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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for September 2nd, 2022

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

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

Electric Scotland News

23% of Children in England live in lone parent households - The European average is 13%. Source: Children's Commissioner for England.

Britain's social fabric is tattered – putting families first is the key to repairing it. A new report authored by the Children's Commissioner for England, Dame Rachel D'Souza, has issued a stern warning over the scale and effects of family breakdown. Among her findings are that half of English children now live across more than one household and a quarter of families are headed by a lone parent (of whom 90% are women).

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/britains-social-fabric-is-tattered-putting-families-first-is-the-key-to-repairing-it>

I have been persuaded to accept advertising from InfoLinks so have now implemented this on the web site. I will be running this for a month as a trial so please let me know what you think. I could do with a bit more income due to the high inflation rate which is why I've decided to give it a go.

As you may know I ditched Google advertising some months ago and so just take advertising from "Unique Cottages" who offer self catering accommodation in Scotland and have been with me for some 15 years now and also MyHeritage for genealogical purposes as for those with European heritage I do believe they offer the best range of benefits.

Each Infolinks ad has a small question mark on the banner. To turn off Infolinks you can click on the question mark. The click will direct you to the "Learn more about Infolinks" page; inside this page you can choose to opt out and disable Infolinks ads from your browser. Due to this option I decided to implement this advertiser. You can also click on the small x on the top right of the advert to close it if you wish. And here is what they say about themselves...

Infolinks is an online advertising platform offering ad solutions. Infolinks helps online bloggers and website publishers earn real revenue from their sites so that they can continue creating great new content. Infolinks goes beyond conventional advertising by providing non-disruptive solutions delivering relevant ads for website context.

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.

UK inflation rate calculator
How much are prices rising for you?

Read more at:
<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-62558817>

Catastrophic impact of rising prices on children
Poverty caused by rising prices will have a catastrophic impact on children, Scotland's children's commissioner has said.

Read more at:
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-62707055>

Scotland's new disability benefits system comes into force
The Scottish government has begun taking over adult disability benefits from the UK government

Read more at:
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-62712288>

Conrad Black: Canada's unforgivably disastrous health-care system
We have appreciably fewer doctors per capita than many comparatively underdeveloped countries, such as Cuba, and even North Korea

Read more at:
<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/conrad-black-canadas-unforgivably-disastrous-health-care-system>

The royal roots of Quebec's French
Quebecois French has long been mocked for its rough-and-tumble sound, but this version of French is more likely what 17th-Century French aristocracy spoke - including the king.

Read more at:
<https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20220829-the-royal-roots-of-quebecs-french>

Rolls-Royce's unique reactors will power one million homes each to tackle energy crisis
THE UK could soon lead the way in ditching Russian gas as Rolls-Royce's Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) are set to have a competitive advantage over the rest, Express.co.uk has been told.

Read more at:
<https://www.express.co.uk/news/science/1630895/rolls-royce-nuclear-reactors-power-one-million-homes-energy-crisis>

Nearing the end of an era
By Gerry Hassan in the Scottish Review

Read more at:
<https://www.scottishreview.net/GerryHassan626a.html>

Media
By Hamish MacKay in the Scottish Review

Read more at:

<https://www.scottishreview.net/HamishMackay626a.html>

How a sleepy backwater in Ayrshire helped win the Battle of the Atlantic and defeat the Nazis

Fairlie's most important work was to find a solution. Riddell explained: They developed an asdic which could pick up a submarine in three dimensions: distance, direction, and most critically depth. That was a big advance.

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/how-a-sleepy-backwater-in-ayrshire-helped-win-the-battle-of-the-atlantic-and-defeat-the-nazis/>

The 6,089 Dundee WW1 victims

Search their names, ages, ranks and addresses

Read more at:

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/courier-investigations/2703714/dundee-ww1-victims/>

Electric Canadian

Ontario Agricultural College

Bulletin 124. Nature Study, Stories in Agriculture

Note that I've used the Introduction and the first story from this publication as our Story for this week.

You can read these stories at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/bulletin25onta.pdf>

The Pioneer Farm and the Wabigoon Country

Rainy River District, A new section opened for settlement - Information as to the Country and its capabilities - A account of the farm established there by the Ontario government (1896) (pdf)

You can read this account at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/pioneerfarmwabig00onta.pdf>

The Marshlands (Second Edition)

The Trail of the Tide by John Frederic Herbin, B.A., (1899) (pdf)

You can read these poems at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/poetry/marshlandsdedan01.pdf>

The Indians of Canada

Their Manners and Customs by John McLean, M.A., PH.D. Third Edition (1892) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/indiansofcanada.htm>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 28th day of August 2022 - Inspiration
By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26243-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-28th-day-of-august-2022-inspiration>

