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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for April 25th, 2025

Flectric Scotland News

I ended up in Hospital in Toronto for an all day and overnight stay on Easter Monday.

I am fine but you can read about it in my Canadian Experience journal at: https://electriccanadian.com/canada_add20.htm

HELP TERMS OF USE CONTACT US

I went into Toronto on the Friday to spend the Easter weekend with Nola and her family and got to meet her two dogs which didn't like me very much and got bitten by one of them [sheesh].

However it was apparently over eating the lamb that did me in or so the hospital report said.

I've voted in the Canadian elections already although it will be Monday before the last day you can vote. I recommend the Conservatives but you must vote the way you feel best suites your wishes.

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

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 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.

Here is what caught my eye this week...

Northern Ireland richer than Ireland

The hugely distorted national accounts of Ireland deceive people into thinking that the Republic of Ireland has higher living standards than the UK and especially Northern Ireland. When correctly measured the opposite is true. Living standards are higher in the UK than In Ireland and even Northern Ireland has higher living standards.

Read more at:

https://www.briefingsforbritain.co.uk/northern-ireland-richer-than-ireland/

Conrad Black: Liberals, not Trump, are the true threat to Canadian sovereignty A vote for the Liberals on April 28 is a vote to play Russian roulette with Canadian Confederation

Read more at:

https://archive.is/ZBIVq

Early turnout shatters record in Canada polls with 7.3m ballots cast

More than 7 million Canadians have cast their ballots in advance, setting a new record for early voter turnout, Elections Canada says.

Read more at:

https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cp3129z5kyko

Challenges for crofting on Eigg unveiled in new report

A new report has been published offering an in-depth analysis of the opportunities for the growth and development of crofting on the Isle of Eigg.

Read more at:

https://archive.is/SjcNp

Pope Francis: Scottish Parliament tributes to humble pontiff

First Minister John Swinney praised Pope Francis for "always being on the side of the poor" and dedicating his life to public service as he led tributes in the Scottish Parliament today.

Read more at:

https://archive.is/3KIrW

Darwin's documentary archive recognised by Unesco

An archive of works by the scientist Charles Darwin has been recognised by the United Nations for its importance to global science and the need to preserve it.

Read more at:

https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8x89kw0vg4o

What Trump really wants from Canada

Machias Seal Island is a tiny dot on maps of North America. But the fogbound rock is significant for its location in an area known as the "Grey Zone" the site of a rare international dispute between Canada and the United States

Read more at:

https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c15vl99dw0do

Farage: Scottish establishment says we're the bad guys, so we must be in right place First Minister John Swinney kicked off his summit to combat 'threat from the far right' on Wednesday.

Read more at:

https://news.stv.tv/politics/farage-scottish-establishment-says-were-the-bad-guys-so-we-must-be-in-right-place

'Haud yer wheesht': Scottish phrases that have helped shape the English language 'Blood is thicker than water', 'dressed to the nines' and 'the best-laid plans' have made a new list of sayings curated by the British Council.

Read more at:

https://news.stv.tv/scotland/haud-yer-wheesht-scottish-idioms-and-phrases-that-have-helped-shape-the-english-language

Victorian engine discovered in attic of former Scots jail 'one of three in world' The engine had remained hidden at the building on the Royal Mile for decades.

Read more at:

https://news.stv.tv/east-central/victorian-engine-discovered-in-attic-of-former-edinburgh-jail-one-of-three-in-world

Major Glasgow Airport plans revealed by new owner

The new owner of Glasgow Airport has revealed plans for a comprehensive transformation of the main terminal building as part of a £350 million investment in the growth and decarbonisation of its three UK airports.

Read more at:

https://archive.is/DIPkg

Ban phones and punish violent pupils to end the chaos in our classrooms A leading educationalist has called on schools chiefs to properly address disruption and violence in classrooms.

Read more at:

https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/ban-phones-and-punish-violent-pupils-to-end-the-chaos-in-our-classrooms/

Conservative Party of Canada have pledged to establish a CANZUK agreement should they form government after the 2025 federal election.

