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THE CELTIC MAGAZINE.

No. IV. **FEBRUARY 1876.**

THE STATE OF THE OSSIANIC CONTROVERSY.

[Concluded.]

In prosecuting the geological and geographical confirmation of Ossian on which we have lately been engaged, the most convincing proofs and the greatest difficulties alike are to be found in the Frith of Clyde. The levels of the water in that frith penetrating far inland, by Paisley, Rutherglen, and Kilsyth, assumed unconsciously as matter of fact in the text of Ossian, are in such obvious harmony with every word of the poems which relate to that region, that the poems in question cannot otherwise be understood; and we therefore cannot help believing not only that the poems themselves are genuine, but that they represent a geological phenomenon hitherto unsuspected in the world—are, in fact, a revelation in science. On the other hand, the levels thus assumed are so very far beyond anything admitted by geologists within the era assigned, as to seem not only extravagant but incredible; and if they cannot be maintained, their assumption as a fact will destroy the credibility of the poems in which the assumption is made. As regards the authenticity of these poems, however, the assumption itself is conclusive; for the translator did not see it, and could therefore never have fabricated the poems in which it appears. Such poems must have been written by some eye-witness of the fact, who did not require to exaggerate; and the only question as regards reliability now to be settled, is whether he did exaggerate or no? Was the Clyde a sea to Rutherglen, as he seems to affirm? Was the Kelvin a fiord to Kilsyth, or nearly so, as he implies? Was the Leven an estuary to Loch Lomond, as we are bound to conclude? Was the Black Cart a marine canal to Ardrossan in the days of Agricola? If so, the Clyde must have been from 60 to 80 feet above its present level at the date supposed—and then, where was the Roman Wall? Traces of that wall upon the Clyde at a much lower level, it is said, still exist; and the old fortifications between Dunglass and Kilpatrick only 50 feet or thereby above the present level, put an end to the reliability, if not to the authenticity of Ossian. This is the difficulty now to be disposed of; and of which, in passing, we need only say, that if Macpherson had seen it he would certainly have avoided it; and therefore, that whoever was the author of the poems in which it occurs, Macpherson was not.

But it is with the difficulty itself we are now concerned, and not with the authorship. I. First then, suppose any statement, direct or indirect, had occurred in any Greek or Roman writer of the time [Pg 100]

—Cæsar, Tacitus, Dion Cassius, or Ptolemy—affirming, or even implying, such a level in the Clyde at the date in question, notwithstanding the Roman Wall, would the testimony of such authors have been rejected? If not, how would our geologists have disposed of it? or how would they have reconciled it with existing matters of fact? One can imagine the jealousy with which such texts would have been criticised; the assiduity with which every crevice on the coast would have been surveyed, not to contradict but to confirm them; and the fertility of invention with which theories would have been multiplied to harmonise them. Strange as it may appear, however, facts and statements amounting very nearly to this do occur, and have hitherto been overlooked, or purposely omitted in silence. The Roman Wall, for example, stops short with a town at Balmulzie on one side of the Kelvin, and begins again with another town at Simmerton, nearly a mile distant, on the opposite side of the Kelvin; but why should such a gap be there, if the Kelvin, which flows between, had not been something like a fiord at the moment? Again, it is distinctly affirmed by Herodian that the marshes of Clydesdale south of the Wall were constantly—end of the third, or beginning of the fourth century—emitting vapours which obscured the sky. But how could this be the case, if volcanic heat had not already been operating underneath, and the waters of the frith were then beginning to subside from their original higher levels?

On the other hand, not only do statements to the effect alleged occur frequently in Ossian, but whole poems are founded on the assumption of their truth, and cannot be understood without them. Why then are not these taken into account by our geologists as contemporaneous testimony, in the same way as similar statements, if they had occurred in Cæsar or in Tacitus, would have been? Because Ossian hitherto has been looked upon by men of science as a fable; as a witness utterly unfit to be produced in court, and no more to be cared for or quoted in an ordnance survey, or in a professor's chair, than the Arabian Nights' Entertainments are in a pulpit. By which very oversight or contempt, the most important revelations have been lost, and the most elaborate theories will soon be rendered useless. Ossian, in fact, is as much an authority as either Cæsar, or Tacitus, or Ptolemy; and in estimating the physical conditions of the world to which he refers, and which he describes, can no longer be either ignored or doubted. If his text seems to be at variance with existing facts, it must be more carefully studied; and if new theories are required to harmonise details they must be accepted or invented. We have had theories enough already, which have perished with the using; something more in harmony with facts, or that will better explain the facts, must now be forthcoming.

II. But the Roman Wall itself, which is supposed to be the greatest barrier in the way of our accepting Ossian, has actually a literature of its own, little understood, in his favour. The three forts farthest west, and on which so much reliance has been placed as indicating the levels of the [Pg 101] Clyde when they were built and occupied, are those at Chapel Hill, near Old Kilpatrick, at Duntocher, and at Castlehill a little farther to the east; all under the ridge of the Kilpatrick Hills, and all—one of them very closely—overlooking the Clyde. But in excavating the remains of Roman architecture in these forts, stones have been found with symbolical sculptures upon them which are still in existence, or which have been accurately copied for public use. On one of the stones at Chapel Hill, farthest west, we have the figure of a wild boar in flight; on one at Duntocher we have another wild boar, on two more there we have sea-dogs or seals and winged horses; on two more at Castlehill we have another boar, and another seal, and an osprey or sea-eagle on the back of the seal; but beyond this to the eastward, although a boar still occurs, not another seal appears. How then is all this descriptive or symbolical sculpture, so plain and so significant, to be accounted for, if the Frith of Clyde had not then been a sea flowing up into the recesses of the land, as high almost as Duntocher and Castlehill? The wild boar is traceable throughout, for he inhabited the woods on the Kilpatrick range, as far eastward, perhaps, as Simmerton; and we find him eating acorns, even beyond that. On the other hand, no seal is represented at Chapel Hill, for the water there was too deep, and the banks too precipitous. It appears first at Duntocher, and again at Castlehill, because the sea flowed up into quiet bays and inlets there, where such amphibia could bask—of which, more hereafter; but it totally disappears beyond that, because the salt water ceased in the distance. The winged-horse, or pegasus, is more difficult to account for, and has greatly perplexed the learned antiquarians who have commented on him; but if the Roman Legionaries who built and occupied these western stations ever heard the Caledonian harp, or listened to a Celtic bard, or received an embassy, as we are expressly told they did, from men like Ossian as ambassadors—the difficulty requires no farther explanation. The Romans were neither blind nor senseless, and knew well enough how to represent the poetical genius of the country which they were attempting in vain to conquer, as well as the wild boars of its woods, and the sea-dogs in its estuaries; and have thus left behind them, in rude but significant sculpture, as true a picture as could be imagined of the men on the soil, and the beasts in the field, and the fish so-called in the sea, and the bird in the air—between Simmerton and Duntocher, in absolute conformity with the text of Ossian. Nor is there any possible reply to this by our antiquarian friends. The Roman Wall itself, to which they constantly appeal, supplies the evidence, and they are bound, without a murmur, to accept it.

III. But the levels of the Wall, it may be said, as now ascertainable by actual survey—what other sort of evidence do *they* afford? This question implies—(1) A range of observation from the Kelvin at Simmerton westward to Duntocher in the first place, and then to Chapel Hill between Old Kilpatrick and Dunglass. The intermediate forts on that line are separated by equal distances, nearly as follows:—From Simmerton to New Kilpatrick, 1¾ miles; from New Kilpatrick to Castlehill, 1¾ miles; from Castlehill to Duntocher, 1¾ miles; the lowest point in which range at Duntocher is from 155 to 200 feet above the level of the Clyde, leaving sufficient room, therefore, for the Wall above the highest level assumed in the text of Ossian. From Duntocher to Chapel Hill [Pg 102] there is a distance of 2½ miles, with no trace whatever of the Wall between. Chapel Hill is

considerably lower than Duntocher, undoubtedly; but why is there so great a gap there, and no trace of a wall in the interval? Either, because there never was a wall so close to the tide; or because the tide itself washed the wall away, having been built too close to its confines; or for some other more probable reason yet to be assigned. The fort at Chapel Hill itself, indeed, is the most indistinct of them all; and if a regular fort of any importance ever existed there, it must have suffered either partial inundation, or some other serious shock, unquestionably.