The History of Canada under French Regime 1535 - 1763

By H. H. Miles, LL.D., D.C.L., (1872) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/french/History-of-Canada-under-French-Regime.pdf>

Electric Scotland

Beth's Video Talks

August 31st, 2022 - Auld Acquaintances

You can view this talk at: <https://electricscotland.com/bnft>

The New Deeside Guide

By James Brown (1829) (pdf)

You can read this interesting book at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/aberdeen/The_New_Deeside_Guide.pdf

Songs of the Hebrides

For Voice and Celtic Harp (second set) (pdf)

You can read this wee book which includes sheet music at:

<https://electricscotland.com/music/songsofhebrides.pdf>

Plantation: Its Process in Relation to Scotland's Atlantic Communities, 1590s-1630s

By Thomas Brochard (pdf)

You can read this article at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/social/Plantation_Its_Process_in_Relation_to_Sc.pdf

The Formation of Marriage in Scotland, c. 1350 -1600

By Heather Parker

You can read this article at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/social/In_all_gudly_haste_The_formation_of_Mar.pdf

The Chevalier de St. George

And The Jacobite Movements in his Favour 1701-1720 edited by Charles Sanford Terry, M.A. (1901) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/jacobites/chevalierdestgeo00terr.pdf>

Chasing the Deer

Hunting Iconography, Literature and Tradition of the Scottish Highlands. A thesis presented by Andrew E. M. Wiseman MA. (Edin., 1992), M.Phil. (Glas., 1997) to the Department of Celtic and Scottish Studies in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh October 2007 (pdf)

You can read this at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/social/Chasing_the_Deer_Hunting_Iconography_Lit.pdf

Family, Finance and Free Will

Marriage Contracts in Scotland, c.1380–1500 by Heather Parker

You can read this article at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/social/Family_Finance_and_Free_Will_Marriage_Co.pdf

A Documentary Research on the Scottish Women of Calcutta

It's the second video on the page. I will note the state of the Scottish Graveyard is a total disgrace.

You can watch this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/india/index.htm>

The Families of Moir and Byres

By Andrew J. Mitchell Gill of Savock (1885) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/nation/familiesofmoirby00gill.pdf>

To secure to themselves and their countrymen an agreeable and happy retreat

The continuity of Scottish Highland Mercenary traditions and North America outmigration. A Thesis Presented to The Graduate Faculty of The University of Akron In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts by Cameron Flint (2006) (pdf)

You can read this at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/america/Materia_L_ON_HIGHLAnders_AMERICAN_REVOLU.pdf

Our Empire, Past and Present

Volume 1, Great Britain in Europe by the Earl of Meath, M. H. Cornwall Legh, LL.A., and Edith Jackson (1901) (pdf)

You can read this volume at:

<https://electricscotland.com/independence/sip/ourempirepastpre01meatuoft.pdf>

Story

Ontario Agricultural College
Bulletin 124. Nature Study, Stories in Agriculture

NATURE STUDY.
James Mills, M.A.. LL.D.

Most people look at many things which they do not see, and hear many sounds to which they pay little or no attention. There are, for instance, many intelligent Canadians who have been looking at ash and elm trees all their lives, and they could not describe the bark, leaves, or general appearance of these two kinds of trees, so as to distinguish one from the other. They have also, no doubt, noticed half a dozen or more species of birds in their fields or lawns from year to year, and have heard them sing very sweetly, and yet have little or no knowledge of most of them, — their color, markings, songs, or habits.

The aim of nature study is to interest men and women, and especially boys and girls, in the natural objects which they look at, handle, taste, or smell from day to day, in order that they may acquire the habit of observing closely, and so get all the pleasure possible out of their surroundings in life, and find their daily duties less irksome, and gather information that will be helpful to them in overcoming difficulties and in working for a share of the necessaries, comforts, and luxuries of life.

The materials for nature study are everywhere, the soil, the plant, and the animal; and the judicious study of soils and soil formation, or useful and troublesome plants, or noxious and beneficial insects—first, as objects of beauty or interest in themselves and afterwards as things which are useful or troublesome to man—opens up a field of unending pleasure and profit to the average boy or girl.

The eyes, ears, and other organs of sense in children are wide awake and keenly attentive; and the one thing needed is nature-loving, well-trained, competent teachers in the Public Schools, to direct and develop the love for natural objects which is so strong from infancy to twelve or fourteen years of age.