The party released it's long-awaited election platform on Tuesday, which includes 30 pages of policy propositions to convince Canadian voters that Pierre Poilievre is the right candidate to become Prime Minister.

Read more at:

https://www.canzukinternational.com/2025/04/conservative-party-of-canada-endorses-canzuk-for-election-2025.html

Let's be real about Ukraine

Britain and its allies should be wholly realistic about what they are truly prepared to do

Read more at:

https://thecritic.co.uk/lets-be-real-about-ukraine/

Federal Election Monday, April 29, 2025

Find out how to vote

Read more at:

https://www.elections.ca/home.aspx

Electric Canadian

Gordon Muir Campbell, OC OBC

A retired Canadian diplomat and politician who was the 35th mayor of Vancouver from 1986 to 1993 and the 34th premier of British Columbia from 2001 to 2011. He was the leader of the British Columbia Liberal Party from 1993 to 2011.

Learn about him at:

http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/annual/gordonmuircampbell.htm

Forest, Stream and Seashore

Issued by The Intercolonial Railway and Prince Edward Island Railway of Canada, August 1901 (pdf)

You can read this magazine at:

http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/foreststreamseas00prinuoft.pdf

Forest and Stream

A weekly Journal devoted to field and aquatic sports, practical natural history, fish culture, the protection of game, preservation of forests, and the inculcation in men and women of a healthy interest in outdoor recreation and study by Charles Hallock, Managing Editor. Added Volume 1 (1874) (pdf)

You can read their first volume at:

http://www.electriccanadian.com/magazines/forestandstream.htm

For the Least of My Brethren

A Centenary History of St. Michael's Hospital by Irene McDonald, CSJ (1992) (pdf)

You can read about this hospital at:

http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/Toronto_St._Michaels_Hospital_100th.pdf

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 20th day of April 2025 - Easter Day By The Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26610-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morningthe-20th-day-of-april-2025-easter-day

With Grenfell on the Labrador By Fullerton Waldo (1920) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/newfoundland/Grenfell-on-the-Labrador.pdf

The Beaver Magazine Added Volume 5 No. 2 (pdf)

You can read this issue at:

http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/hudsonbay/TheBeaver-March1925.pdf

Electric Scotland

Diary and Sermons of the Rev. Alexander MacLeod, Rogart (Formerly of Uig, Lewis) and a Brief Memoir by the Rev. D. Beaton, Wick (1935) (pdf)

You can read this at:

https://electricscotland.com/bible/1925-Alexander-Macleod-Uig-Dairy-Sermons.pdf

The MacLeods of Harris - A Talk by Ruari Halford-MacLeod Added this link to our MacLeod page at: https://www.facebook.com/CMSofScotland/videos/664133924859259

The Quarterly Journal of Agriculture Vol. VI. June 1835 — March 1838 includes an article on Canada and the Illinois: A Tour through North

America; together with a Comprehensive View of the Canadas and United States, as adapted for Agricultural Emigrants. By Patrick Shirreff, Farmer, Mungoswells, East Lothian. Edinburgh*, (1835) (pdf)

You can read this issue at:

https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/The_Quarterly_Journal_of_Agriculture06.pdf

A Treatise on the Rights and Burdens incident to the Ownership of Lands and other Heritages in Scotland

By John Rankine, M.A., Advocate (second edition) (1884) (pdf)

You can read this at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/law/The Law of Land ownership in Scotland.pdf

The Farmer's Magazine

Volume the fourteenth (second series) July to December (1846) (pdf)

You can read this volume at:

https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/The Farmer s Magazine.pdf

The Children's Portion

By Alexander MacLeod, D.D. (1884) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

https://electricscotland.com/bible/The_children_s_portion_sermons.pdf

ScotlandIS "Pivotal" to Future Knowledge Economy Success, Key Survey Finds Country's 25-Year-Old Digital Custodian's expertise will be needed significantly more next quarter of century'. An article by Bill Magee.

