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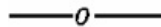
*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE CELTIC MAGAZINE, VOL. 1, NO. 1, NOVEMBER 1875 ***

THE CELTIC MAGAZINE.

No. I.

NOVEMBER 1875.

INTRODUCTORY.



IN the circular issued, announcing the *CELTIC MAGAZINE*, we stated that it was to be a Monthly Periodical, written in English, devoted to the Literature, History, Antiquities, Traditions, Folk-lore, and the Social and Material Interests of the Celt at Home and Abroad: that it would be devoted to Celtic subjects generally, and not merely to questions affecting the Scottish Highlands: that it would afford Reviews of Books on subjects interesting to the Celtic Races—their Literature, questions affecting the Land—such as Hypothec, Entail, Tenant-right, Sport, Emigration, Reclamation, and all questions affecting the Landlords, Tenants, and Commerce of the Highlands. We will also, from time to time, supply Biographical Sketches of eminent Celts at Home and Abroad, and all the Old Legends connected with the Highlands, as far as we can procure them, beginning with those of Inverness and Ross shires.

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We believe that, under the wiser and more enlightened management now developing itself, there is room enough in the Highlands for more Men, more Land under cultivation, more Sheep and more Shepherds, without any diminution of Sport in Grouse or Deer: that there is room enough for all—for more gallant defenders of our country in time of need, for more produce, more comfort, and more intelligence. We shall afford a *medium* for giving expression to these views. When submitting the first number of the Magazine to the public, we think it proper to indicate our own opinion on these questions at greater length than we could possibly do in a circular; but, while doing this, we wish it to be understood that we shall at all times be ready to receive contributions on both sides, the only conditions being that they be well and temperately written, and that no side of a question will obtain undue prominence—facts and arguments alone allowed to work conviction. Thus, we hope to make the *Celtic Magazine* a mirror of the intelligent opinion of the Highlands, and of all those interested in its prosperity and progress.

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In dealing with Celtic Literature, Antiquities, Traditions, and Folk-lore, we must necessarily be Conservative. It is impossible for a good Celt to be otherwise than conservative of the noble History of his Ancestors—in love and in war, in devotion and daring. If any should deem this feeling on our part a failing, we promise to have something to say for ourselves in future, and not only give a reason for our faith, but show that we have something in the Highlands worth conserving.

In dealing with the important question of Sport, we cannot help taking a common sense view of it. We cannot resist the glaring facts which, staring us in the face, conclusively prove that the enormous progress made in the Highlands during the last half century, and now rapidly going on,

is mainly due to our Highland Sports. A great amount of nonsense has been said and written on this question, and an attempt made to hold grouse and deer responsible for the cruel evictions which have taken place in the North. Arguments, to be of any force, must be founded on facts; and the facts are, in this case, that it was not grouse or deer which caused the Highland evictions, but sheep and south country sheep farmers. The question must be argued as one not between men and deer, but between men and sheep, and sheep against deer. We believe there is room enough for all under proper restrictions, and, to make room for more men, these restrictions should be applied to sheep or deer.

We believe that it would be a wise and profitable policy for Landlords as well as for Tenants to abolish Hypothec and Entail, and to grant compensation for improvements made by the latter. We are quite satisfied from experience, that the small crofter is quite incapable of profitably reclaiming much of our Highland Wastes without capital, and at the same time bring up a family. If he is possessed of the necessary capital, he can employ it much more advantageously elsewhere. The landlord is the only one who can reclaim to advantage, and he can hardly be expected to do so on an entailed estate, for the benefit of his successors, at an enormous rate of interest, payable out of his life-rent. If we are to reclaim successfully and to any extent, Entail must go; and the estates will then be justly burdened with the money laid out in their permanent improvement. The proprietor in possession will have an interest in improving the estate for himself and for his successors, and the latter, who will reap the greatest benefit, will have to pay the largest share of the cost.

Regarding Emigration, we have a matured opinion that while it is a calamity for the country generally, and for employers of labour and farmers in particular that able-bodied men and women should be leaving the country in their thousands, we unhesitatingly assert that it is far wiser for these men and women to emigrate to countries where their labour is of real value to them, and where they can spend it improving land which will not only be found profitable during their lives, but which will be *their own* and their descendants *freehold* for ever, than to continue starving themselves and their children on barren patches and crofts of four or five acres of unproductive land in the Highlands. We have experienced all the charms of a Highland croft, as one of a large family, and we unhesitatingly say, that we cannot recommend it to any able-bodied person who can leave it for a more promising outlet for himself and family. While we are of this opinion regarding *voluntary* emigration, we have no hesitation in designating *forced evictions* by landlords as a crime deserving the reprobation of all honest men.

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We shall also have something to say regarding the Commercial Interests of the Highlands—its trade and manufactures, and the abominable system of long Credit which is, and has proved, so ruinous to the tradesman; and which, at the same time, necessarily enhances the price of all goods and provisions to the retail cash buyer and prompt payer. On all these questions, and many others, we shall from time to time give our views at further length, as well as the views of those who differ from us. We shall, at least, spare no effort to *deserve* success.

The HIGHLAND CEILIDH will be commenced in the next number, and continued from month to month. Under this heading will be given Highland Legends, Old Unpublished Gaelic Poetry, Riddles, Proverbs, Traditions, and Folk-lore.

MACAULAY'S TREATMENT OF OSSIAN.

—o—

"It's an ill bird that befouls its own nest." And this is the first count of the indictment we bring against Lord Macaulay for his treatment of Ossian. Macpherson was a Highlandman, and Ossian's Poems were the glory of the Highlands; Macaulay was sprung from a Highland family, and as a Highlandman, even had his estimate of Ossian been lower than it was, he should have, in the name of patriotism, kept it to himself. But great as was Macaulay's enthusiasm, scarce a ray of it was ever permitted to rest on the Highland hills; and glowing as his eloquence, it had no colours and no favours to spare for the *natale solum* of his sires. Unlike Sir Walter Scott, it can never be said of him that he shall, after columns and statues have perished,—

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A mightier monument command—
The mountains of his native land.

There are scattered sneers at Ossian's Poems throughout Macaulay's Essays, notably in his papers on Dryden and Dr Johnson. In the latter of these he says:—"The contempt he (Dr J.) felt for the trash of Macpherson was indeed just, but it was, we suspect, just by chance. He despised the Fingal for the very reason which led many men of genius to admire it. He despised it not because it was essentially common-place, but because it had a superficial air of originality." And in his History of England occur the following words:—"The Gaelic monuments, the Gaelic usages, the Gaelic superstitions, the Gaelic verses, disdainfully neglected during many ages, began to attract the attention of the learned from the moment when the peculiarities of the Gaelic race began to disappear. So strong was this impulse that where the Highlands were concerned men of sense gave ready credence to stories without evidence, and men of taste gave rapturous applause to compositions without merit. Epic poems, which any skilful and dispassionate critic would at a

glance have perceived to be almost entirely modern, and which, if they had been published as modern, would have instantly found their proper place in company with Blackmore's Alfred and Wilkie's Epigoniad, were pronounced to be fifteen hundred years old, and were gravely classed with the Iliad. Writers of a very different order from the impostor who fabricated these forgeries," &c., &c. Our first objection to these criticisms is their undue strength and decidedness of language, which proclaims prejudice and *animus* on the part of the writer. Macaulay here speaks like a heated haranguer or Parliamentary partizan, not like an historian or a critic. Hood says—"It is difficult to swear in a whisper"; and surely it is more difficult still to criticise in a bellow. This indeed points to what is Macaulay's main defect as a thinker and writer. He is essentially a dogmatist. He "does not allow for the wind." "Mark you his absolute *shall*," as was said of Coriolanus. No doubt his dogmatism, as was also that of Dr Johnson, is backed by immense knowledge and a powerful intellect, but it remains dogmatism still. In oratory excessive emphasis often carries all before it, but it is different in writing—there it is sure to provoke opposition and to defeat its own object. Had he spoken of Macpherson's stilted style, or his imperfect taste, few would have contradicted him, but the word "trash" startles and exasperates, and it does so because it is unjust; it is too slump and too summary. Had he said that critics had exaggerated Macpherson's merits, this too had been permitted to pass, but when he declared them in his writings to be entirely "without merit," he insults the public which once read them so greedily, and those great men too who have enthusiastically admired and discriminatingly praised them. Macpherson's connection with these Poems has a mystery about it, and he was probably to blame, but every one feels the words, "the impostor who fabricated these forgeries," to be much too strong, and is disposed, in the resistance and reaction of feeling produced, to become so far Macpherson's friend and so far Macaulay's foe. We regret this seeming strength, but real infirmity, of Macaulay's mode of writing—not merely because it has hurt his credit as a critic of Ossian, but because it has injured materially his influence as an historian of England. The public are not disposed, with all their admiration of talents and eloquence, to pardon in an historian faults of boyish petulance, prejudice, and small personal or political prepossessions, which they would readily forgive in an orator. Macaulay himself, we think, somewhere speaking of Fox's history, says that many parts of it sound as if they were thundered from the Opposition Benches at one or two in the morning, and mentions this as a defect in the book. The same objection applies to many parts of his own history. His sweeping character of Macpherson is precisely such a hot hand-grenade as he might in an excited mood have hurled in Parliament against some Celtic M.P. from Aberdeen or Thurso whose zeal had outrun his discretion.

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Macaulay, it will be noticed, admits that Ossian's Poems were admired by men of taste and of genius. But it never seems to have occurred to him that this fact should have made him pause and reconsider his opinions ere he expressed them in such a broad and trenchant style. Hugh Miller speaks of a critic of the day from whose verdicts when he found himself to differ, he immediately began to re-examine the grounds of his own. This is a very high compliment to a single writer; but Macaulay on the Ossian question has a multitude of the first intellects of modern times against him. The author of the History of England is a great name, but not so great as Napoleon the First, Goethe, and Sir Walter Scott, nor is he greater than Professor Wilson and William Hazlitt; and yet all these great spirits were more or less devoted admirers of the blind Bard of Morven. Napoleon carried Ossian in his travelling carriage; he had it with him at Lodi and Marengo, and the style of his bulletins—full of faults, but full too of martial and poetic fire—is coloured more by Ossian than by Corneille or Voltaire. Goethe makes Homer and Ossian the two companions of Werter's solitude, and represents him as saying, "You should see how foolish I look in company when her name is mentioned, particularly when I am asked plainly how I like her. How I like her! I detest the phrase. What sort of creature must he be who merely liked Charlotte; whose whole heart and senses were not entirely absorbed by her. Like her! Some one lately asked me how I liked Ossian." This it may be said is the language of a young lover, but all men are at one time young lovers, and it is high praise and no more than the truth to say that all young lovers love, or did love, Ossian's Poems. *This is true fame*. Sir Walter Scott says that Macpherson's rare powers were an honour to his country; and in his Legend of Montrose and Highland Widow, his own style is deeply dyed by the Ossianic element, and sounds here like the proud soft voice of the full-bloomed mountain heather in the breeze, and there like that of the evergreen pine raving in the tempest. Professor Wilson, in his "Cottages" and his "Glance at Selby's Ornithology," is still more decidedly Celtic in his mode of writing; and, in his paper in Blackwood for November 1839, "Have you read Ossian?" he has bestowed some generous, though measured praise, on his writings. He says, for instance—"Macpherson had a feeling of the beautiful, and this has infused the finest poetry into many of his descriptions of the wilderness. He also was born and bred among the mountains, and though he had neither the poetical nor the philosophical genius of Wordsworth, and was inferior far in the perceptive, the reflective, and the imaginative faculties, still he could *see*, and *feel*, and *paint* too, in water colours and on air canvass, and is one of the Masters." Hear next Wilson's great rival in criticism, Hazlitt. They were, on many points bitter enemies, on two they were always at one—Wordsworth and Ossian! "Ossian is a feeling and a name that can never be destroyed in the minds of his readers. As Homer is the first vigour and lustihood, Ossian is the decay and old age of poetry. He lives only in the recollection and regret of the past. There is one impression which he conveys more entirely than all other poets—namely, the sense of privation—the loss of all things, of friends, of good name, of country—he is even without God in the world. He converses only with the spirits of the departed, with the motionless and silent clouds. The cold moonlight sheds its faint lustre on his head, the fox peeps out of the ruined tower, the thistle waves its beard to the wandering gale, and the strings of his harp seem as the hand of age, as the tale of other times passes over them, to sigh and rustle like the dry reeds in the winter's wind! If it were indeed possible to shew that