(2) It implies also a corresponding survey of the ground intermediate between the Wall and the river. Now the intervening ground along the banks of the Clyde, from Chapel Hill to the Pointhouse at Glasgow, is a low-lying flat with a gradual rise inland, at the present moment, of not more than 25 or 30 feet. But according to Professor Geikie's latest survey, the Clyde must have been about 25 feet higher in the time of the Romans than it now is—and Professor Geikie, we presume, is an authority on such subjects, who may be quoted along with Hugh Miller and Smith of Jordanhill:—therefore the whole of that strath, and the strath on the opposite side, from Renfrew to Paisley, on this assumption, must have been submerged at the same time; and there could be no dwelling-place for human beings—neither local habitation nor a name—within the entire compass of that now fertile and populous region. But two or three Gaelic names survive on the northern verge of it, which not only indicate the presence of the sea there, but fix the very limits of its tide. Dalmuir, for example, which means the Valley of the Sea; and Garscadden, which means the Bay of Pilchards or of foul herring, must, in fact, have carried the waters up their respective streams to within less than a mile of the Roman Wall at Duntocher and Castlehill. It was in such retreats, then, that both salmon and herring (as the name of one of them imports) would take refuge in the spawning season; it was into such retreats also, they would be pursued by the seals; it was on the shore of such inlets the seals themselves would bask, when the Romans saw them; and it is at the two forts respectively at the head of these inlets—Duntocher and Castlehill—that they have been actually represented in Sculpture. Could anything be more conclusive as to the proximity of the tide, and very character of the shore, within a bowshot or two of the Wall in that neighbourhood, where there is now a distance of more than two miles between it and the river? and yet even more conclusive, in connection with this, is the fact that on the southern verge of the strath, right opposite to these, are other Gaelic names equally significant—such as Kennis, the Head of the island; Ferinis, the Hero's island; and Fingal-ton, which speaks for itself—at the same or a similar level with Dalmuir and Garscadden, that is from 100 to 200 feet above the present level of the Clyde, which seems to demonstrate beyond doubt that the whole intervening space of seven miles in breadth, with the exception of such small islands as those named above, was then an arm of the sea to the depth of 50 feet at least, if not more.

(3) Our survey is thus narrowed to a single point—the existence and alleged position of the fort at Chapel Hill, between Old Kilpatrick and Dunglass, on the banks of the river; and here it should be [Pg 103] observed as between the two extremities of the Wall, east and west, that where it touches the Frith of Forth at Carriden the height of its foundation ranges from about 150 to 200 feet above the level of the sea, and where it approaches the Clyde at Duntocher it is nearly the same—which was probably its terminus. There is scarcely a vestige of it now traceable beyond that, and that it was ever carried farther in reality is a matter of acknowledged uncertainty. But scattered fragments of masonry, as we have seen, and the dimmest indications of a fort deep down in the earth have been discovered or imagined at Chapel Hill to the westward, which seems to be about 50 feet above the level of the Clyde—leaving still a very large margin beyond Professor Geikie's estimate; and a great deal of conjecture about what might, or might not have been there, has been indulged in by antiquarians. For the present, however, until proof to the contrary has been shown, let us accept as a fact that some military station had really been established there in connection with the Wall—then, how have its fragments been so widely scattered? how has it been so completely entombed that it can only be guessed at under the soil? and how has the connection between it and the Wall, more than two miles distant, been obliterated? No other fort on the line, that we know of, is now in the same condition; and therefore, we repeat, either the Romans were foolishly contending with the tide, by building too close to its confines, and the tide drove them back and overthrew their works; or the fort itself was originally on a higher level, and the shock of an earthquake, or a landslip from the mountains, or both together, carried the whole mass of masonry and earthwork at this particular point down to their present level, where they would be washed by the tide and silted up in their own ruins. This is a view of the matter, indeed, which no antiquarian, so far as we are aware, has hitherto adopted; but any one who chooses to look with an unprejudiced eye, for a moment, at the enormous gap in the hills immediately behind, reaching down to the shore and including this very region, must be satisfied that the case was so; and recent discoveries—one of a quay-wall or foundation of a bridge at Old Kilpatrick, about 4 feet deep in a field; and another of a causeway, more than 20 feet submerged and silted up under sea-sand, on the same side of the river, near Glasgow, will most probably confirm it.

One other question, however, yet remains, touching this mysterious fort, which we may be allowed to say only "Ossian and the Clyde" can enable us to answer—Why was such a fort ever thought of there at all? It was either to receive provisions and reinforcements from the sea; and if so, then it must have been on the very verge of the frith, and the water must have been sufficiently deep there. Or it was to watch the estuary of the Leven, and to prevent the native Caledonians either landing from the sea, or coming down from the hills to turn the flank of the Wall at Duntocher, and so surprising the Romans in the rear; and this, beyond doubt, was its most important purpose as a military station on the line. But we have elsewhere explained (in the work above alluded to) that there was a regular route for the Caledonians from Dunglass to Campsie, which still bears the name of Fingal; and Fyn-loch, the very first rendezvous on that

line, is on the top of the hill immediately above the fort in question. The Romans, who must have been fully aware of this, made their own provision accordingly. In sight of that fort, therefore, Fingal and his people might embark or disembark on their expeditions through Dumbartonshire at pleasure; but it would require to be at a reasonable distance westward, on the sides of Dumbuck or in the quiet creek at Milton, if they wished to escape the catapults and crossbows of the conquerors of the world. Now the earthquake, which extended up the whole basin of the Clyde, seems to have changed all that. The fort was sunk or shattered, as we suppose, and the frith began to fall; and antiquarians who do not believe in Ossian, or who do not keep such obvious facts in view, have been puzzled ever since, and will be puzzled ever more, attempting to account for it. [Pg 104]

IV. In adducing this evidence—partly antiquarian and partly geological—we have restricted our survey exclusively to the Roman Wall, for it is on this important barrier between the Forth and Clyde that those who object to the geography of Ossian are accustomed to fall back. But the sort of testimony it affords might be easily supplemented by a survey of the Clyde itself, which can be shown, and has been shown, by incontestable measurement on the coast of Ayrshire, to be sinking at the rate of ¾ of an inch annually for the last forty or fifty years at least; and if such subsidence has been going on for fifteen hundred years at the same rate, the level of the frith in the days of the Romans must have been even higher than we now allege. A critic in the *Scotsman*, who, himself, first demanded such a survey, and to whom the survey when reported in the same paper—August 30th, 1875—was troublesome, appeals boldly in an editorial note to the authority of Hugh Miller, and again demands that the survey be transferred from Girvan to Glasgow, because "the height to which the tide rises is a very fluctuating quantity"—in Ayrshire, we presume. As for Hugh Miller, we can find nothing whatever in his pages to the purpose; and if such a distinguished authority is to be relied on in the present controversy, we must insist on his very words being quoted. As for the fluctuation of the tide, if it fluctuates in one place more than another, what is the use of appealing to it at all? and as between the Ayrshire coast, and the Renfrewshire or Lanarkshire coast, on the same side of the frith, unless "the moon and one darn'd thing or another" have special disturbing influence in Ayrshire, what difference can there be in the regularity of flow between Girvan and Glasgow? This learned adversary in the *Scotsman* must surely have been at his wit's end when he took refuge in such an absurdity, and we may safely leave him where he is, to revise his own calculations and recover his composure.