You can read this article at:

https://electricscotland.com/magee/article0029.htm

High Adventure

A Narrative of Air Fighting in France By James Norman Hall (1918) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

https://electriccanadian.com/forces/highadventurenar0000jame.pdf

Proud Heritage

The Story of the Highland Light Infantry by Lt.-Col. L. B. Oatts, D.S.O. Late H.L.I. Volume Three (pdf)

You can read this volume at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/ProudHeritageV3.pdf

Essays of Military Biography

By Charles Cornwallis Chesney, Colonel in the British Army and Lieutenant Colonel in the Royal Engineers (1874)

You can read these at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/essays.htm

1970: Shetland Life

Added this video to the top of our Shetland page.

You can view this at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/shetland/index.htm

Story

The Gentle Heart Talking to the Children by Alexander MacLeod, D.D.

THE other day a friend brought me a song which was sung in Italy six hundred years ago. He called it "The Song of the Gentle Heart?" It is a song in praise of gentleness in the life, and of gentle deeds and words and thoughts. And what the song says is, that all gentleness has its home in the heart; and that unless there be gentleness in the heart there can be none in the life.

At the time this song was sung, there were many who thought that gentleness could only be found in palaces and castles, and among the people who dress in splendid clothes. But the song says that it may also be found in the most humble cottages, and among people whose hands are rough with daily toil. It is the gentle heart which makes people gentle. Whether a home be rich or poor, if those who live in it have gentle hearts, that home is the dwelling-place of gentlefolks.

After hearing this song I could think of nothing else. The words of the old singer kept sounding like music in my soul. And I also, as if I had got back his eyes, began to see his visions.

And all the bypast week these visions have been coming to me. When I went out into the country, they met me in lonely roads. When I went into the town, I saw them in the crowded streets. Night and day, and every day, they came. And every day they seemed brighter than the day before. At last I said, I will bring them into my words to the children, and they shall be visions for them as well as for me. I will call them Visions of the Gentle Heart.

I

One of the first visions of the Gentle Heart I saw came to me hid under the rough form of an old Roman soldier. If I had seen him only when he was dressed for battle, I should not have thought of him as gentle. I should have seen him carrying a sword to kill men with, and a shield to defend himself from being killed by others. And as he had other soldiers under him, I might have heard him speaking to them in a loud, commanding way, and telling them to do hard and cruel things.

But when I saw him his sword and shield were hanging on the wall, and he was sitting beside a little bed in his room in the soldiers' barracks. After one of his dreadful battles he had got for his share of the spoil a little boy who had been taken captive—a poor little boy, torn away from father and mother, and forced to be a slave. He was the slave of this soldier; he cooked his food, he tidied his room, he polished his armour, he went his errands. Just a little slave—nothing higher. This rough-looking soldier might have beaten him every day if he liked; nobody would have found fault. He was his own property—just as his horse was—just as his dog was—and he might have sold him like any other property.

But under the outside roughness of this soldier was a gentle heart. He did not beat his slave; he loved him; he looked upon him as his own son; he let the little man have a home in his heart. It was a joy to him to see the child happy; it was a grief to him to see him sad. And it was a great grief to him when one day the little slave fell sick. Then the rough soldier was as tender as a mother could be. He sat by his bed; he watched

over him day and night. Many a time, I am sure, as the thought came into his heart, "My little boy will die," the hot tears came rolling down his cheeks. And he thought the boy was really about to die; the little fellow's breathing became more feeble, his face grew very pale, his eyes were closed.

One day, as the big soldier was sitting by the little bed, somebody came in and said, "A great prophet has come to the town. Jesus of Nazareth has come."

"Jesus of Nazareth?" the soldier said; "the healer of sickness? Oh that He would heal my boy!"