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this writer was nothing, it would only be another instance of mutability, another blank made, another void left in the heart, another confirmation of that feeling which makes him so often complain—"Roll on, ye dark brown year, ye bring no joy in your wing to Ossian!" "The poet Gray, too," says Wilson, "frequently in his Letters expresses his wonder and delight in the beautiful and glorious inspirations of the Son of the Mist." Even Malcolm Laing—Macpherson's most inveterate foe—who edited Ossian for the sole purpose of revenge, exposure, and posthumous dissection, is compelled to say that "Macpherson's genius is equal to that of any poet of his day, except perhaps Gray."

In another place (Bards of the Bible—'Jeremiah') we have thus spoken of Ossian:—"We are reminded [by Jeremiah] of the 'Harp of Selma,' and of blind Ossian sitting amid the evening sunshine of the Highland valley, and in tremulous, yet aspiring notes, telling to his small silent and weeping circle, the tale of—

"Old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago."

"It has become fashionable (through Macaulay chiefly) to abuse the Poems of Ossian; but, admitting their forgery as well as faultiness, they seem to us in their *better passages* to approach more nearly than any English prose to the force, vividness, and patriarchal simplicity and tenderness of the Old Testament style. Lifting up, like a curtain, the mist of the past, they show us a world, unique and intensely poetical, peopled by heroes, bards, maidens, and ghosts, who are separated by their mist and their mountains from all countries and ages but their own. It is a great picture, painted on clouds instead of canvass, and invested with colours as gorgeous as its shades are dark. Its pathos has a wild sobbing in it, an Æolean tremulousness of tone, like the wail of spirits. And than Ossian himself, the last of his race, answering the plaints of the wilderness, the plover's shriek, the hiss of the homeless stream, the bee in the heather bloom, the rustle of the birch above his head, the roar of the cataract behind, in a voice of kindred freedom and kindred melancholy, conversing less with the little men around him than with the giant spirits of his fathers, we have few finer figures in the whole compass of poetry. Ossian is a ruder "Robber," a more meretricious "Seasons," like them a work of prodigal beauties and more prodigal faults, and partly through both, has impressed the world."

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Dr Johnson's opposition to Ossian is easily explained by his aversion to Scotland, by his detestation of what he deemed a fraud, by his dislike for what he heard was Macpherson's private character, and by his prejudice against all unrhymed poetry, whether it was blank verse or rhythmical prose. And yet, his own prose was rhythmical, and often as tumid as the worst bombast in Macpherson. He was too, on the whole, an artificial writer, while the best parts of Ossian are natural. He allowed himself therefore to see distinctly and to characterise severely the bad things in the book—where it sunk into the bathos or soared into the falsetto,—but ignored its beauties, and was obstinately blind to those passages where it rose into real sublimity or melted into melodious pathos.

Macaulay has, in various of his papers, shewn a fine sympathy with original genius. He has done so notably in his always able and always generous estimate of Edmund Burke, and still more in what he says of Shelley and of John Bunyan. It was his noble panegyric on the former that first awakened the "late remorse of love" and admiration for that abused and outraged Shade. And it was his article on Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress which gave it—popular as it had been among religionists—a classical place in our literature, and that dared to compare the genius of its author with that of Shakespere and of Milton. But he has failed to do justice to Ossian, partly from some early prejudice at its author and his country, and partly from want of a proper early Ossianic training. To appreciate Ossian's poetry, the best way is to live for years under the shadow of the Grampians, to wander through lonely moors, amidst drenching mist and rain, to hold *trystes* with thunderstorms on the summit of savage hills, to bathe in sullen tarns after nightfall, to lean over the ledge and dip one's naked feet in the spray of cataracts, to plough a solitary path into the heart of forests, and to sleep and dream for hours amidst the sunless glades, on twilight hills to meet the apparition of the winter moon rising over snowy wastes, to descend by her ghastly light precipices where the eagles are sleeping, and returning home to be haunted by night visions of mightier mountains, wider desolations, and giddier descents. A portion of this experience is necessary to constitute a true "Child of the Mist"; and he that has had most of it—and that was Christopher North—was best fitted to appreciate the shadowy, solitary, and pensively sublime spirit which tabernacles in Ossian's poetry. Of this Macaulay had little or nothing, and, therefore, although no man knew the Highlands in their manners, customs, and history better, he has utterly failed as a critic on Highland Poetry.

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We might add to the names of those authors who appreciated Ossian, Lord Byron, who imitates him in his "Hours of Idleness"; and are forced to include among his detractors, Lord Brougham, who, in his review of these early efforts, says clumsily, that he won't criticise it lest he should be attacking Macpherson himself, with whose own "stuff" he was but imperfectly acquainted, to which Lord Byron rejoins, that (alluding to Lord Byron being a minor) he would have said a much cleverer and severer thing had he quoted Dr Johnson's sarcasm, that "many men, many women, and many *children* could write as well as Ossian."

We venture, in fine, to predict that dear to every Scottish heart shall for ever remain these beautiful fragments of Celtic verse—verse, we scruple not to say, containing in the Combat of Fingal with the Spirit of Loda, and in the Address to the Sun—two of the loftiest strains of poetic genius, vieing with, surpassing "all Greek, all Roman fame." And in spite of Brougham's sneer,

and Johnson's criticisms, and the more insolent attacks of Macaulay, Scotchmen both Highland and Lowland will continue to hear in the monotony of the strain, the voice of the tempest, and the roar of the mountain torrent, in its abruptness they will see the beetling crag and the shaggy summit of the bleak Highland hill, in its obscurity and loud and tumid sounds, they will recognize the hollows of the deep glens and the mists which shroud the cataracts, in its happier and nobler measures, they will welcome notes of poetry worthy of the murmur of their lochs and the waving of their solemn forests, and never will they see Ben-Nevis looking down over his clouds or Loch Lomond basking amidst her sunny braes, or in grim Glencoe listen to the Cona singing her lonely and everlasting dirge beneath Ossian's Cave, which gashes the breast of the cliff above it, without remembering the glorious Shade from whose evanishing lips Macpherson has extracted the wild music of his mountain song.

GEO. GILFILLAN.

ALASTAIR BUIDHE MACIAMHAIR, the Gairloch Bard, always wore a "*Cota Gearr*" of home-spun cloth, which received only a slight dip of indigo—the colour being between a pale blue and a dirty white. As he was wading the river Achtercairn, going to a sister's wedding, William Ross, the bard, accosted him on the other side, and addressing him said,

'S ann than aoibheal air bard an Rugha
'Sa phiuthar a dol a phosadh
B-fhearr dhuit fuireach aig a bhaile
Mo nach d' rinn thu malairt cota.

To which *Alastair Buidhe* immediately replied—

Hud a dhuine! tha'n cota co'lach rium fhein
Tha e min 'us tha e blath
'S air cho mor 's gha 'm beil do ruic-sa
Faodaidh tusa leigeal da.

MARY LAGHACH.

FROM THE GAELIC, BY PROFESSOR BLACKIE.

—o—

Ho! my bonnie Mary,
My dainty love, my queen,
The fairest, rarest Mary
On earth was ever seen!
Ho! my queenly Mary,
Who made me king of men,
To call thee mine own Mary,
Born in the bonnie glen.

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Young was I and Mary,
In the windings of Glensmoil,
When came that imp of Venus
And caught us with his wile;
And pierced us with his arrows,
That we thrilled in every pore,
And loved as mortals never loved
On this green earth before.

Ho! my bonnie Mary, &c.

Oft times myself and Mary
Strayed up the bonnie glen,
Our hearts as pure and innocent
As little children then;
Boy Cupid finely taught us
To dally and to toy,
When the shade fell from the green tree,
And the sun was in the sky.

Ho! my bonnie Mary, &c.

If all the wealth of Albyn
Were mine, and treasures rare,
What boots all gold and silver
If sweet love be not there?

More dear to me than rubies
In deepest veins that shine,
Is one kiss from the lovely lips
That rightly I call mine.

Ho! my bonnie Mary, &c.

Thy bosom's heaving whiteness
With beauty overbrims,
Like swan upon the waters
When gentlest it swims;
Like cotton on the moorland
Thy skin is soft and fine,
Thy neck is like the sea-gul
When dipping in the brine.

Ho! my bonnie Mary, &c.

The locks about thy dainty ears
Do richly curl and twine;
Dame Nature rarely grew a wealth
Of ringlets like to thine:
There needs no hand of hireling
To twist and plait thy hair,
But where it grew it winds and falls
In wavy beauty there.

Ho! my bonnie Mary, &c.

Like snow upon the mountains
Thy teeth are pure and white;
Thy breath is like the cinnamon,
Thy mouth buds with delight.
Thy cheeks are like the cherries,
Thine eyelids soft and fair,
And smooth thy brow, untaught to frown,
Beneath thy golden hair.

Ho! my bonnie Mary, &c.

The pomp of mighty kaisers
Our state doth far surpass,
When 'neath the leafy coppice
We lie upon the grass;
The purple flowers around us
Outspread their rich array,
Where the lusty mountain streamlet
Is leaping from the brae.

Ho! my bonnie Mary, &c.

Nor harp, nor pipe, nor organ,
From touch of cunning men,
Made music half so eloquent
As our hearts thrilled with then.
When the blythe lark lightly soaring,
And the mavis on the spray,
And the cuckoo in the greenwood,
Sang hymns to greet the May.

Ho! my bonnie Mary, &c.

