon the cairn of those who composed and of those who transmitted the work." Such piety, indeed, is one of the virtues assured of a blessing, not only hereafter, but even here and now.

But outside the great collections Highland supernaturalism has left its traces upon the society which is securing its disappearance. It is, of course, easy to exaggerate the influence of the North on southern imagination, and there are, even within the British isles, several rivals to its predominance in literature. Border ballads and legends have had their sway; the Arthurian cycle must always claim an obvious and explicit supremacy; and the Irish mythology would find even more scope for its influence than it does were its modern proselytes more genuinely and simply Irish. Indeed, the external signs of Highland influence through myth and story are almost meagre. There are Highland renderings of the supernatural mood in Highland poetry. One English poet at least—I mean Collins—surrendered to the claims of "the popular superstitions of the Highlands," even if he went astray in his description of the "gifted wizard seer's abode" in "the depth of Uist's dark forest." Macpherson gave it vogue in a form the corruptions of which had, curiously enough, as much influence as the pure reality. It appears, artificially but not insincerely, in Scott's poetry and novels, although I do not know that Scott really sympathised with Highland superstition as he did with Border legend. And Stevenson, with the artist's knowledge of a treasure, used it as a fascinating but subordinate part of his artist's stock in trade. But explicit literary influence is a deceptive guide. The Gaelic power has proved its strength by undercurrents and modifications, not the less genuine because they have done their work silently. The virility of the modern understanding and imagination depends on the element of primitive irrationalism in it; and Highland superstition, working not so much through books as through personal contact—through the whims of Highland gentlemen, the home-sick traditions of Highland emigrants, and the curious educative faculty of Highland nurses, has done much to hamper the enfeebling progress of the clear civilised intellect. The passivity of England may have let primitive ideas die out, and the arid efficiency of American materialism may dispense with actual myths; but through the Highlander it is still possible to draw from these deep living waters' of fear and wonder, and to prolong for a little the childhood of the world. Here is a last refuge against the monotonous onsets of common sense.

I have chosen to dwell on this element in the Highland life, for it is not possible to judge Highland literature accurately without a critical equipment, drawn from these barbaric religious fancies. It is, perhaps, absurd for one who knows Gaelic poetry only in translation, to venture on criticism. Yet I do not know that stricter knowledge of local detail is necessary to substantiate the proposition that the true literature of the Highlands is to be found, not in the individual efforts of the bards and poets, but in the songs owned by the nation itself, inspired in the nation by the old vanishing world, and doomed to end, except as a record of the past, with the culture that produced it. The earliest poetic promise of the race, when Erse was the literary dialect of both Ireland and the Scottish Highlands, was singularly splendid. This is no place in which to describe the heroic legends of the Irish Celt; or the schools of the Irish bards; or the rich literature of early Celtic Christianity. It will be sufficient to indicate from such early lyrics as Dr. Kuno Meyer has translated, the distinctive qualities of early Celtic poetry. Dr. Meyer has very rightly indicated the secret of their charm—an "avoidance of the obvious and the commonplace. The half-said thing to them is dearest." It would be hard to find in the literature, late or early, of any European people a more perfect treatment of nature. The early Celtic poet finds subtle enjoyment of her through all his senses. Sight is the obvious hand-maiden of descriptive verse, and the old poet's eyes are aided in their work by a loving care for detail—he sees not merely the autumn hillside, but the bracken reddening on its slopes, the pleasant ruin of the summer's growth, and the wild-geese winging their way to sunnier skies. He hears with acuter ear the small sounds, and subtle quiet music of nature, and like the greatest of later lyric poets, Keats, he knows the poetry of taste. He associates the nature he loves with all the occupations of his life, and earns his bread more willingly in the sweat of his brow, because he does it in a fair setting. Even the scribe finds new attractions in his scroll and pen and ink, because he writes under trees and with the sky above him :-

"A hedge of trees surrounds me,  
A blackbird's lay singe to me;  
Above my lined booklet  
The trilling birds chant to me.  
Well do I write under the greensward."

The religious penitent rejoices because the operations of the Holy Spirit have as their fitting symbol the clear pool in which he washes away his sins. The life ascetic has still the subtle luxury of natural beauty to satisfy earthly cravings, and a warrior saint like Columba tempers the rigours of his religious exile with memories of the oak-groves of Derry. Matthew Arnold, misleading the world with a phrase, as was his wont, has spoken of melancholy, and a kind of brooding art-magic, as the notes of the Celtic imagination. He speaks of "the sheer inimitable note" (Celtic, of course) in passages like these:

"Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,  
By paved fountain or by rushy brook,  
Or in the beached margent of the sea."

And

"In such a night as this  
Stood Dido, with a willow in her hand,  
Upon the wild sea-banks, and waved her love  
To come again to Carthage."

But half the charm of this early Celtic poetry lies in its frankness and health. It has lightness and spirit; and real melancholy, reflective gloom, in fact all derivative emotions are less evident than in Anglo-Saxon verse. Laments there are, but objective and direct laments.