All this might be insisted on anew; but the object of the present argument is simply to show to the readers of the *Celtic Magazine* that the Ossianic controversy must of necessity be removed to another and a higher sphere than ever. There are certain points, indeed, on which philological inquiries may still be of the utmost importance as regards the Gaelic original, and these we cheerfully consign for discussion to those whom they most concern; but these will never decide the question of authenticity in its proper form, or establish Ossian in his proper place as a witness-bearer of the past. The sense of Macpherson's translation, as it stands, must be honestly ascertained; its testimony verified, or otherwise, by direct appeal to the subject matter of its text; and its value in the literature of the world determined, on the same principles, and by the very same process as that of any other public record would be in the history of the world. Such investigation has now become indispensable. In Ossian's name alike, and in that of science, as well as of common sense, we demand it, and will never be satisfied until it has been accorded. [Pg 105]

P. HATELY WADDELL.

We direct the reader's careful attention to the following interesting statistics regarding occupiers of land in Ireland:—The agricultural statistics of Ireland recently completed for 1873 show that in that year there were in that country 590,172 separate holdings, being 5,041 less than in the preceding year. The decrease was in the small holdings. The number of holdings not exceeding one acre fell to 51,977, a decrease of 908, and the number above one acre and not exceeding 15 acres, shows a decrease of 3,777. The holdings above one acre can be compared with the numbers in 1841. Since that date the total number has decreased 22 per cent. The number of farms above one and not exceeding five acres has fallen to 72,088 (in 1873), a decrease of 76.8 per cent.; the number of farms above five and not exceeding 15 acres has diminished to 168,044, a decrease of 33.5 per cent.; the number above 15 and not exceeding 30 acres has risen to 138,163, an increase of 74.1 per cent.; and the number above 30 acres has increased to 159,900, an increase of 228.8 per cent. Of the total number of holdings in 1873, 8.8 per cent. did not exceed 1 acre; 12.2 per cent. were above 1 and not exceeding 5 acres; 28.5 per cent., 5 to 15 acres; 23.4 per cent., 15 to 30 acres; 12.4 per cent., 30 to 50 acres; 9.4 per cent., 50 to 100 acres; 3.7 per cent., 100 to 200 acres; 1.4 per cent., 200 to 500 acres; 0.2 per cent., above 500 acres. More than 60 acres in every 100 of the land comprising farms above 500 acres are bog or waste. As the farms diminish in size, the proportion under bog and waste decreases until it amounts to only 7.1 per cent. on the smallest holdings. The average extent of the holdings not exceeding 1 acre is 1 rood and 32 perches, and of farms above 500 acres 1,371 acres and 19 perches. As in many instances landholders occupy more than one farm, it has been considered desirable to ascertain the number of such persons, and it has been found that in 1873 the 590,172 holdings were in the hands of 539,545 occupiers, or 2,293 fewer than in the preceding year. There were in 1873 50,758 occupiers whose total extent of land did not exceed 1 acre; 65,051 holdings above 1 and not exceeding 5 acres; 150,778 holdings above 5 but not exceeding 15 acres; 124,471 holdings above 15 but not exceeding 30 acres; 65,991 holdings above 30 and

not exceeding 50 acres; 50,565 holdings above 50 but not exceeding 100 acres; 20,764 holdings above 100 but not exceeding 200 acres; 8,799 holdings above 200 but not exceeding 500 acres; and 2,368 holdings above 500 acres. The whole 590,172 holdings extended over 20,327,196 acres, of which 5,270,746 were under crops, 10,413,991 were grazing land, 13,455 fallow, 323,656 woods and plantations, and 4,305,348 bog and waste. The estimated population of Ireland in the middle of the year 1873 was 5,337,261.

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NEW YEAR IN THE OLD STYLE IN THE HIGHLANDS.

OLD Mr Chisholm sat at his parlour fire after a hearty New Year dinner. His wife occupied the cosy arm-chair in the opposite corner; and gathered round them were a bevy of merry grand-children, enjoying New Year as only children can. Their parents were absent at the moment, and the family group was completed by a son and daughter of the old couple.

Mr Chisholm was in a meditative mood, looking into the bright blazing fire. "Well," he observed at last with an air of regret, "The New Year is not observed as it was when we were children, wife. It's dying out, dying out greatly. When these children are as old as we are there will be no trace of a Christmas or a New Year holiday. What did you say you had been doing all day Bill?" he asked, turning to his son.

"Shooting," said Bill, "and deuced cold I was. Catch me trying for the 'silver medal and other prizes' another New Year's Day."

"Shooting may be interesting" said Mr Chisholm, "but as you say it is cold work. We had sometimes a shot at a raffle in my young days, but usually we had more exciting business. Shinty my boy, shinty was our great game," and Mr Chisholm looked as if he greatly pitied the degeneracy of the latter days.

"I have played shinty myself" said Bill, "and I see it is still played in Badenoch and Strathglass, and among wild Highlanders in Edinburgh. But it's too hard on the lungs for me, and besides we never play it here."

"The more's the pity, Bill. There's no game ever I saw I could compare to shinty. Talk about cricket, that's nothing to it. Shinty was suited to a New Year's day; it kept the spirits up and the body warm. I should like to have a turn at it yet—wouldn't I run?" And the old man's heavy frame shook as he chuckled at the idea. "However, there's no use speaking; is tea ready wife?"

"No, and it won't be for half-an-hour yet, perhaps longer" said Mrs Chisholm. "You know we have to wait Bella and John," indicating her married daughter and her husband.

"Then," said the old man, "come here bairns and I shall tell you how I spent one of my early New Year's days."

"Yes, do, grandfather," shouted a happy chorus; "now for a story."

"Not much of a story" replied Mr Chisholm, "but such as it is you shall have it. I was born and bred in the country, you know, my father being a small farmer. The district was half-Lowland, half-Highland, and we mixed the customs of both. At that time shinty was a universal winter game, and greatly we prided ourselves on our smartness at the sport. And it was a sport that required a great deal of smartness, activity, strength, presence of mind, and a quick sure eye. Many a moonlight night did the lads contend for the honour of hailing the ball. On this particular day there was to be a match between two districts —twenty men a-side, and the stake £5 and a [Pg 107] gallon of whisky. Our leader was a carpenter, named Paterson, who was the hero of many a keenly contested shinty match.

"The eagerly expected morning at last arrived. The New Year was taken in by the young folk trying for their fortune in 'sooans.' Bless me bairns, don't you know what 'sooans' is? No; then the thin sooans was made for drinking like good thick gruel; the thick was like porridge, but that we never took on a Christmas or New Year morning. About four o'clock I came down to the kitchen, and there found my mother superintending the boiling of the 'sooans,' and the place filled with the servants, girls, and men, and some of our neighbours. My friend Paterson, who had an eye to one of the servants (a pretty country lassie) had walked four miles to be present. Wishing them all a happy Christmas I sat down to share the 'sooans' with the rest.

"'Well Paterson,' said I, 'how do you feel this morning? Nothing, I hope, to interfere with your running powers.'

"'No thank ye, Willie,' said he, 'I'm as supple as a deer.'

"'Supple enough,' said one of the men with a grin; 'he was here first this morning. Wasn't he, Maggie?'

"'Twould be lang afore ye were first,' retorted Maggie; 'the laziest loon on the whole country side.'

"By this time the 'sooans' were ready, and we were all unceremoniously turned out of doors. In our absence ten bowls were filled. In two of these a ring was placed, signifying, of course, speedy marriage; a shilling put into two others represented the old bachelor or old maid; and a half-crown in another represented riches. Called in, we had each to choose a dish, beginning at the youngest. Great was the merriment as we drained our dishes, but at the last mouthful or two we paused, as if afraid to peer into dark futurity.

"'Here goes,' exclaimed Paterson first of all, and he emptied his dish. At the bottom lay a shilling, which he exhibited amidst a general shout of laughter.

"'What have *you* got Maggie,' was the next exclamation. With a titter Maggie produced a ring.

"'And here's the other ring' cried Jock, the 'laziest loon in the country side.' 'Maggie, you're my lass for this year anyway.'

"Maggie tossed her head in superb disdain.

"'I'll try my luck now,' said I, and drained my dish. My luck was to get the second shilling. So you see wife, though I got you I was intended to be a bachelor. The half-crown, I think, fell to a man who could never keep a sixpence in his purse.

"After breakfast we started for the place of meeting. Our men joined us one by one, and many more came to see the game. As we passed the cottages the girls called to us to see that we supported the honour of the place, and returned victorious, to which we replied 'ay, that we will,' and flourished our clubs with vigour. Before we reached the appointed ground the procession had greatly increased in numbers, and a large crowd at the spot welcomed us with tossing up of [Pg 108] bonnets and rounds of cheering. Soon afterwards our opponents arrived, headed by a piper, and their leader Jack Macdonald. Their appearance also excited hearty cheering, and preliminaries were soon arranged.