**PROFESSOR MORLEY, EDITOR OF "EARLY
ENGLISH LITERATURE," ON CELTIC
LITERATURE AND THE CELTIC
PROFESSORSHIP.**

—o—

PROFESSOR MORLEY, at a meeting called by the Gaelic Society of London, in Willis' Room, spoke as follows, and we think his remarks, being those of a great and unprejudiced Englishman of letters, well worth reproducing in the *Celtic Magazine*:—

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He said that the resolution, which had a fit proposer in a distinguished representative of the north, was seconded by one [himself] who had no other fitness for the office than that he was altogether of the south, and had been taught by a long study of our literature to believe that north and south had a like interest in the promotion of a right study of Celtic. We were a mixed race, and the chief elements of the mixture were the Celtic and Teutonic. The Teutonic element gave us our strength for pulling together, the power of working in association under influence of a religious sense of duty; but had we been Teutons only, we should have been somewhat like the Dutch. He did not say that in depreciation of the Dutch. They are popularly associated with Mynheer Vandunck, but are to be associated rather with grand struggles of the past for civil and religious liberty, for they fought before us and with us in the wars of which we had most reason to be proud, and gave the battle-field upon which our Sidney fell at Zutphen. Nevertheless, full as Dutch literature is of worthy, earnest thought, it is not in man to conceive a Dutch Shakspeare. This was not his first time of saying, that, but for the Celtic element in our nation, there would never have been an English Shakspeare; there would never have been that union of bold originality, of lively audacity, with practical good sense and steady labour towards highest aims that gave England the first literature in the world, and the first place among the nations in the race of life. The Gael and Cymry, who represented among us that Celtic element, differed in characteristics, but they had in common an artistic feeling, a happy audacity, inventive power that made them, as it were, the oxygen of any combination of race into which they entered. He had often quoted the statement made by Mr Fergusson in his "History of Architecture," that, but for the Celts, there would hardly have been a church worth looking at in Europe. That might be over expressive of the truth, but it did point to the truth; and the more we recognise the truth thus indicated the sooner there would be an end of ignorant class feeling that delayed such union as was yet to be made of Celt with Saxon—each an essential part of England, each with a strength to give, a strength to take. We had remains of ancient Celtic literature; some representing—with such variation as oral traditions would produce—a life as old as that of the third century in songs of the battle of Gabhra, and the bards and warriors of that time, some recalling the first days of enforced fusion between Celt and Teuton in the sixth century. There were old manuscripts, enshrining records, ancient when written, of which any nation civilised enough to know the worth of its own literature must be justly proud. Our story began with the Celt, and as it advanced it was most noticeable that among the voices of good men representing early English literature, whenever the voice came from a man who advanced himself beyond his fellows by originality of thought, by happy audacity as poet or philosopher, it was (until the times of Chaucer) always the voice of a man who was known to have, or might reasonably be supposed to have, Celtic blood in his veins; always from a man born where the two races had lived together and blended, or were living side by side and blending. Before the Conquest it was always in the north of England, afterwards always along the line of the west, until in the latter part of the fourteenth century, London was large and busy enough to receive within itself men from all parts, and became a sort of mixing-tub for the ingredients of England. From that time the blending has been general, though it might even now be said that we are strongest where it has been most complete. With such opinions then, derived by an Englishman who might almost call himself most south of the south, from an unbiassed study of the past life of his country, he could not do other than support most heartily the resolution—"That a complete view of the character and origin of society, as it exists in these countries, cannot be given without a knowledge of the language, literature, and traditions of the Celts." He welcomed heartily the design of founding a Celtic Chair in the University of Edinburgh as a thing fit and necessary to be done, proposed to be done in a fit place, and by a most fit proposer. The scheme could not be better recommended than by the active advocacy of a scholar like Professor Blackie, frank, cheery, natural; who caused Mr Brown and Mr Jones often to shake their heads over him, but who was so resolved always to speak his true thought frankly, so generous in pursuit of worthy aims, with a genial courage, that concealed no part of his individuality, that he could afford to look on at the shaking of the heads of Mr Brown and Mr Jones, while there could be no shaking of the public faith in his high-minded sincerity. As to the details of the establishment of the chair there might be difficulties. The two Celtic languages had to be recognised. The ideal Professor whom one wished to put in the new chair should have, with scholarly breadth of mind, a sound critical knowledge of the ancient forms of both, and of their ancient records, and he would be expected to combine with this a thorough mastery of at least Gaelic, which he would have to teach also as a spoken tongue. Whatever difficulty there might be in this was only so much the more evidence of the need of putting an end to the undue neglect that had made Celtic Scholarship so scarce. Nothing would ever be done by man or nation if we stayed beginning till our first act should achieve perfection. He could only say that it was full time to begin, and that the need of a right study of Celtic must be fully recognised if the study of English literature itself was to make proper advance in usefulness, and serve England in days to come, after its own way, with all its powers.

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A PLEA FOR PLANTING IN THE HIGHLANDS.

—No. I.

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As this Magazine is devoted to subjects of interest and importance to Highlanders and the

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Highlands, no more fitting subject could be dealt with in its pages than that of Forestry.

Whatever conduces to the wealth of a district, to the amelioration of its climate, and beauty of its scenery, is most praiseworthy. It is undeniable that planting extensively and widely will effect these objects, and of this subject it is proposed now to treat.

That great part of Scotland was at one time forest is universally admitted. The remains of magnificent trees are to be constantly met with in the reclamation of land, many of the peat bogs being the formation of decayed vegetation.

It is frequently asked by the inexperienced, how it is, that while great trees are found in bogs, planted trees will not now grow except in a dwarfish degree, but the answer is obvious. These peat bogs are themselves the product of vegetation as before noted, and it is an ascertained fact that the tendency of these peat bogs and formations is to increase both by absorbing the surrounding soil, and by exercising an upward pressure. Many theories and allegations have been put forth as to the period or periods when the original forests of Caledonia were burnt. It may be generally admitted in the absence of any authentic contemporaneous record, that three particular periods are commonly pointed at, first in the time of the Roman occupation, second in the reign of Edward the First, and third in the time of Mary, Queen of Scots.

The three principal native trees in the Highlands, as now understood, which grow to any size, are the fir, oak, and ash; and it may be said roundly, that few standing trees exist in Scotland of a greater age than 300 years. No doubt there may be exceptions, but the rise of the plantations of beech, sycamore, plane, chestnut, &c., cannot be put further back than the accession of James VI. to the English throne. That Scotland was, in the early part of the 17th century, very bare may be inferred from the numerous Acts passed to encourage planting, and the penalties imposed upon the cutters of green wood. A great part of the Highlands must ever lie entirely waste, or be utilized by plantations. The expense of carriage to market was till lately in the inland and midland districts so great, that no inducement was held out to proprietors to plant systematically and continuously. The opening up of the Highlands by the Caledonian Canal at first, and now more especially by railways, has, however, developed facilities for market which should be largely taken advantage of. The market for soft woods, such as fir, larch, and birch, is ever widening; and great as is the consumption now, it cannot be doubted it will still greatly increase.

What greater inducement can there be to any exertion whatever, than that of pleasure combined with profit? We undertake to show that on this point both co-exist. To an idle man it is pleasant to saunter about and observe the growing of his plants, contrasting their progress from month to month, and year after year. The child of tender years, the most ignorant peasant, have alike their faculties of interest and observation aroused and excited by the contemplation of the gradual rise and change in the progress of the plant. We have heard from those unable to speak the English language, and in the poorest circumstances, poetic description and the liveliest manifestation of admiration at a thriving growing wood. Again, to the man who is engrossed with harassing mental occupations, what pleasure and satisfaction is this contemplation; and, as in the case of our immortal novelist, not only giving immediate consolation and happiness, but powerfully incentive to intellectual effort.

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Let us turn, however, to the practical bearings of our subject; and we shall take the case, say, of an estate of 20,000 acres. Let us suppose 500 acres to be arable, and 4,500 acres, either from the nature of the soil or its altitude, to be unfit for any improvement whatever. 1000 acres would be probably required for ordinary pasture lands, and 10,000 acres for hill pasture. It is far from our wish that any plantations should diminish the already scanty population, or unduly press upon the pastoral agricultural occupants. We therefore have given roughly what may be held as full soöming for stocks upon such an estate. It must be always recollected it is not acres alone that will sustain sheep or cattle, or maintain a first-class stock; on the contrary, it is the quality of the ground, and whether enclosed and drained. The matter of enclosure is one that has long been recognised as most essential in the case of sheep grounds, but the cost until the introduction of wire-fencing, was so great, as to be almost prohibitory. Hill pastures should be enclosed just as in the case of arable lands, and with efficient drainage and judicious heather burning, it is not too much to say that at least one-third more in number could be pastured on the same ground, and the stock would be of a higher class than on lands unfenced and undrained.

We have now left 4000 acres or so for plantation. If the proprietor be in a position to do so, and do not object to lay out some money unproductively, he will cause trees to be planted along all the roads through the estate, putting clumps and beltings near the farm steadings. This is a matter that is sometimes entirely neglected, rendering the buildings conspicuous, bare and ugly, a blot on the landscape. In other cases, the plantations are too near the buildings, making them uncomfortable and unhealthy. Two things, viz., shelter and beauty, are required, which a judicious eye should easily combine. The proprietor, when there is appearance of a natural growth should select such for enclosure, and on such an estate we place this at 500 acres. Only those who have practical knowledge and experience in the matter, can realise the extraordinary vitality of the seeds of birch, fir, oak, and others, over a great part of the Highlands. Nothing is required over thousands upon thousands of acres, but simple enclosure. These natural trees are both beautiful and valuable, and therefore their encouragement does not admit of question. No tree is more beautiful than the birch, which is found all over the Highlands, makes great annual progress, and commands a steady price. Blank spaces, &c., may be filled in with other woods for the purposes of adornment.

There now remains the plantation, properly so called, upon our estate of 3,500 acres. The

selection of this ground is a matter requiring careful consideration, because the land best adapted for planting is generally the best pasture, and every proprietor will, of course, endeavour to do his tenant as little injury as possible. At the same time, he will require to bear in mind that the too common idea that any ground will do for planting is a serious error. It is not often that the person who plants lives to reap the full benefit of his labours, and it would therefore be doubly hard, if these labours were thrown away.

Forestry, however, is now so generally understood, that with reasonable precaution no mistake ought to occur in the selection of the ground, or the tree best suited to the soil. Hard wood is of course out of the question in a great Highland plantation. Time occupied in reaching maturity, and carriage to market unconsidered, iron has entirely superseded this class of wood. Therefore fir and larch form the staple for Highland plantations. On the other hand, for beltings, roadsides, and in the vicinity of houses, hard wood should be planted. Two hundred years ago people generally were wise in this respect, for they planted ash trees and the like, each of which could stand by itself and bid defiance to the elements. These now form beautiful and picturesque objects round old *duchuses*, where hardly one stone stands on another, and thus alas! in many cases alone denoting where respectable families once had their homes; under whose spreading branches stout lads and bonnie lasses interchanged love tokens, and went over that old, old story, which will never die.

With the introduction of larch about the end of last century, which soon became, and deservedly, a favourite in the Highlands, it unhappily was used as a single belting in exposed places near farm houses and steadings. The consequence, as every one who travels through the Highlands must be painfully conscious of, has been trees shapeless and crooked, giving no shelter, and unpleasing in view. A ludicrous illustration of this may be seen from the Highland Railway between Forres and Dunphail, the larches having grown up zig-zag, according as the several winds happened to prevail. It is well known that no regular plantation can in beauty equal a natural one. There is too much stiffness and form, but the man of taste will avoid straight lines, and utilize the undulations of the land, blending the landscape as it were into one harmonious whole.