Passing from this fair early phase of Celtic imagination, we have an acute sense of disappointment at the later achievements of Gaelic genius, when that genius has learned to express itself in a Highland dialect. It is, perhaps, well to remind ourselves at how late a date this happened. According to Skene, it was only when the fall of the almost independent kingdom of the Isles, and the Reformation again separated the country from Ireland that a reaction towards the vernacular and spoken Scotch Gaelic took place. Among the earliest examples of Gaelic literature are the poems in the Book of the Dean of Lismore. Even there "some are in pure Irish, . . . others in a mixed dialect, in some of which the Irish idiom, in others the Scotch predominates." The old lyrical graces have not entirely disappeared. The affectionate details of natural beauty in Deirdre's lament show the old quality still present.

"Glendaruadh! O Glendaruadh!  
My love each man of its inheritance.  
Sweet the voice of the cuckoo on bending bough,  
On the bill above Glendaruadh.

Beloved is Naighen and its sounding shore;  
Beloved the water o'er pure sand.  
O that I might not depart from the cast,  
But that I might go with my beloved."

There is an extraordinarily frank and simple pleasure in human graces—ruddy faces, pearl-white teeth, raven-black hair, as in this verse in praise of Diarmaid:

"Whiter his body than the sun's bright light,  
Redder his lips than blossoms tinged with red,  
Long yellow locks did rest upon his head."

The heroic note, too—battle, and legendary splendour, and the virtues of champions—still sounds clearly. But despite one little despairful love song by a Countess of Argyll, the collection creates the impression that writing and the self-conscious literary life are obstacles intervening to pervert the true character of Gaelic poetry. There are wonderfully few memorable things in the Ossianic fragments in the Dean's book; only vain repetitions, and hints of things which the Irish had done more skilfully centuries earlier. Much of the rest of the volume is composed of aphorisms and trite sayings—the refuge, in all ages, of third-rate minds. There are the usual satires of the half-educated imagination, many of them wearisome tirades against women in general, suggesting that woman in particular has been a little disdainful of the bardic advances. Eulogies and laments commemorate great heroes, not without a professional unction, as though sorrow and praise rose and fell in strict accordance with a recognised tariff. It may be the effect of imperfect translation, but the novice in Gaelic finds himself conscious of a literary dilemma—the one alternative, that there is little in the substance of the poetry to justify aesthetic enthusiasm, the other, that somewhere, concealed behind imperfect art, lies a world of true poetry and natural magic. Nor does the critic's difficulty grow less as he passes on to the age of more celebrated Gaelic poets, when the graces and complicated art of the Gael had reached perfection. It is obvious that the affection of Duncan Ban Macintyre for his hills and deer has produced some charming open-air poetry, and that Alastair Macdonald's "Birlinn Ghlan-Raonuill" has Celtic fire and movement, even in a late translation; yet, when enthusiastic advocates of Highland Celticism boast of poetic triumphs in Gaelic, the Saxon critic remains sceptical. Alexander Carmichael may claim for Gaelic oral literature that it has passages "unsurpassed by anything similar in the ancient classics of Greece or Rome," but there is surely little in the artificial literature of his people which counts in European courts of literary criticism, and it is no kindness to Highland folk-poetry to compare it with anything in the classics more modern than Homer. Apart from the eighteenth-century Wardour Street Celtic of Macpherson, which has its own virtues, and which certainly had its influence, no work of any Gaelic poet has yet contrived to convince the world of western criticism that the obstacle of the Gaelic language is worth surmounting, as men learn Italian to know Dante, for the treasures beyond.

Nevertheless, somehow or other, the Gaelic temperament has always received: recognition as poetic; indeed if there were nothing

more, the power which Macpherson's translations so indubitably exercised, in spite of Dr. Johnson's triumphant and ignorant contempt, demands some further explanation than that of Macpherson's very questionable genius. It was on a voyage of adventure, to discover some solution to this dilemma, that I found Alexander Carmichael's *Carnzina Gadelica*, and so came upon the greatest author produced' by Highland culture, and its finest expression,—the Highland folk themselves, and their natural songs and poetry. In the remoter regions of the Western Highlands, and more especially in "The Long Island," that ardent Gael and true gentleman, Alexander Carmichael, discovered a literature in folk-song, unquestionably superior, not merely to formal and artificial Gaelic poetry, but to any similar folk-song in the British Isles. It is a literature dependent on a life simple and primitive, where natural wants are satisfied by the simplest natural processes, and literature, if that may be called literature which is never written, is nothing but the rhythms or melodies which serve as a kindly accompaniment to domestic routine and the labours of the field. Sowing and reaping, churning and weaving, pasturing cattle and catching fish, these things with shining intervals of Sundays and saints'-days, dominate life, and leave no intervals for modern artifice. There, even Christianity has done little to repress the worship of former days, and Protestantism could secure her dogmatic victory only by creating waste places in the old traditional life. "There were many sad things done then," said a housewife to Carmichael, "for those were the days of foolish doings, and of foolish people. . . . The good ministers and the good elders preached against them, and went among the people, and besought them to forsake their follies and' to return to wisdom. They made the people break and burn their pipes and fiddles. If there was a foolish man here and there who demurred, the ministers and elders themselves broke and burnt their instruments, saying:

"Is fearr an teine beag a gharas la beag na sithe  
 Na'n teine mor a loisgeas la mor na feirge.  
 [Better is the small fire that warms on the little day of peace,  
 Than the big fire that burns on the great day of wrath.]"