"The sides were very equally matched. Macdonald was an active young ploughman, who came neatly dressed in a velveteen jacket and corduroy trousers, the latter adorned with rows of buttons. Paterson, of course, was our mainstay; and besides him, we had an innkeeper, as stout and round as one of his own barrels, who, singular to say, was a capital shinty player. Our opponents had the assistance of an enthusiastic schoolmaster, who, even in those days, encouraged sports among his pupils, in spite of the remonstrances of some of the wiseacres. Our clubs were carefully selected. Some preferred a sharp square crook, some a round one, just as they happened to excel in hitting or 'birling'—that is, in getting the ball within the bend, and running it along upon the ground. The ball, composed of cork and worsted, was at once strong and elastic.

"The hails, four hundred yards apart, were duly measured out and marked by upright poles. Then the players ranged themselves in the centre of the field, Macdonald and Paterson hand to hand; and at the understood sign the ball was thrown down and the strife commenced. I don't know whether the rules were the same in all places, but with us no kicking or throwing of the ball was allowed. We could stop it by any means we pleased, but we could strike it forward only with our clubs. The players were ranged in opposing ranks; and it was against all rule for a player, even in the heat of contest, to turn round to his opponents' side, though he might, by so doing, obtain a more convenient stroke. Should such a thing happen, the roar of "Clipsides ye" from a dozen throats, and the thwack of two or three clubs on his legs would soon apprise the unlucky individual of his fault.

"As long as the ball was in the midst of the players there was great scrambling and confusion. The lads pushed and shouted; club stuck fast in club; and the ball was tossed from side to side without any advantage to either party. Paterson watched his opportunity, and cleverly picking the ball from the other clubs, he gave it a hasty stroke which brought it close to me, eagerly waiting for it outside the thick of battle. In a moment I had caught it, and sped along the field, 'birling' rather than hitting, followed by the whole troop, cheered by my friends and stormed at by my opponents. Macdonald, rushing fast and furious, first came up and seized my club with his as I was about to administer a stroke. For a second or two we were both helpless; Macdonald first succeeded in extricating his weapon, and struck the ball backwards two or three yards. The other players were almost upon us, when I struck up Macdonald's club, caught the ball again and shot a-head. Macdonald overtook me with a few bounds, for he was now thoroughly roused and heated; but stretching too far to hit the ball he fell on his knee. The schoolmaster, however, was now upon me, and the ball was hurled back by him among the troop of players. Macdonald had sprung to his feet almost in an instant, and darted back to the contest.

"Again the scene of confusion recommenced. Backwards and forwards, backwards and forwards, [Pg 109] swayed the excited crowd, every face flushed, and every muscle strained to the utmost. Shins and arms received some awkward blows in the strife, but no one cared as long as the injuries were unimportant. Macdonald at last succeeded in pulling out the ball, and getting it for a moment into a clear space, he delivered a tremendous blow, which drove it far on the road to hail. There was a race who should reach it first. Paterson succeeded, and drove the ball far down the field, but out of the direct way and into a whin bush. 'Hands,' shouted his nearest opponent; and at this call the stout innkeeper, who was nearest the bush, caught up the ball and brought it into the open field.

"'High or low' said the innkeeper, holding his club in his right hand and the ball in his left.

"'High,' said his opponent.

"The ball was immediately thrown into the air and both tried to strike it as it fell. The innkeeper was successful, but the blow was necessarily a feeble one, and carried the ball but a few yards.

"The contest continued during the greater part of the day, neither side being able to claim a decided advantage. During a momentary pause Paterson flung off his boots, sharp frost as it was, and was followed by Macdonald, the innkeeper, and myself. The innkeeper freely regaled himself from his pocket-flask, and actually became more eager and active. Late in the afternoon he got a-head with the ball, and skipped forward, sometimes 'birling' and sometimes hitting it, until he was within twenty yards of hail. Another blow would have finished the match, when Macdonald caught the ball and ran back with it, most wonderfully eluding all the clubs, now wielded by arms for the most part greatly fatigued. Paterson, thrown off his guard by the suddenness of the movement, was left behind. The innkeeper pursued Macdonald closely—so closely, indeed, that his bulky body obstructed all movements but his own. Macdonald was in high spirits, when, running against an opponent in front, he turned round for a moment to our side to secure a better stroke. The innkeeper, foaming with rage and disappointment, roared out 'Clipsides ye,' and administered a blow to Macdonald's leg that caused him to halt for an instant. That halt was fatal. I darted past and hoisted the ball to Paterson, who seized it and carried it easily through the now scattered ranks of our opponents. Once out into the open field it was a direct chase. Paterson had better wind than any man on the field, and having got so far ahead he made the most of his advantage. Macdonald pursued him hotly. Twice he came up with Paterson, twice he struck at the ball, and both times struck the ground just as the object of his pursuit was carried forward by our leader's weapon. After that all was over. Paterson took the ball to within twenty yards of hail, and then with a well-directed blow sent it between the winning posts. A loud shout rent the air. In the excitement of the moment I attempted leapfrog over the stout innkeeper, and both came to the ground.

"After this the whisky was broached, and mutual healths followed. The game had been so well contested that there was no ill-feeling; and we promised to give our opponents an opportunity of [Pg 110] revenge another day. Late at night we returned to my father's house, where a good supper was spread for us in the barn. A hearty dance followed, and so New Year's Day, old style, came to a close. Don't you think it was a jovial day?"

"Not a doubt about it" said Bill, "only the sport was rather rough. Do you really mean to say that you threw off your boots for the play?"

"That we did my boy in the heat of the match, and it was not so unusual as you may suppose. Highlanders were tough lads in those days, and they didn't fear a blow or a bruise."

"Did many accidents happen?" asked Bill. "When clubs were swinging about freely I should think heads were in danger."

"Serious accidents were rare" replied Mr Chisholm. "Ankles and legs and hands did get some smart knocks, but heads generally escaped. In the thick of the strife there was no use swinging clubs in the air. We could only push and thrust, and pull the ball out with the crook. In a race we struck as we ran, giving short rapid strokes; and when a player delivered a sweeping blow, he had generally space for the swing of his club. I remember a boy getting his face laid open by an awkward fellow; but such an occurrence was rare among experienced players. We could handle our clubs as you handle your guns—scientifically. There are not usually many casualties at a shooting match—eh Bill?"

"But, grandfather, what came of Paterson?" asked little Mary. "Did he marry Maggie?"

"Oh, that's the subject of interest to you, lassie. No, he didn't. Women are always contrary. Maggie married the 'lazy loon' Jock; he made the most of his good fortune in getting the ring, and the marriage was long cited as a proof of the unfailing certainty of the oracle."

"Grandfather," cried Henry, "have you made us the totum? Didn't you used to play the totum on New Year's Day?"

"That we did boy" said Mr Chisholm. "The youngsters thought it a capital game, and the elders did not refuse to join in it. Yes, Harry, I made you the totum, and by-and-bye we shall have a game."

"Let us have it now" cried the children springing up in eager excitement. "Let us have it now; we have all brought our pins."

Mr Chisholm cheerfully acquiesced. The group gathered round a little table, each with a stock of pins displayed, to be staked on the game now about to be commenced. Look at the totum as Harry takes it up and balances it between the thumb and second finger of the right hand. It is only a piece of wood about half an inch long, cut away to a sharp point below, and having a slender spike thrust in at the top to serve as a handle. It is four square, and a letter is carved on each side—namely, "T," "D," "N," and "A." Each player stakes a single pin, and each in rotation gets his chance of whirling the totum. If, after whirling, the totum falls with the letter "A" uppermost, all the stakes become the prize of the player; if "T" is the uppermost letter he only takes one; if "N" appears he gets nothing at all; while "D" obliges him to contribute a pin from his [Pg 111] private stock to the heap in the centre. Every whirl comes to be watched with as much eagerness

as if a fortune depended on the result.

