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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for August 13th, 2021

For the latest news from Scotland see our ScotNews feed at:
<https://electricscotland.com/scotnews.htm>

Electric Scotland News

It's been quite a week since I lost my Internet connection on Thursday 12th at 10:30 in the morning and didn't get it back until 10:30 in the morning Monday 16th. I'm told this was due to staff problems due to holidays and illness. So sorry for the lateness of this issue of our newsletter.

Firefox Becomes the First Major Browser Available in Scots

The Firefox web browser has become the first major software available in the Scots language. The project, led by Edinburgh-based localization provider Rubric, seeks to promote the language and will be available for users from the 10th of August 2021.

Recognition of the Scots language has grown recently in Scottish schools, parliament, and on social media. However, speakers have had limited options for software in their own language.

Rubric hopes that this new language option will change that by allowing learners and fluent speakers to browse the web in Scots.

A renaissance of the Scots language

The 2011 Scottish census reported that 1.9 million people could speak, read, write or understand Scots. Despite this, there has been less drive to incorporate it into technological products than other minority languages, such as Scots Gaelic.

Ashley Douglas, writer, researcher, and translator for the project explains the importance of Scots language software: "This project shows Scots being used as the fully-fledged, fully functioning, fully legitimate modern language that it is. It's wonderful that Rubric and Mozilla are committed to doing this, and it was a real pleasure to help Rubric deliver on the goal."

Fellow translator and Scots writer Thomas Clark notes that the browser will provide validation for native speakers. He says "For younger speakers especially, it's so important that they see that Scots is out there so they're not embarrassed about using it. Being able to access the internet through a Scots medium makes so much difference to their confidence, their development, and hopefully to the status of the language."

What it takes to translate a browser into Scots

As Scots has not been used extensively in the technological sphere before, the team had to coin some new terms.

Douglas explains "Sometimes that was using existing words in new ways. For example, for 'maximize' and 'minimize' we opted for 'mak muckle' and 'mak tottie'."

Their guiding principle was to use terms that will be immediately understandable to Scots speakers.

Clark says "The real challenge was finding a medium between an interesting, lively accessible Scots and making sure that it wasn't too antiquated or whimsical."

Françoise Henderson, CEO of Rubric, hopes the publicity around the browser will encourage the Scots community to build upon their efforts to promote the Scots language in the technology domain.

She says: "It's unusual for a commercial company like us to do this kind of thing. Usually, the community translates for Mozilla. For us, it's very much a seeding exercise, it's not a commercial exercise. The language has to live and the community has to take over now."

Founded by Françoise and Ian Henderson in 1994, Rubric works with global businesses to grow their international reach through localization services and global content strategy. Rubric regularly donates resources to important volunteer projects having previously translated Firefox into Xhosa and donated Wikipedia translations of key health information during the 2014 Ebola virus epidemic in West Africa.

Learn more about Rubric at www.rubric.com

Download Firefox in the Scots language at:

<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-CA/firefox/addon/scots-language-pack/>

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 and world news stories that can affect Scotland and as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines it becomes a good resource. I might also add that in a number of newspapers 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 which I do myself from time to time.

AstraZeneca gives longer immunity and you don't need booster jab

ASTRAZENECA's vaccine could potentially give longer immunity and booster jabs might not be needed for full protection from the COVID-19 virus, a boss of the UK drugs giant has claimed.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1473203/astrazeneca-vaccine-news-emmanuel-macron-longer-immunity-booster-jab>

Glasgow life expectancy gap widens between richest and poorest

The life expectancy gap between the richest and poorest in Glasgow has widened over the past 20 years, a new study suggests.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-58118599>

Scotland used to make many things, including big-thinking politicians. No more

Political negligence is to blame for the demise of Scotland's industrial base, according to the leader of one of the country's biggest trade unions.