Let us now in the last place look at the pecuniary results. The enclosure, drainage, and planting will of course vary according to locality and the nearness to sources of supply and labour, but it may be said that £3 sterling per acre is a very ample sum for all costs. If there were one great block of plantation, it would not amount to one-half. Returns, again, must also vary, depending on proximity to railway or sea-board, but we have heard it stated by those well qualified to give an opinion, that from 30s to £2 per acre per annum will be an ultimate probable return. When it is considered that the lands we have referred to, putting both pastoral and shooting rents together, will not approach six shillings per acre per annum, the pecuniary advantages are seen to be enormous.^[A]

No life insurance policy is equal to a large and judicious plantation by a proprietor, as a provision for his younger children. The premium in this case will not need to run longer than twenty-five years, and he has not only beautified his estate and made it more valuable, but also transmitted it to his heir without incumbrance.

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No wonder then that in the county of Inverness large proprietors, such as the Earl of Seafield, Mackintosh, Sir John Ramsden, and others, have taken this matter up on a great scale. To them large plantations ought to be in the same category as minerals are in England; and, unlike their English brethren, this source of wealth is not exhaustive but re-current.

To the public these plantations are not only objects of beauty and an amelioration of climate, but the thereby greatly increased wealth of the country ensures diminished taxation.

These remarks are purposely made in the simplest language, because chiefly intended to attract the intelligent attention of the commonality of the people resident in, or connected with, the Highlands, and the subject will be again brought up.

C. F.-M.

FOOTNOTES:

- [A] According to present and approved modes of valuation, no great time need elapse after planting before the wood becomes of admitted value. Ten years after, the valuation will, if the wood be thriving, equal three times the original cost, including interest and rent.

[WE consider ourselves and our readers very fortunate indeed in having procured the following as the first of a series of contributions from Mr William Allan, Sunderland, whose recent publication—"Heather Bells, or Poems and Songs"—has been so favourably received by the Reviewers. A prior publication—"Hame-spun Lilts"—was also well received. Of the author, the *Inverness Courier* of 19th August, says—"You will fail, if you try, to find from first to last the slightest imitation of a single one of the many that, within the last hundred years, have so deftly handled the Doric lyre. Before the appearance of this volume, Mr Allan was already favourably known to us as the author of 'Hame-spun Lilts,' 'Rough Castings,' and by many lively lilts besides in the poets' column of the *Glasgow Weekly Herald*. There is about everything he has written a sturdy, honest, matter-of-fact ring, that convinces you that, whether you rank it high or low, his song—like the wild warblings of the song-thrush in early spring—is from the very heart. All he says and sings he really means; and it is something in these days of so many artificial, lack-a-daisical, 'spasmodic' utterances, to meet with anybody so manifestly honest and thoroughly in earnest as Mr William Allan." The *Dundee Advertiser* of August 17th concludes a long and very favourable review of "Heather Bells, &c."—"The 'Harp of the North,' so beautifully invoked by Sir Walter in his 'Lady of the Lake,' has been long asleep—her mountains are silent—and what if our Laureate of Calydon—our Modern Ossian—were destined to hail from Bonnie Dundee?" The *Scotsman* of Oct. 1st, says—"There is true pathos in many of the poems. Such a piece as 'Jessie's Leavin' must find its way to the hearts in many a cottage home. Indeed, 'Heather Bells,' both deserves, and bids fair to acquire, popularity."]

Dark Winter's white shroud on the mountains was lying,
 And deep lay the drifts in each corrie and vale,
 Snow-clouds in their anger o'er heaven were flying,
 Far-flinging their wrath on the frost-breathing gale;—
 Undaunted by tempests in majesty roaring,
 Unawed by the gloom of each path-covered glen,
 As swift as the rush of a cataract pouring,
 The mighty Montrose led his brave Highlandmen:—
 Over each trackless waste,
 Trooping in glory's haste,
 Dark-rolling and silent as mist on the heath,
 Resting not night nor day,
 Fast on their snowy way
 They dauntlessly sped on the pinions of death.

As loud as the wrath of the deep Corryvreckan,
 Far-booming o'er Scarba's lone wave-circled isle,
 As mountain rocks crash to the vale, thunder-stricken,
 Their slogan arose in Glen Spean's defile;—
 As clouds shake their locks to the whispers of Heaven;
 As quakes the hushed earth 'neath the ire of the blast;
 As quivers the heart of the craven, fear-riven,
 So trembled Argyle at the sound as it passed;—
 Over the startled snows,
 Swept the dread word "Montrose,"
 Deep-filling his soul with the gloom of dismay,
 Marked he the wave of men,
 Wild-rushing thro' the glen,
 Then sank his proud crest to the coward's vile sway.

To Arms! rung afar on the winds of the morning,
 Yon dread pennon streams as a lurid bale-star:
 Hark! shrill from his trumpets an ominous warning
 Is blown with the breath of the demon of war;—
 Then bright flashed his steel as the eye of an eagle,
 Then spread he his wings to the terror-struck foe;
 Then on! with the swoop of a conqueror regal,
 He rushed, and his talons struck victory's blow:—
 Wild then their shouts arose,
 Fled then their shivered foes,
 And snowy Ben-Nevis re-echoed their wail;
 Far from the field of dread,
 Scattered, they singly fled,
 As hound-startled deer, to the depths of each vale.

Where, where is Argyle now, his kinsmen to rally?
 Where, where is the chieftain with timorous soul?
 On Linnhe's grey waters he crouched in his galley,
 And saw as a traitor the battle blast roll:—
 Ungrasped was the hilt of his broadsword, still sleeping,
 Unheard was his voice in the moment of need;
 Secure from the rage of fierce foemen, death-sweeping,
 He sought not by valour, his clansmen to lead.

Linnhe, in scornful shame,
Hissed out his humbled name,
As fast sped his boat on its flight-seeking course;
Sunk was his pride and flown,
Doomed then his breast to own
A coward-scarred heart, ever lashed with remorse.

WM. ALLAN.

SUNDERLAND.

Correspondence.

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[Open to all parties, influenced by none, except on religious discussions, which will not be allowed in these columns under any circumstances.]

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TO THE EDITORS OF THE CELTIC MAGAZINE.

67 Rue de Richelieu, Paris, September 19, 1875.

DEAR SIRs,—I am glad to hear that you contemplate the foundation of a Celtic Magazine at Inverness. It is very gratifying for the Celtic scholars on the Continent to see that the old spirit of Celtic nationality has not died out in all the Celtic countries, and especially that a country like the Highlands of Scotland—that may boast equally of the beauty of her mountains and glens, and of the gallantry of her sons—will keep her language, literature, and nationality in honour. The Gaelic Society of Inverness is doing much good already, but a Magazine can do even more, by its *regularly* bringing news and instruction.

A wide field is open to you. The Gaelic literature, the history—political, military, religious, social, economic, &c.—of the Scottish Gaels at home; the collecting of popular tunes, songs, proverbs, sayings, and even games; the history and the development of Gaelic colonies and settlements abroad; the history of Highland worthies, and also of Foreign worthies who are of Scotch descent (I think, for instance, of Macdonald, one of the best *marechaux* of Napoleon I.), &c. Although the other branches of the Celtic family be separated from the Scotch Gaels—the Irish by their religion, the Welsh by their dialect, the French Bretons by their religion and their dialect at the same time,—yet the moral, social, and literary state of these cousins of yours may form, from time to time, interesting topics to patriotic Highland readers. The field of Celtic literature extends far and wide, and awaits yet many reapers. You will not fail to make a rich harvest in your poetic and patriotic Scotland; and at Inverness, in the middle of the Gaelic country, you have the best opportunity of success.—I am, Dear Sirs, yours very faithfully,

H. GAIDOZ, *Editor of the Revue Celtique.*

THE OSSIANIC QUESTION.

Altnacraig, Oban, September 20, 1875.

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SIR,—In the last number of *The Gaedheal*, a Gaelic periodical which may be known to some of your readers, I inserted a translation from the German of an essay on the authenticity of Macpherson's Ossian, appended to a poetical translation of Fingal by Dr August Ebrard, Leipsic, 1868. My object in doing this was to give Highlanders ignorant of German, as most of them unhappily are, an opportunity of hearing what a learned German had to say on the character of the most famous, though in my opinion far from the best, book in their language. I did not in the slightest degree mean to indicate my own views as to this vexed question. I know too well the philological conditions on which the solution of such a question depends to hazard any opinion at all upon the subject in the present condition of my Celtic studies. I am happy, however, to find that one good result has followed from the publication of this translation—a translation which, by the way, only revised by me, but made by a young lady of great intellectual promise—viz., the receipt of a letter from the greatest living authority on the Ossianic question, I mean John Campbell of Islay, traveller, geologist, and good fellow of the first quality. This letter, which I enclose, the learned writer authorises me to print, with your permission, in your columns; and I feel convinced you have seldom had a more valuable literary communication.—I am, &c.,

JOHN S. BLACKIE.

Conan House, Dingwall, September, 1875.

MY DEAR PROFESSOR BLACKIE,—In the last number of *The Gael* I find a translation by you from a German essay, and a quotation from a German writer who calls Macpherson's Ossian "the most magnificent mystification of modern times." The mists which surround this question need the light of knowledge to shine from the sitter on that rising Gaelic chair which you have done so much to uplift. In the meantime let me tell you three facts. On the 9th December 1872, I found out that Jerome Stone's Gaelic collection had been purchased by Mr Laing of the Signet Library, and that he had lent the manuscript to Mr Clerk of Kilmallie. On the 25th November 1872, I found a list of contents and three of the songs in the Advocates' Library, but too late to print them. The learned German relied on Stone's missing manuscript as proof of the antiquity of Macpherson's Ossian, because it was of older date. It contains versions of ten heroic ballads, of which I had printed many versions in "Leabhar na Feinne." There is not one line of the Gaelic printed in 1807 in those songs which I found. I presume that Mr Clerk would have quoted Stone's collection made in 1755 if he had found anything there to support his view, which is that Ossian's poems are authentic. Stone's translation is a florid English composition, founded upon the simple old Gaelic ballad which still survives traditionally. I got the old music from Mrs Mactavish at Knock, in Mull, last month. She learned it from a servant in Lorn, who sung to her when she was a girl.

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2d, The essayist relied upon a lost manuscript which was named "A Bolg Solair" (the great treasure.) That designation seems to be a version of a name commonly given by collectors of Scotch and Irish popular lore to their manuscripts. The name seems rather to mean "rubbish bag." The idea was probably taken from the wallet of the wandering minstrel of the last century who sang for his supper. A very great number of paper manuscripts of this kind are in Dublin and in the British Museum. I own two; but not one of these, so far as I have been able to discover, contains a line of the Gaelic Ossian printed in 1807, which one learned German believed to be old and the other a mystification.