One of the best aids, in fact the ever-necessary handmaid—of nature study is drawing. Nothing contributes more to exact and reliable information, say in the study of plants and insects, than an attempt to draw a representation of the object or organ under examination. All parts and the arrangement of parts, with every angle, curve, and peculiarity, must be noticed and represented in some way; and I regret to say that there is nothing in which our Canadian teachers and schools are more deficient than in this important branch of elementary education. Boys from England are far more proficient in drawing than Canadian boys and girls; and those who have given any attention to the subject, know what excellent work is being done under this head in some of the leading cities of the United States (say Boston, New York, and Philadelphia), where every teacher, in almost every division from the kindergarten up, teaches drawing. The children at school in these cities are taught to describe by some kind of diagram or drawing nearly everything they look at or read about; and the results are very satisfactory,—far beyond what one would think possible in a Public School course.

Those who have had experience, almost without exception, say that nature study, properly pursued, does not interfere with ordinary school duties. On the contrary, it breaks the monotony of school routine and increases the interest in the regular school studies to such an extent that the most and best book-work is done where a little time is given every week to the examination and study of some portion of the great world of nature around us.

This Bulletin is, we think, the first formal attempt in the Province of Ontario to present items of information and simple, common-place incidents regarding natural objects, in the hope of interesting some of our young people, and inducing teachers to undertake such work in the Public and High Schools of the Province. These simple stories are, no doubt, very imperfect ; but they constitute a beginning, — the opening up of a very wide and interesting field for observation and study; and with more time and a careful selection of writers according to their special tastes and aptitudes, we may be able to furnish something nearer what is required in this important department of educational work.

A HANDFUL OF EARTH.
Professor. J. B. Reynolds.

“A handful of earth! Dirt! Surely we are not asked to listen to a story about anything- so common as dirt ! Dirt sticks to our hands and faces, and we are made to wash it off. It clings to our shoes. It gets onto our clothes, it blows into the house, and makes the furniture dirty, and people have to be continually rubbing and brushing, sweeping, and dusting to get rid of it. We should be very glad never to hear of it again.”

I fancy I hear many boys and girls saying this when they see the title of this story of mine. But stay! I said Earth, and what you say is about Dirt. Earth is very good in its place, but out of its place, it is dirt. It is out of its place when it is on your hands or shoes or clothes. Then it annoys you and you call it bad names. There

are other things besides earth that sometimes get out of place and are called bad names. I have heard it said that boys and girls are all very well in their place, which seems to hint that they are sometimes out of their place. I have known boys, and girls too, make visits to a neighboring orchard. The owner of the orchard was a mean old fellow, and when he saw the children in his orchard he would say, "Plague on those youngsters: They're at it again." And he would send someone, or go himself, to drive them out, just as you would brush the dust off your hands. But the fathers and mothers of those same intruders thought they were pretty good children, and were proud of them. So with this handful of earth. In its place, that is, in the garden or field, it is of untold value.

Earth is so common and unlovely, while "birds and butterflies and flowers" are so bright and beautiful, that all our interest is naturally drawn to these. But we should know that although the soil has no life or beauty in itself, yet it supports life, and enables other things to be useful and beautiful.

The Soil and the Rock.—Take from the field some fine dry earth. Place a good sized pinch of it on a piece of smooth white paper, and place under this a newspaper or a piece of thick cloth. Tip the whole so as to give it a little slope. Then tap this paper with the finger, and you will begin to see parts of the soil begin to draw away from the other parts. Keep at this, and you will find some of the soil rounding up in little heaps, while the rest scatters over the paper. Roll your pencil forwards and backwards over this last, pressing slightly upon it, and tap again, until no more will round up. Then look closely at the little heaps and the scattered parts. The heaps first formed are made of soil fine as flour. The next lot of heaps have little grains like granulated sugar. The part scattered about is sand and lumps. The sand is mostly clear and white, some of the grains sparkling in the sun like diamonds. The lumps, perhaps, are made of smaller grains stuck together, and do not look clean-cut and white like the sand. Sand, as you well know, is nothing but small bits of rock. Now, if you hold the little heaps so that the sun shines upon them, you may see, if your eyes are sharp, very small rock-bits among these too. In fact, a large part of all soil is rock. When you come to know geology, you will learn how this rock became broken down into such small bits to make soil. But for the present we are interested in knowing that the soil contains rock-bits of many different sizes.

The Soil and the Tree. "But," you say, "many soils are quite dark in color, while most of this sand is clear and white; There must be something else in soils besides sand grains, or it would not be so dark." Quite true; and now we shall see what this is.

Get from the woods, under last year's leaves, some black mold; and after it has become dried, treat it as you did the sample of earth. You will find much the same separation as before; but on looking closely at the heaps and scattered grains of the mold, you will find two important differences: First, the separate grains, big and little, instead of being white as the sand grains were, are all brown or black. Secondly, instead of looking like rock, these, especially the coarser ones, look like bits of wood.