The nature of the game having been made sufficiently plain, Mr Chisholm leads off with a whirl which sends the totum spinning round so fast as to be almost invisible; but gradually relaxing its speed it falls at last, exposing upon its upper surface the letter "N," carved, if not with elegance, at least with sufficient plainness to show that it is a veritable "N" and no other letter of the alphabet.

"Nickle nothing," shout the children, as they clap their hands with delight.

Then Harry takes his turn. He holds the totum very carefully between his finger and thumb, poising it with intense gravity; then looks at the letter next him, twirls the toy backward and forward, and finally propels it by a sudden jerk from his fingers. It whirls like a top for a few seconds, watched by eager faces, and ultimately falls with the letter "D" uppermost.

"D put down" bursts from the merry group; and the boy looks very disappointed as he withdraws a pin from his private stock and places it among the general deposit. Grandfather enters into the fun with as much enthusiasm as the children, and the spirit of gambling has taken possession of the New Year party.

The smallest girl—four years old—next takes the totum. She places it between the thumb and forefinger, screws her mouth to make an effort, and placing the point on the table gives it a whirl. It goes round three or four times with a convulsive staggering motion, and at last falls, "A" uppermost, amidst a general shout of laughter and applause.

"A, take them all—Lizzy has got the pins"—and the surprised and happy child, proud of her success, gathers the heap to her own stock, while the others each replace a stake.

So the lively little game proceeds amidst varying success. Possessions grow and diminish as the totum makes its rounds; and before the game ends Mr Chisholm is reduced to his last pin. He holds it up with rueful countenance, confessing himself a ruined man, while the children clutch their treasures, and boast of their success.

"Grandfather is beaten—is beaten at the totum" cried Mary as her father and mother at length arrived. "He showed us how to play, and look at the pins we have gained."

"May you always be as happy with your gains," said the old man resuming his paternal attitude. "Now you know how we spent our Old New Years. Sooans and shinty, and the totum—they were all simple maybe, but there was pleasure in them all. Many a heart was lost at the 'sooans'; many a hand made strong at shinty; and many a little head got its first notion of worldly competition from the totum. Take your seats, boys and girls, for here's the tea!"

KNOCKFIN.

CUMHA—MHIC-AN-TOISICH.

——o——

Why shrouded in gloom is Clan Chattan?
Clan Chattan! Clan Chattan!
Tears circle the crest of Clan Chattan!
Clan Chattan! Clan Chattan!
Ochone! our light is reft,
Burning too brief,
Ochone! the darkness left,
Fills us with grief.
Streamlets are singing woe,
Torrents in sorrow flow,
Flow'rets on ev'ry leaf,
Bear the red dew of grief.
Ochone! the Beam of Clan Chattan is low.—

Deep-bosomed the woe of Clan Chattan!
Clan Chattan! Clan Chattan!
Far rings the lament of Clan Chattan!
Clan Chattan! Clan Chattan!
Ochone! our joy-lit star,
Sunk in the night.
Ochone! his soul afar,
Swiftly took flight:
Hero-sires welcomed him,
Pealing their deathless hymn,
Loud on their happy shore,

Angels the pæan bore:
Ochone! the Pride of Clan Chattan sleeps on.—

Still brightly he smiles on Clan Chattan!
Clan Chattan! Clan Chattan!
His spirit is guarding Clan Chattan!
Clan Chattan! Clan Chattan!
Ochone! his mem'ry lives,
Ever in bloom.
Ochone! its beauty gives
Light to his tomb:
Matrons and maidens mourn,
Life in its glory shorn,
Stalwart sons, fathers grey,
Dash the sad tear away.
Ochone! the *Love*[A] *of Clan Chattan ne'er dies*.

WM. ALLAN.

SUNDERLAND.

FOOTNOTES:

[A] "Love" here means the Chief.

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THE GAME LAWS.

[The conductors of the *Celtic Magazine* in their prospectus, and in their first number, state that "they will at all times be ready to receive contributions from both sides on any question connected with the Highlands, and of interest to Highlanders." In whatever light the subject of the following remarks may be viewed, it will readily be admitted that it has an interest for Highlanders sufficient to entitle it to temperate discussion in these pages]:—

THE Game Laws in Scotland, as our readers are aware, consist chiefly of various statutes designed to secure to landed proprietors what the common law, while it leaves them without the means of effectually securing, declares them entitled to, the exclusive possession and use of their land. The common law maxim, that an owner is entitled to the sole enjoyment of his own ground, the legislature has practically given effect to from time to time by passing various enactments pointing to that end. These somewhat numerous statutes are almost identical in effect in the three kingdoms, to which some of them extend; nor does the common law throughout materially vary. It is not our intention, however, to emulate Sir Roger de Coverley, whose explanations of the Game Acts used to gain great applause at quarter sessions, by entering upon a minute analysis of them here. We mean to confine ourselves simply to a critical examination of the various attacks to which they have been subjected, and an endeavour to make a brief and impartial survey of their effect on the prosperity of the Highlands.

In entering upon the consideration of adverse criticisms, we find that they are easily resolved into two classes:—First, there are those as to what opponents term the unnecessary severity and injurious influence of the Game Laws upon poachers; and secondly, the injury indirectly effected by them upon tenant-farmers, agricultural and pastoral.

Sympathy for the poacher is frequently proclaimed by anti-game law agitators. They will tell you that the disposition to pursue game is inherent in human nature; that the indulgence of this irrepressible propensity ought to be regarded with a lenient eye: that game cannot be identified as property, and that the man who takes it should not be considered or treated as a thief; dilating the while on the sad misfortunes that an occasional lapse into the fields in search of a hare or a rabbit may bring upon an agricultural labourer and his family, ultimately it may be involving them in ruin. These arguments, however, though at first sight appearing to have some foundation in reason, do not satisfactorily stand the test of serious scrutiny. They are such as could be brought to bear for what they are worth against the operation of almost all repressive laws in the kingdom. Smuggling, for instance, is not generally looked upon as a breach of the moral law, nor does it present itself to common eyes in an odious light; yet it is a crime punishable by penal laws for the sake of increasing revenue. The man who takes his own agricultural produce and converts

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it into a wholesome and refreshing beverage for his own domestic use is liable to a very much heavier penalty than he who steps on to his neighbour's property and puts out his hands to take what he has neither laboured for nor purchased. In the one case we can imagine an honest industrious labourer, actuated only by a desire for the comfort of himself and his family, manufacturing his own goods into nourishing and sustaining ale, heavily punished for his untaxed enjoyment of the bounties of Providence; whereas, in the other case, the poacher, as a rule, is a person with a turn for idleness, an aversion to all honest and steady labour, and a taste for luxurious indulgences above his means, who persists in illegally invading another's property in the pursuit and seizure of its produce.

This character is specially applicable to the poaching class in the Highlands. Any one familiar with prosecutions in poaching cases there must see that the offenders brought up for trial form a limited list of mean-spirited cringing creatures, upon whom any sort of sympathy would be sadly thrown away, whose faces are well known to the procurator-fiscal as they appear in rather regular succession in the dock. It may be said that almost nine poaching prosecutions out of ten are instituted against old and habitual offenders, who calculate, like blockade runners, that a few successful raids will enable them cheerfully to pay the fines inflicted on the occasions of their capture. As deer-stalking and grouse shooting, to be effective, require day-light, and pheasant breeding is the exception not the rule in the north, cases of night poaching, the worst and most severely punishable, are of unfrequent occurrence, while fines of two pounds, the highest that can be inflicted for day poaching, in the most aggravated cases, is not heavy enough even when coupled with costs to make habitual and systematic poaching an altogether unprofitable occupation. We have no difficulty therefore in saying that the Game Laws do not press with undue severity upon the labouring classes in the Highlands, by whom, on the whole, poaching is now an offence rarely committed; and we believe that in saying so we express the opinion of those classes themselves. Any complaints that have been made have not proceeded from them but from third parties who have endeavoured to range themselves as pretended friends to compass their own ends. There is just one direction in which we might hint that improvement is possible. We would wish to see a sliding scale of fines legalised, by which lighter penalties would be exigible for first offences and repeated transgressions less leniently punishable than at present.