3d, The essayist relies upon the "Red Book." In 1873 Admiral Macdonald sent me the book, which he had recovered. Mr Standish O'Grady helped me to read it, and translated a great part of it in June and July 1874 in my house. It is a paper manuscript which does not contain one line of Macpherson's Ossian. It does contain Gaelic poems by known authors, of which copies are in other manuscripts preserved in Ireland. I do not question the merits of Ossian's poems. Readers can judge. They are Scotch compositions, for the English is Macpherson's, and the Gaelic is Scotch vernacular. A glance at old Gaelic, of which many samples are printed in late numbers of the Parisian *Revue Celtique*, ought to convince any reader of Ossian that modern Scotch vernacular Gaelic cannot possibly represent the language of St Patrick's time. I have hunted popular lore for many years, and I have published five volumes. I have gathered twenty-one thick foolscap volumes of manuscript. I have had able collectors at work in Scotland; I had the willing aid of Stokes, Hennessy, Standish O'Grady, Crowe, and other excellent Irish scholars in ransacking piles of Gaelic manuscripts in Dublin, London, Edinburgh, and elsewhere. I could never find an uneducated Highlander who could repeat any notable part of the Gaelic poems which were circulated gratis soon after 1807. Nobody ever has found one line of these poems in any known writing older than James Macpherson. I agree with many speakers of Scotch Gaelic who have studied this question. We hold that the Gaelic Ossian of 1807 is, on the face of it, a manifest translation from English; and that the English was founded upon an imperfect acquaintance with genuine old Scotch Gaelic ballads. These are still commonly sung. They are founded upon the mythical history which still is traditionally known all over Scotland and Ireland. It was old when Keating wrote; it was old when the Book of Leinster was written about 1130. It really is a strange thing that so little should be known in Great Britain about this curious branch of British literature. I suppose that no other country in Europe can produce uneducated peasants, fishers, and paupers, who sing heroic ballads as old as 1130 and 1520, which have been orally preserved. Some fragments about Cuchullin, which I have gathered can be traced in the Book of Leinster. Many ballads which I have heard sung in the Scotch Isles were written by the Dean of Lismore in 1520. By travelling to Tobermory, you may still hear Wm. Robertson, a weaver there, tell the story of Cuchullin, and sing the song of "Diarmid," the "Burning of the Fenian Women," and many other heroic ballads. I heard him sing them in 1872, when he said that he was eighty-seven.—I am, yours very truly,

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J. F. CAMPBELL.

Kilmallie Manse, September 25, 1875.

SIR,—There is no man living who has done so much for Gaelic literature as Mr Campbell, and, just in proportion to my sense of the greatness of his services, is my reluctance to put myself, even for a moment, in opposition to him. But his opinion on the Ossianic question, expressed in his letter, constrains me to oppose him.

One word as to what he says about Jerome Stone's MS. Dr Laing kindly lent it to me, and it is now in my possession. I referred to it frequently in my edition of Ossian, 1870. Had I known that Mr Campbell wished to see it, I would gladly place it at his service. There is no mystification about this MS.; and I am sorry to say that it will not turn the scale either way in the present controversy.

But to the main point. Mr Campbell holds "that the Gaelic Ossian of 1807 is a manifest translation from English." Dr Johnson expressed the same opinion more than a hundred years ago; but while

Mr Campbell can speak with a thousandfold the authority of the great moralist, who knew nothing of Gaelic, yet even Mr Campbell submits no positive proofs to support his decision—no new fact of any kind. As far as external evidence goes, he founds his opinion entirely on what is negative. Now, I submit that the history of the case presents many undoubted facts all going to prove the priority of the Gaelic to the English Ossian, and these facts must be disposed of before Mr Campbell's conclusions can be adopted.

Let me say in one word that I do not for a moment pretend to solve the Ossianic mystery. Any theory which has yet been proposed presents serious difficulties, but I maintain that Mr Campbell's presents the greatest of all, and in the present state of our knowledge cannot be adopted.

For proof, I must submit a brief outline of facts certified in the report of the Highland Society on the subject, and which, though they are undeniable, are often unaccountably overlooked in the controversy.

1. It is the case that Macpherson, before publishing in English, got several Gaelic MSS., which he acknowledged in his letters still extant, and which he showed to his friends; further, that he asked and obtained the assistance of some of these friends—Captain Morison, Rev. Mr Gallie, and, above all, Strathmashie—to translate them into English.

2. It is a most important fact that when challenged to produce his Gaelic MSS., he advertised that they were deposited at his booksellers—Beckett & De Hondt, Strand, London—and offered to publish them if a sufficient number of subscribers came forward. The booksellers certify that his MSS. had lain for twelve months at their place of business.

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3. It is a fact that several persons, well able to judge of the matter, and of unimpeachable character, such as the Rev. Dr Macpherson, of Sleat; Rev. Mr Macleod, of Glenelg; Rev. Mr Macneill, &c., &c., did, in 1763—that is, 44 years before the publication of the Gaelic Ossian—compare Macpherson's English with Gaelic recited by various persons in their respective neighbourhoods. They give the names of these persons, and they certify that they found the Gaelic poetry recited by these, who never had any correspondence with Macpherson, to correspond in many instances—to the extent of hundreds of lines—with his English. One very significant fact is brought out in these certifications, that Gaelic was found to agree with Macpherson's English in cases where he never gave Gaelic. The English Ossian contains various poems for which he never gave Gaelic; but here Gaelic, corresponding to his English, is found in the mouths of people with whom he never held any communication.

Now, what are we to say to all these things? Shall we believe that Macpherson advertised his MSS. when he had none? The belief implies that he was insane, which we know was not the case. And are we further to believe that such men as the above deliberately attested what they knew to be false, and what, if false, might easily be proved to be so? It is impossible for a moment to receive such a supposition.

But it is said these, though good men, were prejudiced, spoke loosely, and therefore are not to be relied on in this enlightened and critical age. This, however, is assuming a great deal, and in so doing is *uncritical*. Prejudice is at work in the nineteenth century even as it was in the eighteenth. These men had far better opportunities of judging the matter than we have. They give their judgment distinctly and decidedly, and I never yet saw any good reason for setting that judgment aside.

I must add further, on the historic evidence, that several Gaelic pieces, and these among the gems of Ossianic poetry, were published by Gillies in 1786; that some of these are found in the Irvine MS. about 1800; that there is no proof of Macpherson having furnished any of these; and that the genuineness of one of them, "The Sun Hymn," given seem to be beyond the possibility of cavil.

From all this it appears to me undoubted that Macpherson began his work with Gaelic MSS., that he founded his English on them, and that various portions of his work were known in several quarters of the country forty years before he published his Gaelic. The subsequent disappearance of all MSS. containing his Gaelic is very remarkable, and is much founded on by Mr Campbell. But the history of literature affords various instances of the preservation of a book depending on one solitary MS. The case of the great Niebelungen-Lied—unknown for centuries, and brought to light through the accidental discovery of a MS.—is quite in point; and to come nearer home, two years ago, only one perfect copy of the first Gaelic book ever printed, Bishop Carewell's translation of John Knox's liturgy, was in existence. It may be, then, that when Macpherson destroyed his Gaelic MSS. he destroyed all in which his poetry was to be found. Again, it is asked, when Highlanders in the present day recite so many heroic ballads, why do they not recite Macpherson's? I answer that there being now forgotten is no proof that they were never remembered. A hundred years may obliterate many things among a people. The last hundred years have wrought such obliterations in the Highlands of Scotland as to make it no cause of wonder that heroic poetry then remembered should now be forgotten.

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I must restrict myself to a very few words on the internal evidence—though it is on this the question must be finally decided, if it ever is to be decided. As to the inference from comparing the Gaelic and English, I am sorry to say that I am entirely at variance with Mr Campbell. The more I examine the subject, the deeper is my conviction that the freeness of the Gaelic, the fulness of its similes, and its general freshness incontestably prove it to be the original. I would

refer especially to the sea-pieces (*e.g.*, Carhon, ll. 48-52.) In Gaelic they are vivid and graphic—in English tame, and almost meaningless—a fact such as might naturally be expected from the words of a true mariner being translated by a thoroughly "inland bred man" like Macpherson, but absolutely irreconcilable with his having written the Gaelic. Mr Campbell himself in his admirable work of the "West Highland Tales," vol. 4, p. 142, *et seq.*, has some striking and conclusive remarks on the internal evidence of the Gaelic to the English; and I sincerely hope, when he considers them again, they will induce him to return to his first faith.

Much might be said on the structure of the Gaelic—especially the Gaelic of the 7th Book of Temora, published by Macpherson in 1763, which differs widely from any other Gaelic that I have met with; and much of the whole character of Ossian, whether Gaelic or English, being so absolutely unlike all Macpherson's other compositions—many and well known; but I must conclude by repeating that Mr Campbell's theory "makes confusion worse confounded"—in asking us to set at nought the various facts which I have stated, demands a moral impossibility; and that whatever light may be thrown on the subject from the new Celtic Chair, we must in the present state of our knowledge admit Gaelic to be the original, and Macpherson to be the translator of the Ossianic poems.—I am, &c.,

ARCHIBALD CLERK, LL.D.

REMNANTS OF GAELIC POETRY.

—o—

THE name of Lachlan Macpherson, Esq. of Strathmashie, is well known to those who are conversant with the dissertations on the poems of Ossian. About the year 1760 he accompanied his neighbour and namesake, James Macpherson, Esq. of Belville, in his journey through the Highlands in search of those poems, he assisted him in collecting them, and in taking them down from oral tradition, and he transcribed by far the greater part of them from ancient manuscripts to prepare them for the press, as stated by himself in a letter to Dr Hugh Blair of Edinburgh. He was beyond all doubt a man of great powers of mind, and a Celtic poet of no mean order. He died at the comparatively early age of forty years, greatly lamented by his contemporaries, leaving behind him no written literary production.

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Fragments of Mr Lachlan Macpherson's poetry, hitherto unpublished, will be acceptable to those who have done so much of late to promote the interests of Celtic literature. In some of his poems, composed in the sportive exercise of his poetic genius, he makes the same objects the subjects of his praise and censure alternately. We give the following specimens:—

On the occasion of a marriage contract in his neighbourhood, the poet honoured the company with his presence. The important business of the occasion having been brought to a close, the bridegroom departed, but remembering that he had left on the table a bottle not quite empty, he returned and took it with him. The poet, viewing this as an act of extreme meanness, addressed the bridegroom as follows:—

CAINEADH AN DOMHNULLAICH.

'S toigh leam Dòmhnulach neo-chosdail
 O nach coltach e ri càch.
 'N uair bhios iadsan ag iarraidh fortain
 Bidh esan 'n a phrop aig fear càis
 Ma bha do mhàthair 'n a mnaoi chòir
 Cha do ghleidh i 'n leabaidh phòsda glan,
 Cha 'n 'eil cuid agad do Chloinn Dòmhnuille,
 'S Rothach no Ròsach am fear.
 'N uair a bhuail thu aig an uinneig
 Cha b' ann a bhuinnigeadh cliù,
 Dh' iarraidh na druaid bha 's a' bhotul,
 Mallachd fir focail a' d' ghiùr.

We give a free translation of the above into English, far inferior, however, to the Gaelic original:

MACDONALD SATIRISED.

I like to see a niggard man,
 One of the great Macdonald clan;
 When others are in quest of gain
 This man the needy will sustain.
 Your mother, if an honest dame,
 Has not retained her wedlock fame;
 No part is Mac from top to toe,
 You're either Rose or else Munro.
 When to the house you turned your face,

Let it be told to your disgrace,
'Twas for the dregs you had forgot,
The Poet's curse be in your throat.

The bridegroom, as we may well believe, smarted under the chastisement administered to him. He took an early opportunity of putting himself in the poet's way. Seeing Mr Macpherson riding past his place one day, he went to meet him with a bottle and glass, and importunately begged of him that he would have the goodness to say something now in his favour. Mr Macpherson complied with the request. Sitting on horseback, and taking the glass in his hand, he pronounced the ensuing eulogy on the bridegroom:—

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MOLADH AN DOMHNULAICH.