But then this thought came into his mind, "I am a soldier of the nation that is ill-treating the Jews. I am not worthy that a Jew so good as He should do anything for me." Then other thoughts came, and in his great love for the boy, and knowing that Jesus could heal him, he at last ventured to send this humble message: "O my Lord, my servant is near to die, and thou art able to save from dying. I am not worthy that Thou shouldst visit my house. But only speak the word, and he shall live. Thou art Lord of health and sickness, as I am a lord of soldiers. Say to this sickness, 'Depart! and it will depart. Say to health, I Go to this soldier's servant/ and health will come to him, and he shall live."

Now when Jesus received that message, a great joy came into His heart; and He said to health, "Go to that soldier's little servant, and make him well, for I have not found a heart so gentle as his master's—no, not in all Israel."

And He had no sooner spoken, out on the street, than the thing He commanded was done. Health came back to the sick boy in the soldier's house. The eye, in which there had been no light, opened; a little smile passed over the worn face as he saw his dear master still nursing him. And the gentle heart of the master swelled up in thankful joy, as he stooped down and kissed the child whom Jesus had made well again.

Ш

My next vision also took me back to old times, but not so far back as my first. It was to times that were very evil I was taken. There was a wide open place in an ancient city, and a great crowd of people standing far off in a ring. Inside of the ring were priests and soldiers in black cloaks and red. In the centre was a stake of wood, with faggots of wood piled round about it. And there chained to the stake in the midst of the faggots, was an holy man of God, whom evil priests were about to burn, not because he was bad, but because he had preached the gospel of Christ to men.

Then I saw the evil men putting a light to the faggots; and I saw that the faggots were wet, and slow to catch fire, and the slow burning of the fire was a great agony to the man at the stake. And then came to me this strange but real gleam of the Gentle Heart. Out from the crowd stepped an old woman with a bundle of dried faggots and some straw. She set them on the pile, on the side the wind was, and they blazed up at once. And I saw a look of thankfulness come over the face of the poor sufferer as he said, half speaking to God, and half to her, "Oh, holy simplicity!"

It was the holy simplicity of the Gentle Heart. She could not bear to see his slow pain. Since he was to die for Christ, for Christ's sake she shortened his suffering.

Ш

That vision faded, and instead of the evil fire I saw a beautiful garden in Geneva. I saw a young couple, with happy faces, come out of the house, come down the garden walk, and seat themselves beside a beehive. It is Hilber the student and Aimee, his beautiful wife. What we read now in books about the queen bee and the other bees, and the honey and the wax, was found out for the most part by this man. He spent his life in the study of bees. But look! he is blind. He has been blind for years. He will live till he is an old man, and be blind to the end. And yet to the end he will watch the ways and find out the secrets of the bees. And he will

be able to do this because the gentle Aimee is by his side. Her friends said to her, "Do not marry Francis Hilber, he has become blind." But she said, "He therefore needs me more than ever now." And she married him, and was his happy wife and fellow-student forty years. She was eyes to the blind. She looked into the hives, and he wrote down what she saw. And she never tired of this work, and she did it with her whole soul. And the story of the bees, as it was seen and written in that garden by these two, will be read in schools and colleges when Hilber and his beautiful Aimee are themselves forgotten.

It is a hundred years ago since they began to study the bees together, and they are both long since dead. But still shines out for me in the long helpful, patient, and loving service of Aimee, the Gentle Heart. And it was of that very heart, I am certain, her husband was thinking in his old age, when he said, "Aimee will never be old to me. To me she is still the fair young girl I saw when I had eyes to see, and who afterwards, in her gentleness, gave the blind student her life and her love."

IV

After that I saw an island on the coast of Africa. And in the island I saw a house for lepers, with a great high wall round about it. And I beheld, when a leper or any one else entered that house, that the gates of the great walls were shut upon them, and they never more were allowed to come out. The house was filled with lepers—lepers living, lepers dying—and no one to care for their sufferings or speak to them of God. Then I beheld two Moravian missionaries bidding farewell to their friends on the shore, crossing over to the island, coming up to the gates, and passing in amongst the sick and the dying, to nurse them, to preach to them, to live with them, and never more go out from among them, till they should be carried out dead.