We have now to consider that more vexed and intricate portion of our subject, the operation of the Game Laws upon the position of the tenant-farmer. This we have stated to be indirect, because, in reality, many of the results complained of might be continued in existence independently of the operations of these laws. The points at issue between landlord and tenant, over which such torrents of discussion have been poured, are really questions of contract been individuals, which could and would arise, were the Game Laws abolished. But as complaints are coupled with a demand for the abolition of these laws as a panacea, we cannot avoid briefly [Pg 115] examining their relation to the interests of agriculture. Whether owing to bucolic trust in the friendly intentions of a Conservative Government, or to hopelessness of there being any advantages derivable therefrom, it is worthy of observation that the recent agitation on this question, as well as on the kindred subjects of unexhausted improvements and hypothec denominated by Mr Hope in his observations in "Recess Studies," "Hindrances to Agriculture," have now entered upon a quiescent phase. A few years ago an agricultural dinner was no sooner eaten by the assembled agriculturists than the Game Laws were tabled with the toddy, and both hotly, and in some cases ably discussed. But a change for the better is now noticeable in the atmosphere of Cattle Club Meetings and Wool Fair dinners whereat the voices of game preservers may even be heard amid applause. Monotony was the rock on which the agitation was in danger of being shipwrecked, and as the results did not appear to be commensurate to the labour, as the stone seemed to be rolled up the hill in vain, so far as concerned the passing of any favourable parliamentary measure, swords have again been turned into more useful ploughshares, and spears into less ornamental pruning hooks. The opportunity is therefore not an unfavourable one for a calm survey of the situation.

It is a well-known principle in jurisprudence that a contract between two parties capable of contracting in respect to a subject matter known to both, if adhered to by either, is inviolably binding; and with the free action of this principle as between parties, except in a matter of life and death, the legislature always has had, and we confidently believe, always will have a delicacy in interfering. If there is no vital principle, or specialty in a contract between landlord and tenant in regard to an heritable subject, such as an arable farm, that necessarily takes it out of the list of ordinary contracts, no Government would seriously entertain or assist the passing of a measure for imposing fetters upon one of the parties to that contract, exceptional legislation to obtain an advantage for the lessee to the detriment of the lessor. Are there then such specialties? Tenant-farmers allege (1) that land is not an ordinary subject of contract owing to the extent being limited, and is a possession the owners of which stand in the relation merely of national trustees, bound to administer in the way most beneficial to the people; (2), that tenants are not capable of contracting on equal terms with their landlords, and that the weaker party should receive legislative protection in the shape of an inalienable right to ground game; and (3), that in being compelled to sign game preservation clauses, the subject matter of that part of their agreement is one the full extent of which must, from its nature, be unknown to them. To this reply is made—(1), That the possession of land is no more a monopoly than the possession of cattle or any other commodity, that is continually in the market and sold to the highest bidder; that the fact of the supply being limited, and necessarily in the hands of the few, in comparison with the many who wish to use it, is no reason why exceptional restrictions should be placed on its being let out for hire, but rather the reverse; as well might the possessors of money, who are few in comparison

with those who wish to borrow it, be statutorily bound to lend it out at less than it would otherwise bring; and that those who invest money in land, having no contract with the State, cannot be interfered with by the State in the management of it in the way they believe most advantageous to themselves; (2), that farmers as a rule, and particularly those who make the greatest noise about the Game Laws, are quite capable of attending to their own interests in any contract with proprietors as to leasing of land; that if they are glad to obtain it on the proprietors' terms, that is occasioned by the legitimate operation of the laws of supply and demand, which equally affect all other contracts; and that to give them an inalienable right to ground game, which they would immediately convert into money value by sub-letting, would simply amount to confiscation of part of the enjoyment of property, and in effect amount to depriving proprietors of a considerable part of the equivalent for which they gave their money; and (3), that when a tenant makes an acceptable offer for a farm, he does so after the fullest investigation as to its capabilities and disadvantages, and with a good knowledge of the amount of game on the ground, and the damage likely to be occasioned thereby; and, as thus, the amount of rent offered is fixed by him after all these points have received due consideration at his hands, he is precluded from afterwards crying out against the one-sidedness of his contract. It will thus be seen that there is just as much to be said on the one side as the other; and clamour notwithstanding, we believe, the day is still distant when the legislature will step in to interfere with free contract between landlord and tenant, by laying down conditions which even both parties with their eyes open, and of mutual consent, will not be allowed to alter. In other words, in an age when the cry is for freedom from all special advantages to owners of land, such as hypothec and entail, so as to place it on an open footing with all other subjects, it would be strange, indeed, were exceptional legislation required for the lessees of land to give them the special advantages which the spirit of the age denied to their landlords. Are we to have landlord right levelled down while tenant right is to be levelled up? We have yet to see it. It cannot, however, in fairness be denied that there are certain circumstances in which the tenants' third complaint above-mentioned is just and reasonable. While a tenant is strictly tied down under the conditions of his lease to a certain rotation of cropping, and various other regulations regarding his use of the land, the proprietor is left practically unfettered as to the extent of increase of game that he may allow to take place. Immunity in such an event is secured to the latter, either by a clause to that effect in the lease or by the prudent reluctance of the tenant to pursue his landlord through court after court in the knowledge that even the extra-judicial expense of such procedure would quickly amount to more than the ultimate damages awarded, if awarded at all, and that the feelings engendered by the contest would stand in the way of a renewal at the expiry of the lease. There is here, undoubtedly, a manifest hardship to the tenant, for which the legislature would be justified in passing a remedial measure. It would quite consist with the acknowledged and equitable principles of jurisprudence that cheap and speedy redress for the tenant against such uncontemplated and undue increase of game should be provided by legislative enactment. All [Pg 116] [Pg 117] wrongs have their remedies; but the remedy in such a case is not the giving an inalienable right to ground game to the tenant, as that would amount to a wronging of the landlord, who might wish to reserve such right at any cost of compensation to the tenant for damage really inflicted. What is desirable is, that such damage should be assessable, and the value thereof recoverable with the least possible trouble and expense to the tenant. We think that this could be most effectually secured by the statutory appointment in each county of a competent, impartial, and reliable assessor whose duty it would be to inspect and record the amount of game existing on every farm in that county at the entry of the tenant, and who would be bound at any future season on the application, either of the proprietor or of the tenant, to re-inspect that farm and report as to whether there was any appreciable increase in the stock of game thereon, and if so to issue an award and valuation of the amount of damage thereby occasioned, the amount of which the tenant would be legally entitled to deduct at payment of the next half-year's rent. The expense of this inspection, according to a fixed scale of charge, should be payable by the landlord where damages were found exigible; but, otherwise, where the tenant's claim was decided to be unfounded, the whole expense would, in equity, be payable by him to the assessor. Of course, there are objections that can be raised to the adoption of this, as of any other proposed compromise; but on a careful consideration they will not be found insuperable. Enthusiasts there are and will remain who will demand that an inalienable right to ground game be gratuitously conferred upon them. But by the great majority of agriculturalists who think temperately it is agreed that the only possible settlement of the ground game question is one of compromise. We have been credibly informed that in the counties of Forfar and Caithness, farmers, to whom the right to ground game had been made over, after short experience of the unexpected trouble and expense connected with the due keeping down of hares and rabbits, had entreated their landlords to relieve them of the burden, which they had at first unreflectingly and gladly assumed.

The damage done by game on agricultural farms in the Highlands is altogether inconsiderable in affecting the agricultural prosperity of the country. Our opinion is that if the truth were fairly told farmers would confess that where the shoe pinches is in the pressure of high rents caused by their own mutual competitions for farms, rather than the trifling damage done by game. The bringing forward of the game question has been merely the trotting out of a stalking horse. There were no complaints of game or game laws in the good old times when the rents were low. Our grandfathers and great-grandfathers were rejoiced to furnish the laird with a good day's sport, in the fruits of which they generally participated. Game must have done as much harm then as now, but farmers in those days did not feel pushed to meet the rent day. They could live on a smaller income; they did not seek or require the same luxuries, and had less outlay in labour. Of course, a great deal has happened since then, but it cannot be said that for this the lairds are entirely to

blame. Then to rent a farm was synonymous with making money; now it as often means losing it. [Pg 118] With higher rents, the result of a keener demand, a farmer's profits have been sadly diminished, and he too often exerts his ingenuity in discovering grounds of deduction from a rent he feels to be burdensome. On the sound enough principle of abolishing special privileges of all kinds he can fairly advocate the abolition of hypothec, but when in the same breath he turns his back upon that principle by calling for the creation of the extraordinary privilege of an inalienable right to ground game, he asks too much and has every probability of getting too little.