Bha na bàird riamh breugach, bòsdail,
Beular sinn, gòrach, gun seadh,
Lasgair gasd e Chloinn Dòmhnuille,
Mac Ailein Mhòir as a Mhagh.
Chuir e botul neo-ghortach a' m' dhorn,
A chur iotadh mo sgòrnain air chùl,
'S bàrd gun tùr a bh' air a' chòrdadh
Nach do sheinn gu mòr a chliù.
Ach tha 'n seòrs' ud uile cho cailteach,
Cho mi-thaingeil, 's cho beag ciall,
'S ma thig a' chuach idir o 'n ceann,
Nach fiach e taing na fhuair iad riamh.

The above may be thus translated:—

MACDONALD EULOGISED.

The bards, as we have ever seen,
Liars and flatterers have been;
Boasting, with little cause to glory,
So empty is their upper storey.
Of Clan Macdonald this is one,
Of Allan Mor of Moy the son;
He brought to me a sonsy vessel
To satiate my thirsty whistle.
The poet proved himself unwise
When him he did not eulogise.
The bards—I own it with regret—
Are a pernicious sorry set,
Whate'er they get is soon forgot,
Unless you always wet their throat.

Mr Macpherson had a dairymaid of the name of Flora, whom he described in abusive language in a poem beginning, :—

Flòiri mhùgach, bhòtach, ghlùn-dubh.

He afterwards made amends for the offence he had given her by commending her in very flattering terms. He represents her as a most useful dairymaid, and as a young woman of surpassing beauty, who had many admirers, and, according to his description of her, such were her good qualities, and her personal attractions, that certain persons whom he names, among others the clergyman of the parish, expressed their desire to engage her in their own service. The poet rejects their solicitations, and informs them how unlikely a thing it is that Flora should engage with them, as she was intended for the King:—

EULOGY ON FLORA.

Flòiri shùgach, bhòidheach, shùil-ghorm,
A pòg mar ùbhlan as a' ghàradh,
'N òg bhean, chliùiteach 's còmhnaird' giùlan,
Dh' òlann dùbailt a deoch-slàinte,
Ge do shiubhail sibh 'n Roinn Eòrpa,
'S na dùthchan mor' an taobh thall dith,
Cha 'n fhaiceadh sibh leithid Flòiri,
Cùl bachlach, glan, òr-bhuidhe na ban-righ.

Maighdean bheul-dearg, foill cha leir dh' i,
'S geal a deud o 'n ceutaich' gaire,
Caoimhneil, beusach, trod neo-bheumach,
'S ro mhaith leigeadh spréidh air àiridh,
Clach-dhatha na h-Alba 's na h-Eirinn,
Nach saltair air feur a h-àicheadh,
Mar dhealt na maidne 'n a h-éirigh,
'S mar aiteal na gréin a dealradh.

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A leadan dualach sìos m' a clusaibh

Chuir gu buaireadh fir a' bhràighe,
Fleasgaich uaisl' a' srì mu 'n ghruagaich,
'N ti tha 'gruaim ris 's truagh a chàramh,
Ach b' annsa leath' cuman 'us buarach,
'S dol do 'n bhuaile mar chaidh h-àrach,
Langanaich cruaidh-laoigh m' an cuairt di,
'S binne sud na uaisle chràiteach.

'S gnìomhach, càirdeil, b' fhearr dhomh ràdhainn,
'S glan a h-àbhaist, 's tearc a leithid,
Muime shàr-mhaith nan laogh àluinn,
Im 'us càise théid sud leatha,
Banarach fhortain ghàbhaidh
Nam miosairean làn 's a' chèithe,
Dheanadh i tuilleadh air càraid
'S a phàidheadh dhomh màl Aonghuis Shaw.

An t-àit' am faic sibh 'm bi gibht àraidh
Sùilean chàich bidh 'n sin 'n an luidhe,
Dòmhnall Bàn o 'm mìne Gailig
Bhuin rium làidir as an athar;
Thuir e, thoir dhomhs' i gu bealltuinn,
Seall an t-earlas tha thu faighinn
Uam-sa, buannachd nan damh Gallda,
No ma 's fearr leat na sin faidhir.

Thuir Dòmhnall Mac Bheathain 's e 's an éisdeachd,
Nàile, 's fheudar dhomh-sa labhairt,
'S mise 'n t-amadan thar cheud,
A bheireadh cead dh' i 'n déigh a gabhail,
Ach thoir-se nise dhomh féin i,
'S théid nì 'us feudail a' d' lamhaibh,
Gu 'n ruig a 's na tha tilgeadh réigh dhomh
Ann am Banc Dhun-éidinn fathast.

'N uair chual am Ministear an t-srì
A bha mu 'n rìomhainn thall an amhainn,
Chuir e pìor-bhuic 'us ad shìod' air,
'S chaidh e dìreach orm a dh' fheitheamh,
'S thuir e, thoir dhomh-s' an ath thìom dhìth,
'S nì mi trì-fillte cho maith thu,
'S ma shearmonaicheas tu féin do 'n sgìreachd
Gheibh thu 'n stìpean 's bean-an-tighe.

Ge pròiseil sibh le 'r n-òr, 's le 'r nì,
Le 'r mòran stìpein, 's le 'r cuid mhnathaibh,
'S fearr leam Flòiri agam fhéin
Na ge do chit 'iad leis an amhainn,
Dheanainn an còrdadh cho simplidh
'S i dhol cinnteach feadh nan tighean,
Cia mar tha i coltach ribh-se?
'S gur h-e 'n rìgh tha dol g' a faighinn.

The Mashie, a tributary of the Spey, in the parish of Laggan, runs close by Strathmashie house. It is a small river, but in harvest time, when in flood, it causes considerable damage. The poet takes occasion to censure the Mashie on this account; but he has his pleasant associations in connection with the charming banks of this mountain stream, as expressed in the following stanzas:—

MATHAISITH CENSURED.

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Mhathaisith fhrògach dhubh,
Fhrògach dhubh, fhrògach dhubh,
Mhathaisith fhrògach dhubh,
'S mòr rinn thu chall domh.

Rinn thu m' eòrna a mhilleadh,
'S mo chuid ghòrag air sileadh,
'Us cha d' fhàg thu sguab tioram
Do na chinnich do bhàrr dhomh.

Mhathaisith, &c.

Cha robh lochan no caochan,
A bha ruith leis an aonach,
Nach do chruinnich an t-aon lan
A thoirt aon uair do shàth dhuit.

Mhathaisith, &c.

Rinn thu òl an tigh Bheathain
Air leann 's uisge-beatha,
'S garbh an tuilm sin a sgeith thu
'S a' ghabhail-rathaid Di-màirt oirn

Mhathaisith, &c.

EULOGY ON MATHAISITH.

Mhathaisith bhòidheach gheal,
Bhòidheach gheal, bhòidheach gheal,
Mhathaisith bhòidheach gheal,
B' ait leam bhi làimh riut.

'N uair a rachainn a' m' shiubhal
B' e sud mo cheann uidhe
Na bh' air bràigh Choire-bhuidhe
Agus ruigh Alt-na-ceàrdaich.

Mhathaisith, &c.

Gu 'm bu phailt bha mo bhuaile
Do chrodh druim-fhion 'us guail-fhionn,
Mar sud 's mo chuid chuachag
Dol mu 'n cuairt dhoibh 's an t-samhradh.

Mhathaisith, &c.

SEANCHAIDH.

HIGHLAND NOTES AND COMMENTS.

—o—

[IN this Column we shall, from month to month, notice the most important business coming before our Highland Representative Institutions—such as the local Parliament of the Highland Capital, Gaelic and other Celtic Societies, and passing incidents likely to prove interesting to our Celtic readers. We make no pretence to give news; simply comments on incidents, information regarding which will be obtained through the usual channels.]

WE make no apology for referring to the doings of the Town Council of the Capital of the Highlands. Anything calculated to interest the Highlander is included in our published programme; and surely the composition, conduct, dignity, and patriotism of the local Parliament of the HIGHLAND CAPITAL, and the general ability, eloquence, intelligence, and independence of spirit displayed by its members is of more than mere local interest. We take it that the Scottish Gael, wherever located, is interested in the Capital of his native Highlands, and will naturally concern himself with the history and conduct of those whose duty it is as its leading men to shine forth as an example to places of lesser importance.

Last year a Gas and Water Bill was carried through Parliament, involving an expenditure of something like £80,000, and at least double taxation. We have no doubt whatever very good and satisfactory reasons will be given for this large expenditure, but hitherto not the slightest explanation has been vouchsafed to the public, and we are, in common with five-sixths of the community, at present quite ignorant of the reasons given for this enormous expenditure: that there must be unanswerable reasons we have no doubt whatever, for have not the Council been unanimous to a man throughout. Not a single protest was entered. Not a single speech was publicly made against it. But more wonderful still, not a single speech was made publicly in the Council in its favour. This did not arise from want of debating power on the part of the members. It must have arisen from the unanswerable nature of the arguments delivered in private committees, where, practically, no one heard them, or of them, except the members themselves. The only objection which can be raised to this theory is, that if the matter is so very clear and simple, and the expenditure so imperatively called for, it is most wonderful that some ingenuous simple-minded member had not thought of making himself popular at one bound, by giving a little information to the public as the matter proceeded, and so silence all the grumbling and general dissatisfaction felt outside.

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THE Gaelic Society of Inverness entered on its fifth session last month. The Society has of late shown considerable signs of popularity and progress; for close upon fifty members have been added to the roll during the first eight months of the Society's year, while only eighteen were added during the whole of the previous one. In 1873, seventy new members were elected. The following five Clans are the best represented—Mackenzies, 23 members; Frasers, 22; Mackays, 19; Macdonalds, 18; Mackintoshes, 14. This is not as it should be; for while the Mackays only

occupy a little over a page of the Inverness Directory, the Mackintoshes two, and the Mackenzies about three and a-half; the Macdonalds occupy over four, and the Frasers seven pages. We would like to see the Clans taking their proper places, by the "levelling-up" process of course.

WE regret to announce the sudden death, on the 19th of August, of Dr Hermann Ebel, Professor of Comparative Philology at the University of Berlin. He superintended the new edition of Zeuss's *Grammatica Celtica*, and was one of the four or five leading Celtic scholars of the age.

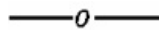
IT will be seen that Logan's "Scottish Gael"—a book now getting very scarce, and which was never, in consequence of its high price, within the reach of a wide circle of readers—is to be issued by Mr Hugh Mackenzie, Bank Lane, in 12 monthly parts at 2s each, Edited, with Memoir and Notes, by the Rev. Mr Stewart, "Nether-Lochaber." In this way the work will be much easier to get. It only requires to be known to secure the demand such an authority on the Celt—his language, literature, music, and ancient costume—deserves.