٧

Among my Christmas cards this year was one from a dear old friend in the north. And among my visions of the Gentle Heart was one in which he was the centre. It is a long while now since he retired from business and turned for work to his garden and his flowers. But it is nearly as long since, as he went along the crowded streets of the town in which he lives, and saw homeless boys and girls on the pavement, the thought came into his heart to gather the orphans among them into a home. So he gave only a part of his time to his garden and his flowers, and the rest to provide this home. And the home was built, and the homeless ones gathered into it—a large family now. And in that home, and for that home, my friend spends many a happy hour. He is justly looked upon as the father of the home. Yet he is so modest that his name never appears in the reports of the home, except among the names of the directors, and those who give money for its support. Once, indeed, he was taken by surprise: the other directors asked as a great favour to have his portrait for the home. And if you were going there, and asking the children whose portrait it was, they would answer, "It is the portrait of our papa."

One year, some failure in bank or railway made him much poorer, and he could not give the twenty pounds which he had given to the home each year. He might have said quite honestly, "I am sorry, but I can't afford to give my twenty pounds this year." But the gentle heart had something more in it than honesty. That very year a new flower had been brought to London from Japan, and each plant of it cost a pound. The orphans' papa sent to London for a plant, took it into his greenhouse, cut it into twenty bits, and struck a new plant out of each. Then he sold his twenty plants at one pound each. And so, that year too, there was joy in this Gentle Heart that he was still able to pay his twenty pounds to help to bless little orphan children.

VΙ

Then I saw a vision of a rich man's son. In the city of Glasgow once lived a worthy merchant, whose children I knew. As God had blessed him in his buying and selling, he became a rich man. And having a great love for country life, he took his riches and bought some fields on which he had played and gathered flowers when a child, and also the mansion in which the old laird of the place was wont to live. There was just one thing he forgot to do; he forgot to make his will, and say to whom the mansion and fields should go when he died. So

by-and-by, when he died, no will could be found. Now he left behind him his wife, four daughters, and an only son. But as no will had been made, the mansion, and the fields, and a great part of all his riches, came to this only son. He was in London when the news came that his father had died, and that he was now a rich man. Just at that moment money would have been very useful to him, for he was a young merchant beginning life, and no one would have blamed him if he had said, "The money is welcome, and with it I shall push my new business on." But God had given him a Gentle Heart. He left London as soon after he got the news as he could get a train. And, although it was late in the day when he arrived at his native city, the first thing he did was to go to the house of a friend who writes out wills. And that friend, at his request, wrote out a will by which the mansion and the fields were made over to his mother all her days—and all the rest, both land and money, which his father had left, was divided, share-and-share alike, between her, his sisters, and himself. And when that was all fixed, he went to his home and buried his father. Somebody said to him afterwards, "But why did you go that very night and have the will made out?" He said, "I that night saw that it was my duty to do it. If I had left it till next day, my duty might not have seemed so clear."

That is the way of the Gentle Heart.

VII

One vision of a Gentle Heart came to me out of the years when I was at school. Among my class-fellows was a Jewish boy. His real name was John, but some of the bigger boys had given him the name of Isaac, and by that name he was known. He was a shy, timid-looking boy, tall and slender, with a little stoop. He was very clever at making musical toys. He used to bring pan-pipes and singing reeds and wood whistles to the school. Sometimes he brought a little flute, and in play hours, when the bigger scholars were at their games, he would stand leaning against the wall, with a crowd of little fellows around him, whom he taught to play on his simple reeds and whistles, or to whom he played on his little flute.

I sat beside him at school, and got to know him well; and I never knew him to tell a lie, or do a base, or mean, or cruel thing. And I do not think as much could be said of any other boy amongst us all at that school during the years when he was there. He helped the backward boys with their lessons. I have seen him oftener than once sharing his lunch with a school-fellow that had none; and although he had no quarrels of his own, he took up the quarrels of the little boys when the bullies were ill-treating them. One day he saw a big lad of fifteen beating a little fellow of eleven. "Now, Tom," he called out, "let that little fellow alone." "You mind your Jews'harps and whistles," said the bully. Isaac made no reply, but went right up to the hulking fellow, seized the wrist of the hand which had hold of the little boy, gave it a sudden twist and pinch, which loosened the hand-grip in a moment, and let the little boy free. It was done so quickly and neatly, that all the boys standing around burst into laughter at the bully. From that time the bully was Isaac's enemy and every evil trick that could be done against the Jew lad he did, and every spiteful word that could be spoken he spoke.