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/ferries-gmb/>

The IPCC report is a sobering reminder of the scale of the climate challenge

Although it clocks in at 4,000 pages long, the central message from the epic new IPCC report is quite simple. Climate change is already here and we better get adapting quickly. For the UK that will mean a set of very tricky political choices - but also a chance to show real leadership at the upcoming COP26 conference.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/the-ipcc-report-is-a-sobering-reminder-of-the-scale-of-the-climate-challenge>

Census unearthed: explore 50 years of change from 1961

From having an inside toilet to how many of us are married, newly digitised data show how the ways we live changed from 1961 to 2011

Read more at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/articles/censusunearthedexplore50yearsofchangefrom1961/2021-08-09>

Biden's popularity PLUMMETS in telling new poll as concerns for America's future grow

US PRESIDENT Joe Biden has seen his popularity plummet to new lows today as a telling poll revealed the concerns Americans had about the future of their country.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/1475016/Biden-popularity-latest-poll-US-economy-inflation-democrats-evg>

Ruskin and Geddes: the sages of Kinnoull

It began in Perth. At various times during the 19th century, the 'fair city' was a home to two remarkable men, John Ruskin and Patrick Geddes, and the former was something of a mentor to the latter. The overlap of their lives is significant: Ruskin's dates are

1819-1900; Geddes's, 1854-1932.

Read more at:

<https://www.scottishreview.net/TomHubbard580a.html>

Angela Merkel's CDU plummets in latest shocking poll ahead of election

ANGELA MERKEL's party is facing a shocking decline in polls just six weeks ahead of the federal general election in Germany.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/1475401/German-election-latest-polls-news-Angela-Merkel-cdu-poll-Spd-armin-laschet>

Still Game star Ford Kiernan enjoys Paisley Oyster for lunch and fans are delighted

Still Game star Ford Kiernan has delighted Scots fans by posting a quick snap of his delicious-looking lunch on social media

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/still-game-star-ford-kiernan-24737758>

Electric Canadian

Thoughts on a Sunday morning - the 15th day of August 2021

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26079-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-15th-day-of-august-2021>

The Making of Canada

By A. G. Bradley (1908) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/makingofcanada.pdf>

The Island

Or Playing at Robinson Crusoe, a children's story which you can read at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/children/islandorplaying.pdf>

Electric Scotland

Beth's Video Talks

Beth has another video for you for August 11th 2021 - More Gaelic with a Southern Accent

You can watch this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft>

Clan Henderson Newsletters

Got in the September 2021 issue which you can read at:

<https://electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/henderson/index.htm>

Stuart Crawford

Added two articles he sent into us this weekend, "Transition to Civvy Street in Scotland: A Better Way Forward" and "Military veterans can wield power at the ballot box".

You can read these at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/tank/scarticles.htm>

Hylton Newsletter

Got in the August 2021 newsletter which explores the remains of WWII buildings in Northern Scotland. You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/hylton/index.htm>

Pioneering in South Brazil

Three years of forest and prairie life in the Province of Parana by Thomas P. Bigg-Wither in two volumes (1878)

You can read these at: <https://electricScotland.com/history/brazil.htm>

A Book for Bairns and Big Folk
By Robert Ford (1904)

You can read this at: <https://electricScotland.com/kids/bairns/index.htm>

Scottish Society of Louisville

Got in their August 2021 newsletter which you can read at:

<https://electricScotland.com/familytree/newsletters/Louisville/index.htm>

Story

Statement as to the Mode of Erection and Tenure of Cottages for Labourers and Tradesmen on the Estate of Annandale, belonging to J. J. Hope Johnstone, Esq., M.P. By Charles Stewart, Esq., of Hillside; with remarks by the Rev. Peter Hope, Minister of the Free Church of Johnstone and Wamphray.