There is no necessity for saying anything in reply to the attacks of a few pastoral tenants or large sheep farmers. It is now matter of history that by repeated and uncontradicted assertion a comparatively small and uninfluential sheep-farmer clique had thoroughly convinced themselves, and almost persuaded a portion of the public, that deer forests were responsible for all the misery and poverty in the Highlands, for all the cruel evictions which were carried out to make room, not for deer, but for those very farmers who made such a noise. Having succeeded in infecting some impressionable people, including not a few writers in the press who knew as little of a deer forest and its surroundings as they did of the great Sahara, there was at one time some danger of the outcry becoming general; but the report of the Parliamentary Commission so completely exposed the nakedness of the land, so thoroughly demonstrated the absence of anything like reasonable foundation for complaint, as to convince even the most extreme politician of the utter absurdity of the position assumed. The cry never did find an echo in the heart of the Highlander. He knew too well that the same justice had been meted out to him and his by the predecessors of those very farmers, as they themselves were then receiving at the hands of the wealthy Sassenach. He knew that the evil of depopulation had been accomplished in the Highlands, not by the introduction of deer, but of sheep on a large scale by Lowland farmers before ever deer forests had come to be considered a source of revenue. It was, therefore, somewhat amusing to the Highland people to witness the descendants of these Lowland *novi homines* smitten upon the thigh and roaring lustily. The only bribe they promised allies was the offer of mutton a twentieth of a penny per pound cheaper, and Highlanders refused to be bought over at that price, especially as its payment was more than doubtful. The deer forest agitation has died a natural death. Peace to its ashes.

We have hitherto confined ourselves to discussing the so-called disadvantages of the Game Laws: we have yet to consider the facts on the other side of the question, by which those disadvantages are altogether overbalanced. As the space allotted to us in this Magazine, however, has its limits, we will meanwhile content ourselves with enumerating *seriatim* a few of the manifold benefits accruing to the Highlands from Game Laws and game. These are—(1), The great increase of rental from land, which is manifestly beneficial, not only to the proprietors, but to all classes in the country in which they spend their incomes; (2), The residence in the Highlands for so many months yearly of wealthy sportsmen, who, if game were unpreserved and consequently non-existent, would have no inducement so to reside; (3), The remunerative employment afforded by [Pg 119] those sportsmen to the labouring classes; (4), The profits made by shopkeepers and others in the various Highland towns, by supplying the requirements of such sportsmen; (5), The opening up of the country by railways, which could not have been remuneratively effected for years yet to come in the Highlands without the traffic afforded by the conveyance of sportsmen and their belongings; (6), The advancement of civilization in the north, by the opening up of roads and the building of handsome Lodges in remote localities, and the circulation of money involved in the execution of these improvements.

This enumeration might be extended to various minor details, but we think we have said enough to satisfy every candid and impartial reader that a very serious blow would be inflicted upon the prosperity of the Highlands by the abolition of the Game Laws—laws which are by no means the antiquated and useless remains of feudalism so strongly denounced by Radicalism run mad. The truth of this need not be altogether left to abstract speculation. We have a crucial instance in the case of the American Republic, where the absence of such laws was felt to be so prejudicial to the general welfare that game regulations were passed much more stringent than in this country, and where, at present, as Mr J.D. Dougall in his admirable treatise on "Shooting" informs us, "there exist over one hundred powerful associations for the due prosecution of Game law delinquents, and these associations are rapidly increasing, and appear to be highly popular." "Here," he adds, "we have one struggling Anti-Game Law League: in the States there are over one hundred flourishing Pro-Game Law Leagues. The cry of a party here is:—Utterly exterminate all game as vermin; leave nothing to shoot at. The increasing general cry across the Atlantic is:—Preserve our game and our fish for our genuine field sports." So long as our Game Laws continue to increase the prosperity of the country without infringing upon the liberty of the people, they stand in little need of defence; are not much endangered by attack.

EVAN MACKENZIE.

A REMARKABLE FEUDAL CUSTOM.

IT is happy for the present age that the ancient manners and customs, which were practised in

the Highlands and Islands under the Feudal system, have long since fallen into oblivion. It would fill volumes to relate the numerous practices which were then resorted to by the feudal lords, many of which were cruel in themselves, and entailed great hardships on their submissive vassals who were bound to obey. As the chiefs had full power over the life and death of their retainers, such of them as betrayed any disobedience or opposition to the stern demands of their superiors, rendered themselves liable to the severest punishment, and frequently to nothing less than the penalty of death. The national laws of Kings and Queens had then but little influence in checking or counteracting the peremptory enactments of Feudalism.

The following striking instance of the remarkable practices alluded to will furnish a specimen to the readers of the *Celtic Magazine*, of what took place in Skye, not much more than a century and a half ago. [Pg 120]

No sooner did the death of a tenant take place than the event was announced to the laird of the soil. The Land-Stewart, or ground-officer, incurred the displeasure of his master unless that announcement were made no later than three days after it had occurred. Immediately after the deceased farmer had been consigned to the grave, the disconsolate widow, if he had left one, was waited upon by a messenger from the landlord, to deliver up to him the best horse on the farm, such being reckoned then the legal property of the owner of the soil. This rule was as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. On large and extensive farms the demand was submitted to without much complaint, by the widow, children, or heirs of the deceased, but it pressed hard upon the occupiers of small tenements of land, and particularly so on helpless widows. But whoever refused, or attempted to evade this heartless enactment, forfeited every right to their farms in future, and became liable to have all their goods and chattels confiscated to the laird. It frequently happened that a poor farmer had but one horse, yet even this circumstance did not mitigate the cruelty of the practice; for the solitary animal was taken away, and frequently so to the great distress of the younger branches of the orphan family, who mourned bitterly, and often shed tears for the loss of their favourite animal.

A circumstance took place in the parish of Strath, which was, it is said, the means of abolishing this abominable rule. About the beginning of the seventeenth century a farmer, of the name of Mackinnon, was gathered to his fathers in the parish, and after his interment the laird's messenger visited the afflicted widow, and, as usual, demanded the best horse on her little farm. Her husband having been a kinsman of the laird, and expecting, in her distress, to receive some sympathy from her chief, and at all events, some relaxation of that rule which had been all along so resistlessly put in force, she showed much reluctance to part with the animal. Seeing this, the officer became more and more determined to have it. The widow, in the same manner, became more and more determined in her refusal, and appealed to him in vain to submit the case to the decision of her chief. The officer was inexorable, and becoming incensed at the woman's pertinacity he turned from words to blows, and inflicted some severe wounds on the helpless female to the effusion of blood. She, however, retaliated, and through desperation, assuming more courage, addressed her little son, a boy of four, that stood weeping by her side, and said to him in her own emphatic vernacular:—

"Cha mhac mar an t-athair thu, a' Lachlainn Oig,
Mar diol thu le fuil droch caithreamh do mhàthar;
'S mar smàil thu gu bàs, le diòghaltas air chòir,
Am borb-fhear fiadhaich so, am mòrtair gu'n nàr!"

Literally translated:—

"Thou art not a son like the father, my young Lachlan,
Unless thou requite with blood the ill-treatment of thy mother;
And unless thou dash to death, with due revenge,
This fierce and savage fellow—this bare-faced murderer!"