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WE take the following from the late Dr Norman Macleod's "Reminiscences of a Highland Parish" on Highlanders ashamed of their country. We believe the number to whom the paragraph is now applicable is more limited than when it first saw the light, but we could yet point to a few of this contemptible tribe, of whom better things might be expected. We wish the reader to emphasize every line and accept it as our own views regarding these treacle-beer would-be-genteel excrescences of our noble race. A wart or tumour sometimes disfigures the finest oak of the forest, and these so-called Highlanders are just the warts and tumours of the Celtic races—they have their uses, no doubt:—"One class sometimes found in society we would especially beseech to depart; we mean Highlanders ashamed of their country. Cockneys are bad enough, but they are sincere and honest in their idolatry of the Great Babylon. Young Oxonians or young barristers, even when they become slashing London critics, are more harmless than they themselves imagine, and after all inspire less awe than Ben-Nevis, or than the celebrated agriculturist who proposed to decompose that mountain with acids, and to scatter the debris as a fertiliser over the Lochaber moss. But a Highlander born, who has been nurtured on oatmeal porridge and oatmeal cakes; who in his youth wore home-spun cloth, and was innocent of shoes and stockings; who blushed in his attempts to speak the English language; who never saw a nobler building for years than the little kirk in the glen, and who owes all that makes him tolerable in society to the Celtic blood which flows in spite of him through his veins;—for this man to be proud of his English accent, to sneer at the everlasting hills, the old kirk and its simple worship, and despise the race which has never disgraced him—faugh! Peat reek is frankincense in comparison with him; let him not be distracted by any of our reminiscences of the old country; leave us, we beseech of thee!"

THE SUNSET OF THE YEAR.

(OCTOBER.)



Sweet Summer's scowling foe impatient stands
On the horizon near of Nature's view.
At the sad sight the sweetly-coloured lands
Filled with the glowing woodlands' dying hue,
For Winter's darkening reign prepare the way.
In the green garden the tall Autumn flowers,
Filling with fragrant breath the beauteous bowers,
With resignation wait their dying day;
Bending their heads submissive to the will
Of Him, at whose command the sun stands still,
Nor dares to send to earth his gladd'ning ray.
Filled with the feeling of the coming doom
Of Nature's beauteous deeds, the heavenly hill
Hides its sad, shuddering face in cloudy gloom.
A whispering silence overhangs the scene,
As if awaiting the dark Winter storm
That fills with fear Hope's slowly-withering form.
Sinking to wintry death—till, pure and green,
Spring shall descend in song from sunny skies,
Smiling her into life. The sad wind sighs
Through flowerless woods, glowing towards their death,
In Winter's cruel, poison-breathing breath.

Fierce grows the murmur of the woodland rill,
Foaming in fury thro' the pensive trees,
Down the steep glen of the mist-mantled hill;
Deeper the roar of death-presageful seas;
While in the changeful woods the rivers seem
Wandering for ever in a Winter dream!

DAVID R. WILLIAMSON.

MAIDENKIRK, 1875.

LITERATURE.

—o—

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TRANSACTIONS OF THE GAELIC SOCIETY OF INVERNESS. Vols. III. and IV., 1873-74 and 1874-75 (Bound in one).

THIS is the third publication issued by the Gaelic Society since its establishment in 1871. The previous volumes were very creditable, especially the first, but the one now before us is out of sight superior not only in size, but in the quality of its contents. First we have an Introduction of eight pages giving the history of the movement in favour of establishing a Celtic Chair in one of our Scottish Universities, and the steps taken by the Gaelic Society of London, who appear to have worked single-handed to promote this object since 1835, when they presented their first petition to the House of Commons, down to 1870, when the Council of the Edinburgh University took the matter in hand. In December 1869 the Gaelic Society of London sent out circulars addressed to ministers of all denominations in Scotland asking for information as to the number of churches in which Gaelic was preached. The circulars were returned, the result being "that out of 3395 places of worship of all denominations in Scotland, 461 had Gaelic services once-a-day in the following proportions—Established Church, 235; Free Church, 166; Catholic Chapels, 36; Baptists, 12; Episcopalians, 9; Congregationalists, 3."

The first paper in the volume is a very interesting account, by Dr Charles Mackay, the poet, of "The Scotch in America." We give the following extract:—

I was invited to dine with a wealthy gentleman of my own name. There were present on that occasion 120 other Scotchmen, and most of them wore the Highland dress. My host had a piper behind the chair playing the old familiar strains of the pipes. The gentleman told me, in the course of the evening, that his father was a poor cottar in Sutherlandshire. "My mother," said he, "was turned out upon the moor on a dark cold night, and upon that moor I was born." My friend's family afterwards went to America, and my friend became a "dry" merchant, or as you would say in Scotland, a draper. I said to him, seeing that his position had so improved, "Well, I suppose you do not bear any grudge against the people by whose agency your family were turned upon the moor." "No," he replied, "I cannot say that I bear them any grudge, but at the same time I cannot say that I forgive them. If my position has improved, it is by my own perseverance, and not by their good deeds or through their agency." In every great city of Canada—Toronto, Kingstown, Montreal, New Brunswick, St John's, Nova Scotia, and in almost every town and village, you will find many Scotchmen; in fact, in the large towns they are almost as numerous as in Edinburgh and Inverness. You will see a Highland name staring you in the face in any or every direction. If you ask for the principal merchant or principal banker, you will be almost sure to find that he's a Scotchman; and no matter in what part of the world your fellow countrymen may be cast, they keep up the old manners and customs of their mother country. They never forget the good old times of "Auld lang syne;" they never forget the old songs they sung, the old tunes they played, nor the old reels and dances of Scotland.

The Scotch, especially in Canada, take the Gaelic with them. They have Gaelic newspapers, which have a large circulation—larger, perhaps, than any Gaelic newspaper at home. They have Gaelic preachers. In fact, there is one part of Canada which might be called the new Scotland; and it is a Scotchman who is now at the head of the Canadian Government—John Macdonald.^[A]

The next is a paper by Archibald Farquharson, Tiree, headed "The Scotch at Home and Abroad," but really a thrilling appeal in favour of teaching Gaelic in Highland Schools. It is impossible to give an idea of this excellent paper by quoting extracts. We, however, give the following on the teaching of Gaelic in the schools:—

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Reading a language they do not understand has a very bad effect upon children. It leaves the mind indolent and lazy; they do not put themselves to any trouble to endeavour to ascertain the meaning of what they read; whereas, were they taught to translate as they went along, whenever a word they did not understand presented

itself to their minds, they would have no rest until they would master it by finding out its meaning. And I am pretty certain that were the Gaelic-speaking children thus to be taught, that by the time they would reach the age of fourteen years, they would be as far advanced, if not farther, than those who have no Gaelic at all; so that, instead of the Gaelic being their misfortune, it would be the very reverse. It would, with the exception of Welshmen (were they aware of it), place them on an eminence above any in Great Britain, not only as scholars, but as having the best languages for the soul and for the understanding. And should they enter college, they would actually leave others behind them, because, in the first place, they acquired the habit of translating in their youth, which would make translating from dead languages comparatively easy; and in the second place, they would derive great aid from their knowledge of the Gaelic. If Professor Blackie has found 500 Greek roots in the Gaelic, what aid would they derive from it in studying that language? and they would find equally as much aid in studying Latin, and even Hebrew.

Comparing the melody of the English with that of the Gaelic, Mr Farquharson says:—

Certainly, compared with Gaelic and Broad Scotch, it [English] has no melody. It is true that it may be set off and adorned with artificial melody. What is the difference between natural and artificial melody? Natural melody is the appropriate melody with which a piece is sung which has true melody inherent in itself, and artificial melody is that with which a piece is sung that is destitute of real melody. In the former case the mind is influenced by what is sung, the music giving additional force and power to it; but in the latter case the mind is more influenced by the sound of the music than by what is sung. I may explain this by two young females; the one has, I do not call it a bonny face, but a very agreeable expression of countenance; the other has not. Were the former to be neatly and plainly dressed, her dress would give additional charms to her, but in looking at her you would not think of the dress at all, but of the charms of the young woman. But although the other were adorned in the highest style of fashion, with flowers and brocades, and chains of gold, and glittering jewels, in looking at her you would not think of the charms of the young woman, for charms she had none, your mind would be altogether occupied with what was artificial about her, with what did not belong to her, and not with what she was in herself. Both the natural and artificial melody elevate the mind, the one by what is sung, and the other by the grand sound of the music. There is real melody in "Scots wha hae," which is natural and appropriate, which gives additional power and force to the sentiment of the piece. In singing it the mind is not occupied with the sound, but with proud Edward, his chains and slavery—Scotia's King and law—the horrors of slavery—the blessing of liberty, and a fixed determination to act.

Dr Masson's description of "Tho Gael in the Far West" is a very readable paper, and gives an interesting account of his tour among the Canadian Gael, where he says, "the very names of places were redolent of the heather—in the land where, alas! the tenderest care has never yet been able to make the heather grow—Fingal, Glencoe, Lochiel, Glengarry, Inverness, Tobermory, St Kilda, Iona, Lochaber, and the rest!" We part with this paper perfectly satisfied that whether or not the Gael and his language are to be extirpated among his own native hills neither the race nor the language will yet become extinct in our British Colonies.

Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, makes the following remarks on "The Church in the Highlands." He said that if they wished to improve the Highlands:—

There was no way in which it could be done better than by raising the class from which ministers were drawn. He remembered saying at the opening meeting of this Society, that one of its objects should be to excite the interest of the upper classes in the language of their forefathers, inducing them to retain that language, or acquire it if lost. Because, when the cultivated classes lost their interest in it, the leaven which leavens society ceased to influence the mass of the people; and it was one of the most unfortunate things in regard to a dying language, when the upper classes lost the use of it, and the uneducated classes came to be in a worse condition than in an earlier state of civilisation, when there was an element of refinement among them. It was an understood fact, that the clergy at this moment had a great influence in the Highlands; and although there were persons present of different persuasions, he thought they would all admit that the Free Church was the Church that influenced the great mass of Highlanders. There were Catholics in Mar, Lochaber, the Long Island, and Strathglass, and Episcopalians in Appin; but the people generally belonged to the Free Church, and if they wanted to influence the mass, it was through the clergy of the Free Church they could do it. Now, it was an unfortunate thing, and generally admitted, that the clergy of the Free Church—he believed it was the same in the Established Church—were not rising in intellect and social rank—that there was rather a falling off in that—that the clergy were drawn not so much from the manse as from the cottar's house; and though he knew a number of clergy, very excellent, godly men, and very superior, considering the station from which they had risen, he thought it was not advantageous, as a rule, to draw the clergy from the lower, uneducated classes. They did not start with that advantage in life which their sons would start with. There had been a talk of instituting bursaries for the advancement of Gaelic-speaking students. He did not see why they should not start a bursary or have a special subscription—he would himself contribute to it—a bursary for theological students sprung from parents of education—whose parents had been ministers, or who themselves had taken a degree in arts. That would tend to encourage the introduction of a superior class of clergymen. He wished to say

nothing against the present ministers. He knew they were excellent men, but he thought their sons would be, in many cases, superior to themselves if they took to the ministry. He was sorry they did not take to it more frequently, and he would be glad if this Society offered them some encouragement.

Two learned papers appear from the Rev. John Macpherson, Lairg, and Dr M'Lauchlan, Edinburgh—the one on "The Origin of the Indo-European Languages," and the other—"Notices of Brittany." Space will not now allow us to give extracts long enough to give any idea of the value and interest of these papers, or of the one immediately following—a metrical translation into English of "Dan an Deirg"—by Lachlan Macbean, Inverness. We shall return to them in a future number.