Long years before the white man came to Canada, even man hunted over these hills and plains, the trees began to grow upon the soil. Year after year, as the trees grew bigger they drew water and food more and more, from the soil. The trees were wise, however, and knew that, although the rain that fell might keep up the supply of water that they needed, yet there was nothing to replace the food they took from the soil, unless they did it themselves. So they agreed to give back to the soil as much food as they took from it. Every year, the maples and the oaks and the beeches dropped their leaves to the ground. Every tree in the forest now and then dropped twigs and broken branches. When a big tree died and decayed, it also fell to the ground, and lay stretched with its arms spreading wide. Slowly but surely all these things—leaves, twigs and trees,—rotted and passed back into the form of mother Earth. And thus the mold, which you find so common in forests, was made.

It is this vegetable matter, or humus, that makes soils dark. It is the most valuable and enriching part of the soil, and so nearly all the best soils are dark. The virgin soil of Canada, that is, the soil before it was cultivated or cropped, wore a thick coat of rich brown mold over the sand-grains below. Through many

years of plowing and cultivating, these two parts—the humus and the rock — have become mixed together, just as you found in the earth you examined. Wood and leaves are not the only sources of humus. Straw, roots, grass, and clover, if left on the land, will finally become humus.

The Soil and the Rain. It was a dry hot summer day. In the fields, the corn and clover leaves hung limp and lifeless. In the gardens, the flowers bent their heads, and had hardly strength enough to put forth their buds. There had been no rain for many days, and the plants had had very little to drink but the dew that gathered on their leaves at night. So they were all very thirsty.

That night the rain fell in a long, heavy shower, upon the fields and gardens. On the steep hillsides it fell, and ran down in torrents to the river below. Upon the gravelly knolls it fell, and trickled quickly down, down, deep into the ground among the gravels and coarse soil-grains, and most of it was soon out of sight and out of reach. It fell, too, upon the clay field, where the soil-grains were all so small and close together that the rain could not find a way between them, and so the rain stood, like little ponds and rivers, in the pits and ruts over the field. Lastly it fell upon good soil, and slowly it soaked away down to the roots of the clover and the corn and the flowers, and down past the roots to a safe storehouse below. Next morning what a change! Even the crops on the hillside and on the gravelly knolls looked fresh and bright. They had kept enough of the rain for one good drink at any rate. On the clay field, the clover stood in danger of having too much of a good thing, for little patches of water were still to be seen here and there. The good soil seemed almost dry again. The corn leaves had straightened out, and every plant in the field was holding its head up straight and strong.

A few days later, and again great changes. The hillside and the gravel patch were in as bad plight as ever, — dry and parched. The wet clay soil, in the hot sun, had dried and baked and cracked, squeezing and breaking the tender roots. The heavy rain and the hot sun had done bad things for this soil, and for its little nursling plants. But on the good soil, the crops had flourished ever since the rain. As soon as the plant roots and the sun had drunk up the moisture at the surface of the ground, the roots sent to the storehouse below the message for more water. The ready soil-grains below the roots began to hand the water from one to another up through two, three, and four feet, to keep the roots supplied with plenty to drink. And so, while the ground above was dry and dusty, the rain that had fallen into the good soil many days before, was still kept on tap, and handed out from below when called for.

The Soil and the Seedling. In every seed there is a possible plant, which will produce many other seeds, food for man or beast. But before the plant can come to life, the seed must be placed in earth. What sort of earth bed does the seed like best? Soft, and moist, and warm. Soft, that is, free of lumps, and fine, and mellow, so that the earth may lie snug and close to the seed; moist, so that the seed may swell and burst, and set the young plant free; warm, so that the little plant may be nursed into life.

Imagine now, the little seedling just peeping above ground, and sending its thread-like roots down into the soil below. If it is a hard cruel soil, as too many are, it cares nothing for its little nursling, and will very likely let it die. But if it is a kind, good soil, it becomes very fond of the little plant and does all it can to make the nursling thrive. The earth all about the seedling becomes a scene of life and activity. When the plant wants water, —and it is a thirsty little creature,—the sand grains begin to hand the water from one to another till it reaches the little roots. As the water passes by, the humus grains hand out a supply of food and put it into the water. The earth above the roots is all day long drinking in warmth from the sun's rays and handing it down to the roots. When the winds blow and try hard to tear the little plant out, the soil-grains cling hard to the roots and hold them fast in their place. So, you see the soil has all to do with the roots; what it does is out of sight, and therefore, often out of mind. Yet it is well to remember that the usefulness and the beauty of the grass, and shrubs, and trees come in great part from the earth about below their roots.

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,
Their fellowship renew;

The stems are faithful to the root,
That worketh out of view;
And to the rock the root adheres
In every fibre true. — Wordsworth.

END

Weekend is almost here and hope it's a good one for you.

Alastair