But it happened one afternoon, when school was over, that Isaac was standing at his father's door, and he saw a great crowd turning into the street. Boys and men were storming up, and there, in front of them, running as if for life, and white with terror and fatigue, was the bully. He had been in some boy's prank or other, and was being chased by those who wished to punish him. Isaac saw at a glance how matters stood, and, standing back within the door and holding it open, he said, "Come in here, Tom; I'll let you out another way." And he let him out into another street. Isaac saved his bitterest enemy, and Tom escaped. It was Tom who told us all this. Isaac never referred to it. But we all noticed that Tom said as much good of the Jew boy afterwards as he had said evil before.

VIII

But while I was thinking of these visions, as they came one by one, I found that they began to come two and three together, and at last in a crowd. And it is only little bits of what I saw after that I can now tell.

I saw a brave man plunging into a river one dark night, and saving a woman who had stumbled in; and when the friends sought him in the crowd, to thank him, he was not to be found. The brave man wanted no thanks. His reward was that he had saved a human life.

I saw a gracious man going into a bank one day, and entering a large sum of money to the credit of a widow, who had lost husband and means the day before.

I saw a wounded soldier on the field of battle refusing the water he was thirsting for, that it might be given to one beside him who was worse wounded and needed it more.

I saw a tender lady passing from bed to bed in a hospital, and speaking cheering words to the sick people, as she did some gentle service to each. And I saw the thankful smile that came up over their wan faces as she passed.

I saw daughters refusing homes of their own, that they might wait beside their sick mothers. I saw them lovingly tending the dear sufferers as if they were queens, and counting it joy to be able in this way to show their love.

I saw a man stand up before an angry mob, and say to them, "It is falsehood you are speaking against my friend." And when they cried against him in their anger, he defended his friend the more.

I saw a brave captain on the great sea, bringing his ship close to a burning vessel crowded with human beings, and waiting beside it—risking his own ship in the flames—till the day closed, and far on through the night, till at length every soul was saved.

And in each of these visions, and in many more that I cannot tell, what I saw was a gleam of the Gentle Heart.

IX

At last, however, all these visions melted away, but I saw that it was into the light of a far greater vision.

I thought it was night, and I was with a crowd of people upon a great mountain. There were mountains all round, mountains below, mountains above, a great stretch of mountains, and the tops, reaching far up into the sky, were covered with snow.

We turned our face s to the mountain-tops, and we saw coming out on the peaks of the highest just the faintest little flush of light. Then it grew stronger, then red, then one by one the great snowpeaks kindled up, away up into the sky, as if some fire were shining on the snow; and indeed a fire was shining on the snow. For as we turned our faces the other way to come down the hill, we beheld the morning sun rising into the sky. It was the flame of the rising sun which we had seen shining on the lighted peaks.

Now that is just what my visions of the Gentle Heart have been,—fires kindled by a greater fire; far-off gleams of the Gentle Heart of Jesus. The gentleness I have been telling you about is just light from Him. He is the sun. They were the hill-tops, great and small, aflame with love like His love. And it was into the light of that largest love my visions faded.

Yes, His is the heart from which all hearts take their gentleness. It is from His heart all the gentleness of mothers and sisters, all the gentleness you have ever known in father, or brother, or companion, or nurse, has come. His is the gentlest heart the world has ever known, or ever can know. It is this heart which in the Bible the loving God offers to each of us. This is that new heart which will new-make you, and bless you, and bring you at last to glory. Just the heart of Jesus, the gentle, loving, merciful heart of Him who once died for us, and who still lives to help and bless us all.

END.

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

Alastair