Even in the Protestant islands something remained after this drastic Puritan invasion; but, in the Catholic islands, a wiser toleration compromised with earlier paganism, and so, thanks to the editor of *Carmina Gadelica*, we have to-day record' of a spontaneous literature of charms, invocations, blessings, as real as the life they commemorate, as beautiful as the old Celtic poetry, the very soul of the Highland people. It has at least one proud distinction, of which the lewder and more sensual lowland genius cannot boast—an amazing purity, which Campbell of Islay found paralleled in the *Highland Tales* to which he listened: "I have never heard a story whose point was obscenity, publicly told in a Highland cottage; and I believe such are rare." It tells the story of the simple crises of a simple life. There are routine chants which the women sang as they milked, or worked the quern, or rocked the cradle; verses appropriate to joy and sorrow, the natural poetry of birth, love, and death. They are pieces of an extraordinary religious mosaic, in which the Celtic imagination has set together old mythology, and mediaeval hagiology, and evangelic truth. For the islanders have written quaint magical verses in honour of a pagan Christ, and his mother, and his angels. Christ is the 'white Lamb'; Mary, some fair heathen goddess; and the angels are demi-gods.

"Come, Brendan, from the ocean,"

sang the herdsman,

'Come, Ternan, most potent of men,  
 Come, Michael, valiant, down  
 And propitiate the cow of my joy.  
 Ho, my heifer, the heifer of my love,  
 My beloved heifer, choice cow of every shelling,  
 For the sake of the High King, take to thy calf."

They sang their appropriate invocations, when February brought round the day of Bride, the "aid-woman" of Mary in travail. They created out of St. Michael a new god of the sea, and held his day, the 29th of September, as "the most popular demonstration of the Celtic year." I cannot find elsewhere in Gaelic verse anything to match in delicate fancy the invocation that the people made on the maiden before her marriage, wishing her the skill and virtue, faith and beauty, of the saints, the ancient heroines, and the fairies; and the simplicity of the true lyric surely reaches its perfection, in these verses sung by lovers, of the lovers' gifts bestowed on the day of St. Michael:

"My lover gave to me a knife  
 That would cut the sapling withe,  
 That would cut the soft and hard,  
 Long live the hand that gave.

My lover promised me a snood,  
 Ay, and a brooch and comb,  
 And I promised, by the wood,  
 To meet him at rise of sun.



My lover promised me a mirror,  
That my beauty I might see,  
Yes, and a coif and ring,  
And a dulcet harp of chords.

He vowed me those and a fold of kine,  
And a palfrey of the steeds,  
And a barge, pinnacled white,  
That would safely cross the perilous seas.

A thousand blessings, a thousand victories  
To my lover who left me yestreen,  
He gave to me the promise lasting,  
Be his Shepherd God's own Son."

Or, once again, here is surely the true and perfect lyric of Highland hospitality; true and' perfect because it reflects, not an individual fancy, but the ideas of the folk:

"I saw a stranger yestreen,  
I put food in the eating place,  
Drink in the drinking place,  
Music in the listening place;  
In the sacred name of the Triune  
He blessed myself, and my house,  
My cattle and my dear ones;  
And the lark said in her song,  
Often, often, often,  
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise.  
Often, often, often,  
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise."

It is with heart-felt sorrow that one realises how quickly this natural literature has already faded. What Carmichael says of the feast of St. Michael is true of the whole world of which he is the affectionate historian: "The Michael lamb is sometimes slain, the Michael struan is sometimes baked, and the carrots are occasionally gathered, but the people can give no account of their significance." Here and nowhere else is the true inspired literature of the Gael, and yet the days of its life are numbered. Old things are passing, and must pass, and' these songs can live, only in the modifications they may have made in minds imperfectly in sympathy with the Highlander, or in the affection and faithful memory of Gaels, still determined to fight time and fate to the last.

Alike in history and literature, the modern student of the Highland community finds the elegiac note predominant. Like another elect people, the clansmen have been and must continue to be pilgrims and strangers. Their gallantry has been the central strength of the British army through a century; their love of culture has done much to give to the Scottish Universities their prestige; their virility and resourcefulness are building *Novae Scotiae* for Britain beyond: the seas. But the days of the proud old Highland realm in Scotland are almost over, and Britain is the poorer for it.

And that's it for this week and hope you have a great weekend.

Alastair