There lies before us a paper by Charles Stewart, Esq., of Hillside, Dumfriesshire, on the mode of providing cottages with pendicles of land for labourers and tradesmen, which has been carried on under his care on the Annandale estate. The paper is made up of two separate reports; which, originally printed in the Transactions of the Highland Society, 1844 and 1859, have since been reprinted. Along with this we must notice a paper by the Rev. Peter Hope, Free Church minister of Wamphray, read before the last Social Science meeting, in which he gives what he has seen of the social and moral results of the experiments Mr. Stewart describes. Mr. Stewart, the author at once of the pamphlet and of the experiments, has for many years had charge of the estate of Annandale, belonging to J. J. Hope Johnstone, Esq., M.P., and of other extensive properties, and has had much opportunity of becoming acquainted with the present state and past history of farming and rural economy throughout Scotland. To those who know him, every statement and opinion of his will be sure to come with no common weight. To those who do not, we need only say, that as for nearly half a century he has been among the foremost promoters of every agricultural improvement and of all useful progress in the south of Scotland, and as his natural sagacity and wisdom have been enriched with a wide and varied experience, his word on all rural matters is of rare authority. The following statements are taken from the above named reports:— In upper Annandale, the labourers and country tradesmen used, for the most part, to hold their houses from the tenant. About fifty years ago, as most of these houses had become ruinous or incommodious, a new plan was adopted. A lease of twenty-one years is given of a homestead and large garden at a moderate rent. The landlord supplies and saws timber and hewed freestone, needed for doors, windows, jambs, etc., etc., at a cost to himself of about twenty-two pounds. The rest of the cost of building the homestead falls on the tenant, and, besides his own labour, ranges from twenty-one to thirty-five or even forty pounds. The proprietor reserves to himself the right of resuming possession on six months' notice—a right, however, which as it would only be put in force in case of bad conduct, is said to have been in no case, as yet, exercised. None but persons of the best character, natives, or well known in the neighbourhood, are granted these leases. They are most of them, either men who have been ploughmen, have saved something, and wish to settle with their families; or elderly men or widows, with well-doing children, who help them; or country tradesmen, carpenters, masons, shoemakers, etc., etc. Great care is taken not to place any without certain prospect of future work, and an eye is kept on the state of population in each parish, with a view to keep the numbers rather under than above the natural demand for labour. This scheme can, of course, be best carried out on great estates, where the care of large woods, draining, fencing, and other improvements, afford a steady supply of work for these cottar tenants. Almost all these occupancies lie in the parishes of Kirkpatrick-Juxta and Johnstone, on a tract of eight or nine miles, stretching along the west side of the river Annan. The houses are generally placed singly, along the turnpike and cross parish roads, and care is taken that they shall not be grouped into hamlets or villages.

The second Report (1859) states that the demand for such leases is greatly on the increase; that the more recent houses are better built, and more roomy than the original ones; that pendicles of land from two to six acres, or grass for a cow, are greatly desired and now generally granted. The land being often coarse, the landlord, besides enclosing, helps to drain and lime it. It is improved till it affords not only summer grazing for one cow, or perhaps two, but green crop and corn, sometimes meadow hay. The rent charged is the same as it is worth as part of a farm, from ten to twenty shillings per acre. It increases the interest of the cottar, and gives scope to the intelligence which is generally possessed, and to the industry of the family, without materially encroaching on the tenant's time for earning his regular money income. He can buy turnips, meadow hay, and corn from farmers at hand. A good supply of milk is secured for the family, and the ready sale of the pork, butter, and perhaps a calf a young beast, meets any outlay as well as rent, which last is paid with perfect promptitude. All the above statements are taken almost word for word from Mr. Stewart's pamphlet. After nearly a lifetime's trial of the system, he expresses his perfect conviction of its success. He has found it advantageous alike to the tenants themselves, the landlord, and the community at large. In parishes where these tenants form a third or a fourth of the whole population, none of them ever come on the poor roll, and pauperism scarcely exists. While this or a like system may be most easily carried out on large estates, owing to the supply of home timber, saw-mills, etc., etc., and the power of regulating the number of such tenancies by the demand for labour; yet Mr. Stewart maintains that much may be done in the same or a like way by smaller proprietors, if they would give the cottar an interest and security in his house, by

allowing him to pay more or less of the original cost, and to hold his lease directly from themselves, and, above all, by furnishing him with a pendicle of land. And it is cheering to learn that the experiment is not now confined to the estate where it originated, but is being tried by other liberal landowners, who understand and esteem the character of our peasantry.