The Rev. A. C. Sutherland gives one of the best written and most interesting papers in the volume on the "Poetry of Dugald Buchanan, the Rannach Bard." The following is a specimen of Mr Sutherland's treatment of the poet, and of his own agreeable style:—

At the time when the great English critic was oracularly declaring that the verities of religion were incapable of poetic treatment, there was a simple Highlander, quietly composing poems, which, of themselves, would have upset the strange view, otherwise sufficiently absurd. But in all justice, we must say that many, very many, both of Gaelic and English poets, who have attempted to embody religious sentiments in poetic forms, have, by their weak efforts, exposed themselves, unarmed, to the attacks of those who would exclude religion from the sphere of the imagination. All good poetry, in the highest sense, deals with, and appeals to, what is universal and common to all men....

It is frequently charged upon the Celt, that in religion as in other matters, emotion, inward feeling in the shape of awe, adoration, undefined reverence, are more eagerly sought, and consequently more honoured, than the practice of the simple external virtues, of which feeling should be the ministers and fountains. Whether this accusation holds good generally, or whether it applies more particularly to the more recent manifestations of the religious life among us, this is not the time to inquire. One thing we are sure of, that a representative religious teacher like Buchanan never allows that any fulness of inward life can dispense with the duties of every-day life, with mercy, truth, industry, generosity, self-control. The unworthy man who is excluded from the kingdom is not the man of blunt, homely feeling, incapable of ecstatic rapture and exalted emotion, but the man who locks up for himself the gold God gave him for the general good, who shuts his ear to the cry of the poor, who entrenches his heart behind a cold inhumanity, who permits the naked to shiver unclothed, who lessens not his increasing flock by a single kid to satisfy the orphan's want. Indeed, one who reads carefully Buchanan's *Day of Judgment*, with his mind full of the prejudices or truths regarding the place of honour given by the Celt to inward experience and minute self-analysis, cannot fail to be astonished how small a place these occupy in that great poem. There, at least, mental experience is of no value, except in so far as it blossoms into truth, purity, and love. We cannot, however, pause to illustrate these statements in detail. We shall merely refer to the indignation into which the muse of Buchanan is stirred in the presence of pride and oppression. The lowest deep is reserved for these. The poet's charity for men in general becomes the sublime growl of a lion as it confronts the chief who fleeces but tends not his people.

[Pg 32]

"An robh thu ro chruaidh,
A' feannadh do thuàth,
'S a' tanach an gruaidh le màl;
Le h-agartas geur,
A glacadh an spréidh,
'S am bochdainn ag eigheach dail?

Gun chridhe aig na daoine,
Bha air lomadh le h-aois,
Le 'n claigeannan maola truagh;
Bhi seasamh a' d' chòir,
Gun bhoineid 'nan dòrn,
Ge d' tholladh gaoth reota an cluas.

Thu nise do thràill,
Gun urram a' d' dhàil,
Gun ghearsonn, gun mhàl, gun mhod:
Mor mholadh do'n bhàs,
A chasgair thu trà,
'S nach d' fhuiling do straic fo'n fhòid."

We part with this paper with an interest in Buchanan's Poems which we never before felt, although we repeatedly read them.

A well written paper, in Gaelic, by John Macdonald, Inland Revenue, Lanark, brings the session of 1873-74 to an end. Mr Macdonald advocates the adoption of one recognised system of orthography in writing Gaelic, and concludes in favour of that of the Gaelic Bible, as being not only the best and purest, but also the best known.

In the second part of the volume 1874-75 are Professor Blackie's famous address, under the auspices of the Society, his first in favour of a Celtic Professor; "The Black Watch Deserters" by Alex. Mackintosh Shaw, London; "History of the Gaelic Church of Inverness", by Alex. Fraser, accountant; "Ancient Unpublished Gaelic Poetry," "The Prophecies of *Coinneach Odhar Fiosaiche*, the Brahan Seer," by Alex. Mackenzie, Secretary to the Society; and other interesting matter. We shall notice these in our next number. This valuable volume is given free to all Members of the Society, besides free Admission to all Lectures and Meetings, while the Annual Subscription for Ordinary Membership is only 5s.

FOOTNOTES:

- [A] Since the paper was written, the Hon. John Macdonald gave place to another Scottish Highlander, the Hon. Alex. Mackenzie, as Prime Minister of Canada.

***SONGS AND POEMS IN THE GAELIC LANGUAGE. By
DUNCAN MACKENZIE, "The Kenlochewe Bard." Written
verbatim from the Bard's own Recitation, and Edited, with
an Introduction in English, by Alexander Mackenzie,
Secretary to the Gaelic Society of Inverness.***

WE have before us part first of the above Songs and Poems, containing thirteen pieces, and consisting of 36 pp., crown 8vo, with an Introduction. We have not met with anything to equal them in our language for pith, spirit, and poetic genius, since the days of *Rob Donn*; and we trust the bard will receive the encouragement he so well deserves with the first part, so as to enable him to give us the second on an early date. There is a short introduction to each piece, which gives them an additional interest. We notice a few unimportant editorial errors which we know Mr Mackenzie would be the first to admit and correct. The following three verses are from "Moladh na Gailig"—air fonn *Cabar-feidh*,—and is a fair specimen, although by no means the best in the book:—

[Pg 33]

Si Ghailig cainnt as aosda
Th' aig daoine air an talamh so,
Tha buaidh aic' air an t-saoghal
Nach fhaodar a bhreithneachadh,
Cha teid i chaidh air dhi-chuimhn',
Cha chaochail 's cha chaidil i,
'S cha teid srian na taod innt'
A dh' aindeon taobh dha 'n tachair i,
Tha miltean feairt, le cliu, 's le tlachd,
Dha cumail ceart neo-mhearachdach,
'S i treun a neart, le briathran pailt,
Cha chrìon, 's cha chaith, 's cha theirig i,
Tha cuimhne 'us beachd na lorg, 's na taic,
'S cha n-iarr i facal leasaichidh.

An am sinn na sailm gur binn a toirm
Seach ceol a dhealbh na h-Eidailtich.

Tha fianaisean na Gailig
Cho laidir 's cho maireannach
'S nach urrainn daoine a h-aicheadh,
Tha seann ghnas a leantuinn ri.
Tha ciall 'us tuigse nadur,
Gach la deanamh soilleir dhuinn,
Gur i bu chainnt aig Adhamh
Sa gharadh, 's an deighe sin.
Gur i bh' aig Noah, an duine coir,
A ghleidh, nuair dhoirt an tuil, dhuinn i,
'S mhair i fos troimh iomadh seors',
'S gun deach a seoladh thugainne,
Do thir nam beann, nan stra, 's nan gleann,
Nan loch, 's na'n allt, 's na'n struthanan,
'S ge lionmhor fine fuidh na ghrein,
Se fir an fheilidh thuigeadh i.

Tha 'n t'urram aig an fheileadh
Seach eideadh as aithne dhuinn,
'S na daoine tha toir speis dha
Gur h-eudmhor na ceatharnaich.

A' cumail cuimhn air euchdan,
 As treuntas an aithrichean,
 A ghleidh troimh iomadh teimheil,
 A suaintas fhein, gun dealachadh.
 Oh! 's iomadh cruadal, cath, 'us tuasaid,
 'S baiteal cruaidh a choinnich iad;
 'S bu trice bhuaidh aca na ruaig,
 Tha sgeula bhuan ud comharricht.
 'S bu chaomh leo fuaim piob-mhor ri 'n cluais
 Dha 'n cuir air ghluasad togarrach,
 Sa dh-aindeon claidheamh, sleagh, na tuadh,
 Cha chuireadh uamhas eagal orr.

The Celtic Magazine.

THE Promoters of this Magazine will spare no effort to make it worthy of the support of the Celt throughout the World. It will be devoted to Celtic subjects generally, and not merely to questions affecting the Scottish Highlands. It will afford Biographies of Eminent Highlanders at home and abroad—Reviews of all Books on subjects interesting to the Celtic Races—their Literature, questions affecting the Land—Hypothec, Entail, Tenant-right, Sport, Reclamation—Emigration, and all questions affecting Landlords, Tenants, and Commerce of the Highlands. On all these questions both sides will be allowed to present their case, the only conditions being that the articles be well and temperately written. Care will always be taken that no one side of a question will obtain undue prominence—facts and arguments on both sides being allowed to work conviction.

[Pg 34]

The Promoters believe that, under the wiser and more enlightened management now developing itself, there is room enough in the Highlands for more Men, more Land under cultivation, and more Sheep, without any diminution of Sport in Grouse or Deer. That there is room enough for all—for more gallant defenders of our country in time of need, more produce, more comfort, and more intelligence; and the Conductors will afford a *medium* for giving expression to these views. In order the more successfully to interest the general reader in Celtic questions, the Magazine will be written in English, with the exception of contributions concerning Antiquities and Folk-lore, which may require the native language. It is intended, as soon as arrangements can be made, to have a Serial Highland Story appearing from month to month.

The following have among others already forwarded or promised contributions:—The Rev. GEORGE GILFILLAN on "Macaulay's Treatment of Ossian"; The Very Rev. ULICK J. CANON BOURKE, M.R.I.A., President of St Jarlath's College, Tuam, on "The Relationship of the Keltic and Latin Races"; CHARLES FRASER-MACKINTOSH, Esq., M.P., on "Forestry or Tree-planting in the Highlands"; The "NETHER-LOCHABER" CORRESPONDENT of the *Inverness Courier*, on "Highland Folk-lore"; The Rev. JOHN MACPHERSON, Lairg, "Old Unpublished Gaelic Songs, with Notes"; Professor BLACKIE, a Translation of "Mairidh Laghach"; Principal SHAIRP, St Andrews, on "Subjects connected with Highland Poetry, and the Poetic Aspects of the Highlands"; ALEXANDER MACKENZIE, Secretary of the Gaelic Society, "Coinneach Odhar Fiosaiche—the Brahan Seer's Prophecies"; "The Traditional History of how the Mackenzies came into possession of Gairloch, and drove out the Macleods"; "Latha na Luinge"; "Freiceadan a Choire Dhuibh"; "Latha Lochan Neatha," and other West Highland Folk-lore and Unpublished Gaelic Poetry; ALEX. FRASER, Accountant, Inverness, "Curiosities from the Old Burgh Records of Inverness"; The Rev. A. SINCLAIR, Kenmore, on "The Authenticity of Ossian"; WM. ALLAN, Sunderland, author of "Heather Bells," "Hame-Spun Lilts," and other Poems; Rev. ALEX. MACGREGOR, M.A., Inverness, "Old Highland Reminiscences"; The KENLOCHEWE BARD, an Original Gaelic Poem every month. Contributions are also promised from Dr CHARLES MACKAY, the poet; Dr THOMAS M'LAUCHLAN, Sheriff NICOLSON, WM. JOLLY, H.M.'s Inspector of Schools; ARCHIBALD FARQUHARSON, Tiree, on "The Songs and Music of the Highlands"; H. GAIDOZ, editor of the *Revue Celtique*, Paris; The Rev. WALTER M'GILLIVRAY, D.D., Aberdeen; The Rev. A. C. SUTHERLAND, Strathbraan; KENNETH MURRAY, Esq. of Geanies; JOHN CAMERON MACPHEE, President of the Gaelic Society of London; Rev. J. W. WRIGHT, Inverness; and other well-known writers on Celtic subjects, Traditions, and Folk-lore.

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