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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for November 15th, 2019

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

<https://electricscotland.com/scotnews.htm>

Electric Scotland News

Well if you want a no deal Brexit there are really no parties you can vote for that will give you that. The nearest is still the Brexit party as at least they may hold the balance of power in a Conservative led minority parliament.

First fall of snow came this week in Chatham where I live. Not a whole lot but sufficient for my first visit from my snow remover chap. Means another visit to the bank to get some cash to pay him as Canada is sure a cash economy. I've been watching Time Team on YouTube this part week and have really enjoyed watching many old episodes again. They were on the air for 20 years so lots of old episodes to enjoy.

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 Daily Record, Courier, BBC, Capx, ThinkScotland, 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

Quebec denies French student's immigration over English thesis chapter

Quebec's immigration minister said in a statement on Thursday evening that the decision doesn't seem to make much sense. He has asked officials to look into her case.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-50241254>

Germany's economic pain is here to stay

Germany has been stuck in neutral for a year with hopes fading for a turnaround, a situation that threatens to spread lasting economic gloom across Europe.

Read more at:

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-global-economy/germanys-economic-pain-is-here-to-stay-idUKKBN1X11VT>

Scotland's budget prospects

The Fraser of Allander Institute has published its 4th annual Scotland's Budget Report.

Read more at:

<http://sceptical.scot/2019/11/scotlands-budget-prospects/>

First insight into how Scotland's new income tax system is working

The devolution of income tax powers to Holyrood came with a risk that it might produce lower revenue, so lower spending than sticking with the previous system.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-50385954>

Aircraft combats Sydney blaze as Australians reel from bushfires

Fires raged across a swathe of Australia's east coast on Tuesday, destroying more homes and shrouding Sydney in smoke from a blaze authorities fear they will be unable to control until next week.

Read more at:

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-australia-bushfires/new-blazes-break-out-as-australians-take-shelter-from-intense-bushfires-idUKKBN1XL2H4>

A Canadian breakup is back on the table

It's a larger debate that could one day threaten the country's cohesion.

Read more at:

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-canada-politics-breakingviews/breakingviews-cox-a-canadian-breakup-is-back-on-the-table-idUKKBN1XM2U0>

Solheim Cup: Catriona Matthew thrilled to be named as Europe captain again

The 50-year-old Scot led her team to victory over the United States on home soil at Gleneagles in September. She will be captain again at Inverness Golf Club in Toledo, Ohio, in 2021.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/sport/golf/50411603>

Electric Canadian

The Men of the Backwoods

True stories and sketches of the Indians and the Indian Fighters by Ascott R. Hope (1899) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/menoftebackwoods.pdf>

Women of Red River (1923) (pdf)

You can read about them at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/womenofredriver.pdf>

Joyce Wieland Life & Work

By Johanne Sloan (2014) (pdf)

You can read about her at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/Joyce-Wieland.pdf>

Vimy Ridge

Added a new video about the Battle for Vimy Ridge.

You can watch this at: https://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/canadian_scottish.htm

Pioneers of the Cross in Canada

By Dean Harris (1912) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/pioneersofthecrossincanada.pdf>

Electric Scotland

The Home Preacher

Added Service 15 by D.K.T. Drummond

You can read this at: <https://electricscotland.com/bible/homepreacher/week15.htm>

The Stuart Papers at Windsor

Being Selections from Hitherto unprinted Royal archives with Introduction and Notes by Alistair & Henrietta Tayler (1938)

You can read this at: <https://electricscotland.com/history/Stuart-Papers-At-Windsor.pdf>

Britain's New Warships

Found 2 videos, one about HMS Duncan a Destroyer and the other HMS Queen Elizabeth the Aircraft Carrier. Also added another video on the Nuclear Submarine.

You can watch these at: <https://electricscotland.com/history/navy/>

The Sick Man's Friend

Being a plain, practical medical work designed for the use of families and individuals on vegetable, or botanical principles: in four parts by Peter Elkins Sanborn (1836) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://electricscotland.com/history/medical/sickmansfriend.pdf>

One thousand men are walking

Joshua Dyer, aged 14 was tasked at school to write a poem for Remembrance Day 2019. An hour later, without any help he produced the following poignant poem

You can read this poem at: <https://electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/walking.htm>

The Day of Trouble

Plain Words for the Suffering and Sorrowful selected from the Writings of the Rev. W.R. MacKenzie, M.A. (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://electricscotland.com/bible/daytrouble.pdf>

Scotland's budget prospects

The Fraser of Allander Institute has published its 4th annual Scotland's Budget Report. (2019) (pdf)

You can view their report at: <https://electricscotland.com/independence/201911-BudgetReport.pdf>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Got in the December 2019 section 2 issue which can be read at: <https://electricscotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

Robert Bruce

BRUCE, ROBERT (1554 - 1631), theological writer, second son of Sir Alexander Bruce of Airth, who claimed descent from the royal family of Bruce, studied jurisprudence at Paris, and on his return practised law, and was on the way to becoming a judge.