While Mr. Stewart has given the statement of facts, Mr. Hope points the moral. He remarks that, in recent discussions on these topics, it is usual to notice only three orders in an agricultural community—landlord, farmer, and farm-servants, either hired, or cottars holding of the farmer. But he observes there is a fourth class intermediate between the small farmer and the hired labourer, not so high as the former, but higher than the latter, which ought not to be overlooked. This class, consisting of country tradesmen, retired ploughmen, etc. —a class having its own place in a well-ordered rural economy—mainly occupy the small tenancies on the Annandale estate. And Mr. Hope is convinced, by what he has seen, that the system above described has succeeded in elevating this class without burdening either landlord or farmer, but with benefit to both, and has fostered small holdings without depressing agriculture or retarding improvement. Its advantages, as stated by him, are such as these:—

1. The fact that such leases are granted only to men of good character and orderly conduct, acts as a bounty upon these qualities, which make for the public not less than the individual welfare.
2. The system encourages thrift and industry both before and after obtaining such a tenancy; before, to save means to meet the necessary outlay, and after, to make the most of the allotment. What labour the cottager expends on his small holding, does not hinder his ordinary work; it is done at by hours or by his family. And the wife, with her cow to keep, milk for her household, butter and eggs to take to market, calf and pig to care for, becomes quite another woman from what she would have been had her husband been only a day labourer, renting a bare house from a farmer, and removeable at every term. She becomes managing and thoughtful, fertile in resources, feels that she is respected and that much is looked for from her; she can do much for the support of her family, and she is put to her mettle to do it. The children, too, early take part in the field work, and so are trained to useful labour, and to habits which stand them in good stead when they go out in life.
3. Let no one compare this with the Irish crofter system.- All the special evils of the latter are absent here. Character and conduct are well looked to before a lease is granted; security of tenure is combined with moderate rent; there is no middleman between landlord and cottar; the balance between population and demand for labour is carefully attended to. In Ireland, everything tended towards tbriftlessness and idleness; here, all motives are at work to produce thrift and diligence.
4. The security of these small holdings is a mighty charm. The tenant feels sure that when his lease expires it will be renewed, that he himself will end his days in the house his own hands have helped to build, and that when he dies his tenancy will go to some one of his family. Of the advantages of this permanency of abode we need hardly speak. The children brought up at the same school, the family worshipping in the same church, known and respected by the neighbours, and bound by ties of affection to their native district; these, the very best outward influences for forming character, how few of the labouring class are blest with them!

One does not wonder on being told that for these cottar homes and small farms in Anandale a very large number of youths have received a more than a poor man's education, and arisen afterwards to eminence. From such abodes it is that the purity and energy of the towns is recruited, and the Scotch character maintained throughout the world. There is scarcely a small farm in Annandale which has not one or more members of its family doing well in other countries and quarters of the globe, in every position, from the farm griever in England or Ireland to the merchant millionaire in India or China. This comes, in part, from the old border spirit of enterprise which two centuries of peace have not extinguished, but still more it is due to the existence of a class of working farmers. In the Lothians and Berwickshire, where the rural population consists of a few gentlemen farmers and a large number of mere servants, no such proportion make their way upward. The latter see little chance of rising, and the former have no call to make the exertion. This, however, though the most palpable, is by no means the highest moral effect of the system of cottar tenancy and small farms. It is not from the few who rise that it should be estimated, but from the numbers not known nor heard of in the world, who live on these holdings industrious, moral, and contented, and die leaving a good name throughout their neighbourhood. But while such is the solid good that accrues to the cottar tenant, how, it may be asked, does the landlord fare? It is well that we can answer this query on the authority of Mr. Stewart, who certainly has the best means of knowing. He informs us that these cottage leases and small holdings are not only not a pecuniary loss to the landowner, but are in the long run a decided gain. He gets interest for his original outlay on the cottage and field, and fully as good a return as he would have got for the same land included in a large farm. Besides these, there are other advantages of this system which few proprietors will think lightly of. It keeps in check and reduces the poor rate, for rarely have any of this cottar population fallen on the poor-roll. And it peoples his property with a set of industrious, sober, well-to-do workmen, themselves and their fathers native to the soil, men bound to himself who has befriended them, and to the land that has reared them, by the best and strongest ties.

This system of cottage tenure, with small portions of land held directly from the landlord, might, we are convinced, be in some measure introduced by liberal and patriotic landlords, even into exclusively large farm districts, with safety and advantage. It would do much to relieve the hopeless condition of the hinds, of which we have already spoken and something to lessen the social gap, though it could not bridge it. But it is only where there exists a graduated scale of farms, from those of one plough, or about 60 to 70 acres, through every size, up to the large farm, that the system of cottage tenure can have full scope. The existence of these

small farms is a wonderful stimulus to the cottar tenants. They know, that if they hain and husband well the pendicle, this may lead in time to the small farm. In the parish of Johnstone, for instance, out of thirty-six farms, there are six or seven held by men who were themselves once cottar-tenants, and as many more held by men whose fathers rose from that class. When a small farm in a neighbouring parish, of about L.100 a-year rental, was lately out of lease, of fourteen eligible offers, four came from men who had once been labourers. To illustrate what is meant by small farms graduated upwards, take the above-named parish of Johnstone. It contains from 7000 to 8000 acres of mixed arable, improveable, and pasture land. Under the too prevailing system of lumping land into the largest farms possible, it would probably be parcelled out into half a dozen farms, rented from perhaps L.800 to L.1000 a-year each. On these would live a number of hired servants in cottages held of the farmers. Under the system we advocate, it is at present laid out in thirty-six farms, yielding a total rental of nearly L.5000 a-year. Some of the farms pay as much as L.350 to L.400 a-year of rent; while at least twenty farms, of from 70 to 130 acres, and affording tillage for one plough, pay a rental of from L.50 to L. 150 each. Besides these small farms, there are the numerous cottar tenancies we have above described. It can easily be imagined how powerfully the existence of the former must tell on the occupants of the latter. The way upward is open; persevering industry may travel it; and the small farm once attained, there is the large farm beckoning, if not the man himself, then his children. Such a prospect acts far beyond the small circle of those who succeed in realizing it. It tells on the whole body of working men. They see their neighbours and equals rise to better things. They know that they themselves may do likewise, and this feeling has a heartening, healthful influence on many a man, who may never change his original condition.

This, then, would seem to be the type of a well-ordered rural polity. Beginning with the mere day labourer, passing upwards through the cottar tenant, the small farmer, to the large farmer, it would culminate in the landlord,—a social order as perfect as our country, with all its antecedents, would seem to admit of,—an ideal, which is not only an ideal, but has in some places begun to be realized; and that not by sentimentalists or dreamers, but by the most practical of men. And there is no reason why it should not be still further realized, if landlords and others, who have power over land, would but all look at the matter with the same careful foresight, the same humane wisdom, as the landlords and their agents above named have done. By such a course they would help to heal those social sores which in many places have become serious; they would go far to fill up the social gap, which disguise it as you will, is a great, if it be an inevitable evil in many high-farmed districts; and they would help to build up a rural polity, in which, as in our good British constitution, all orders of men are linked closed to each other, and rank passes so insensibly into rank, that you can scarce tell where one ends and another begins.

It may be impossible greatly to alter things in the eastern counties and elsewhere, where large farms have been too long established as the universal rule. But might we not hope that, if landlords would examine closely the experiments made in Annandale, they would see it to be their true wisdom to stay the progress of enlargement, where, as in the western and southern counties, it is only entered on and not yet consummated. Let us not be misunderstood. We would not exclude some large farms from any district. They are prizes for enterprise, and they act as a stimulant on the small farmers around them. And, to some districts, a larger number of them is suitable. To wide plans, or easy undulations of equal soil, and under thirty inches of rain, the large farm with thirty or forty acre fields is more naturally adapted. But in the western counties the ground is broken, the soil unequal, the climate moist and uncertain. To these varieties of soil and weather, the small farmer, working with his own family, without many servants or high kept horses, better suits himself; and in bad years or low prices he can save and curtail consumption and expense in a way the large farmer cannot do. He bends more to the blast, where the other breaks. During the last fifty years, says one who has watched country matters closely, 'I have seen three or four crises, in which the large, farmer on poor soil went to the wall, while the small ones stood.' One argument for large farms, once unanswerable, has now lost its force. There was a time when they were rightly encouraged as the only means of bringing capital, enterprise, and intelligence to embark in agriculture, and raise it from its low primitive condition. But it is so no longer.

END.

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

Alastair