Read more about him at: https://electricscotland.com/bible/bruce_robert.htm

The Travels of Peter Williamson

Among the different Nations and Tribes of savage Indians in America with an account of their Principles religious, civil, and military; their genius, strength, idea of a Deity, and notions of the Creation; with ever things remarkable concerning their manners, customs, employments, diversions, commerce, agriculture, &c. &c. (1768) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://electricscotland.com/history/america/travelsofpeterwilliamson.pdf>

The Story

The Growing Threat of Water Wars

By Jayati Ghosh

In 2015, United Nations member states adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, which include an imperative to “ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.” Yet, in the last four years, matters have deteriorated significantly.

NEW DELHI – The dangers of environmental pollution receive a lot of attention nowadays, particularly in the developing world, and with good reason. Air quality indices are dismal and worsening in many places, with India, in particular, facing an acute public-health emergency. But as serious as the pollution problem is, it must not be allowed to obscure another incipient environmental catastrophe, and potential source of future conflict: lack of access to clean water.

We may live on a “blue planet,” but less than 3% of all of our water is fresh, and much of it is inaccessible (for example, because it is locked in glaciers). Since 1960, the amount of available fresh water per capita has declined by more than half, leaving over 40% of the world's population facing water stress. By 2030, demand for fresh water will exceed supply by an estimated 40%.

With nearly two-thirds of fresh water coming from rivers and lakes that cross national borders, intensifying water stress fuels a vicious circle, in which countries compete for supplies, leading to greater stress and more competition. Today, hundreds of international water agreements are coming under pressure.

China, India, and Bangladesh are locked in a dispute over the Brahmaputra, one of Asia's largest rivers, with China and India actively constructing dams that have raised fears of water diversion. India's government has used water-flow diversion to punish Pakistan for terrorist attacks. Dam-building on the Nile by Ethiopia has raised the ire of downstream Egypt.

And cross-border conflicts are just the beginning. Water-related tensions are on the rise within countries as well, between rural and urban communities, and among agricultural, industrial, and household consumers. Last year, water scarcity fueled conflicts in parts of eastern Africa, such as Kenya, which has a history of tribal clashes over access to water.

In fact, there are long histories of conflict over the waters of many major rivers, including the Nile, the Amazon, the Mekong, and the Danube. But the severity and frequency of such conflicts are set to increase, as climate change alters rainfall patterns, leading to more frequent, intense, and prolonged droughts and floods.

Making matters worse, dwindling water reserves are increasingly contaminated by industrial pollutants, plastics and other refuse, and human waste. In middle-income countries, less than one-third of wastewater is treated; in low-income countries, the share is much smaller. Roughly 1.8 billion people get their drinking water from feces-contaminated sources. The depletion of aquifers and inadequate investment in water infrastructure are exacerbating these problems.

Water stress affects everyone, but the agricultural sector – which accounts for 70% of all water consumption globally, and as much as 90% in the least-developed countries – is particularly vulnerable to constrained supplies. Lack of water makes it difficult to keep livestock, since every drop has to be preserved for crops or human consumption.

Urban areas are also headed for disaster. Last year, Cape Town, South Africa, faced such severe water shortages that it began preparations for a “day zero,” when the municipal water supply would be shut off. (Thanks to supply restrictions and other government measures, that day never came.) Similarly, Mexico City has struggled with a water crisis for years.

Indian metropolises are lurching toward even bigger catastrophes. A 2018 government report warned that 21 cities (including the capital, Delhi, and the information-technology hub Bengaluru) would reach zero groundwater levels by next year, affecting at least 100 million people.

As with climate change, the most severe consequences of water stress disproportionately affect those in the world's poorest regions – especially Africa and South and Central Asia – who contributed least to the problem. In one part of rural Maharashtra, India, women and girls walk up to 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) per day to collect drinking water. In other villages, as local wells run dry, households have had to designate a member to be on full-time water-collection duty. Wealthier families might pay someone else to do the job, but most households do not have that luxury.

Meanwhile, the advanced economies not only avoid many of the consequences of water stress (at least for now); they also maintain the lifestyle excesses that have propelled climate change and environmental degradation, including water depletion. Rice cultivation is often cited as a major water guzzler, but a kilo (2.2 pounds) of beef requires five times more water to produce than a kilo of rice, and 130 times more than a kilo of potatoes. And since agricultural crops account for a significant share of many developing countries' exports, these countries are, in a sense, exporting the limited supply of water they have.

Moreover, current land grabs in Africa are actually about water, with foreign investors targeting areas with big rivers, large lakes, wetlands, and groundwater, and thus with high agricultural potential and biogenetic value. (As it stands, less than 10% of Africa's irrigation potential is being used.)

In 2015, United Nations member states adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, which include an imperative to “ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.” Yet, in the last four years, matters have deteriorated significantly. The international community might be able to fool itself for a while – as it has proved so adept at doing, not least with regard to environmental destruction – but the threat of water wars is only drawing nearer. For many in Africa, Asia, and elsewhere, it has already arrived.

Jayati Ghosh is Professor of Economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, Executive Secretary of International Development Economics Associates, and a member of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation.

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

Alastair