The mother's charge to her boy cannot be said to be tempered with much Christian feeling or principle, yet it was according to the generally cherished practices of the system under which she lived. Then it was that might was right, and revenge bravery. But to return to the subject—the widow's cries and tears, excitement and eloquence, were all in vain. The officer made off with the horse and delivered it to his chief. [Pg 121]

Matters went on in this way, in various quarters, for a considerable time, until at length, and about twenty years thereafter, the same officer appeared on the same errand at a neighbouring widow's door, and deprived her as usual of her best horse. The circumstance was brought under the notice of Lachlan Og, and having been, no doubt, frequently reminded of the cruelty inflicted by that official on his mother, was determined to embrace the present befitting occasion for displaying his dire revenge. It may be stated that young Lachlan was noted in the district for his great agility and muscular strength. He made no delay in pursuing the officer, and having come up to him at the distance of some miles, he seized him by the neck and sternly demanded the widow's horse, reminding him, at the same time, of the treatment inflicted by him on his mother twenty years before. The officer stood petrified with fear, seeing fierceness and revenge depicted so very unmistakably in young Mackinnon's face. Yet still he grasped the animal by the halter, and would not permit his youthful assailant to intermeddle with it. The strife commenced, and that in right earnest, but in a few moments the officer fell lifeless on the ground. Mackinnon, seizing his dirk, dissevered the head from the body, and washed it in a fountain by the wayside,

which is still pointed out to the traveller as "*Tobar a' chinn*," or "The Well of the Head." He then, at once, mounted the horse, and galloped off to the residence of his chief, carrying the bloody head in his left hand on the point of his dirk. His appearance at the main entrance, with the ghastly trophy still bleeding in his hand, greatly alarmed the menials of the mansion. Without dismounting he inquired if Mackinnon was at home, and being told that he was, he said, "Go and tell my Chief that I have arrived to present him with the head of his officer 'Donnuchadh Mor,' in case that he might wish to embalm it and hang it up in his baronial hall as a trophy of heartlessness and cruelty." The message was instantly delivered to the laird, who could not believe that such a diabolical deed could be perpetrated by any of his clan, but still he came out to see. On his appearance in the court, Lachlan Og dismounted, did obeisance to his chief, and prominently exhibited the dripping head, by lifting it up on his dirk. "What is this, Lachlan, what murder is this?" asked the excited chief. Lachlan explained the whole in full detail, and related the circumstances of the present transaction, as well as of the inhuman treatment which his mother had received when he was a child. The chieftain pondered, paused, and declared that these cruelties had been practised unknown to him. He granted a free pardon to Lachlan Og, appointed him his officer in room of Donnuchadh Mor, and issued an edict over all his estate that thereafter neither widow nor orphan, heir, nor kindred, would ever be deprived by him of their horse, or of any other part of their property.

SGIATHANACH.

[Pg 122]

GENERAL SIR ALAN CAMERON, K.C.B.,

COLONEL 79TH CAMERON HIGHLANDERS.

[CONTINUED].

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CHAPTER IV.

These acts of loyalty by the Highlanders in recognition of their Stewart Princes were not long concluded when the same virtue was called into action to defeat the intentions of *other rebels* (as they were rudely termed) from disputing the authority of the British Sovereign, or dismembering any portion of his territory in the American colonies. An abridged outline of what came to be the War of Independence may not be out of place or uninteresting even at this distant date.

North America had been chiefly colonised by the British people—the settlements of the Dutch and French were few and unimportant. The colonists were in the enjoyment of liberal institutions, and the country being fertile, the population rapidly increased; while, at the same time, immigrants from Europe continued to arrive annually on its shores. The mother country being oppressed with debt, it was proposed to make her Transatlantic subjects contribute a portion towards her relief. This resulted in the imposition of a stamp duty on various articles. The Americans would neither afford assistance, nor would they sanction the taxation proposed to be placed on tea, &c.; and at a meeting of Congress resolutions of separation were adopted, followed by the Act of Declaration of Independence. George III. and his Parliament determined on chastising the recusants, and hence the commencement of the American Civil War. Jealousy of Great Britain, and a desire to humble her, induced France to join the Americans, as also did Spain. Against the combined efforts of these allies, however, the British sustained unsullied their ancient renown. The war continued with alternate successes, and disappointments to the contending parties for about six years, at the end of which honourable peace was concluded between them, and America was henceforth declared an Independent State; and in acknowledgment of the able services rendered to her, the colonists elected General Washington as the first president of the new Republic.

During the progress of the war the Americans were guilty of many acts of cruelty to whomsoever fell into their hands, some of which fell to the share of Alan Cameron. The Royal Highland Regiment, to which he was attached, was stationed in Quebec when Canada was threatened with invasion by General Arnold at the head of 3000 men. The colonel of Alan's regiment (Maclean) who had been detached up the river St Lawrence, returned by forced marches and entered Quebec without being noticed by Arnold. The fortifications of the city had been greatly neglected, and were scarcely of any use for the purposes of defence. The strength of the British within its walls was under 1200, yet they repulsed the repeated attacks of the American generals. Here it was that Alan Cameron came for the first time into hostile contact with the enemy, and both his regiment and himself acquitted themselves with great gallantry—on one occasion in particular, [Pg 123] when an assault was made by Generals Arnold and Montgomery, in which the latter was killed and the other wounded. Arnold foiled in this attempt, established himself on the heights of Abraham, thus blockading the town and reducing the garrison to great straits; but this was all he succeeded in, as he was beaten in every attempt to gain possession of the lower town, by the intrepid gallantry of Colonel Maclean and his Highlanders.

On the approach of spring General Arnold despairing of success, withdrew his forces, raised the siege, and evacuated the whole of Canada. Released from this defence the battalion entered on

enterprises in different parts of the province, and to enable it to do so more effectually, Colonel Maclean transformed a limited number of it into a cavalry corps, for out-post duties and otherwise acting as *scouts*. Of this body Alan Cameron got the command. Daring and sometimes over-zealous, he often led himself and his company into situations of desperate danger. On one occasion they were surrounded by a strong force of the enemy, from which they escaped with the utmost difficulty, and only by the personal prowess of each individual and the fleetness of their steeds. The Americans communicated with the British commander to the effect that "this fellow (Alan) and his men had been guilty of the *un*military proceeding of tampering with the native Indians in their loyalty to American interests," stating a determination of vengeance as the consequence. It is not known whether Alan was apprised of this charge or not; at any rate he continued his incursions for some time. The threat was not unintentional, as the succeeding events proved, and an unfortunate opportunity enabled the enemy to give it effect. Alan and nearly one-half of his company were seized. The latter they made prisoners of war, but committed him to the jail of Philadelphia as a common felon, where he was kept for two years and treated with the most vindictive harshness. This proceeding was denounced by the British General as "contrary to all military usage," but his representations proved unavailing.

The ardent nature of the imprisoned Highlander chafed under restraint, and finding no hope of release he was constant in vigilance to procure his escape. This he was at last enabled to effect through his jailer having neglected to fasten the window of his place of confinement, which was on the third storey. His ingenuity was put to the severest test. He, however, managed to tie part of the bed-clothes to the bars of the window, and descended with its aid. The blanket was either too short, or it gave way; anyhow Alan came to the ground from a considerable height, and being a heavy man, in the fall he severely injured the ankles of both feet. In this crippled state he was scarcely able to get away to any great distance, but somehow managed to elude the search of his enemies.

Although the Americans, as a nation, were in arms against Great Britain, still among them were many families and individuals who were slow to forget their ties of kinship with the people of the "old country," and Philadelphia contained many possessing such a feeling. Alan, on his first arrival in that country, became acquainted with and obtained the friendship of more than one of [Pg 124] these families. To the house of one of them, in his emergency, he decided on going. This was a Mr Phineas Bond (afterwards Consul-General in that city) who received the prisoner without hesitation, and treated him with the utmost consideration. Alan, however, before he would accept shelter and hospitality, explained to Mr Bond his condition and how he became a prisoner, adding that he merely desired rest for a day or two to enable him to escape towards the British cantonments. Mr Bond made him welcome and promised him every assistance. Both were fully impressed with the danger and delicacy of their position, and Alan like an honourable soldier was now more anxious about that of his host than his own. He, therefore, embraced the very first opportunity of relieving his chivalrous friend of so undesirable a guest.

Without entering into details as to the nature of his escape, it is enough to state that after frequent chances of being recaptured, he arrived at a station where some British troops were quartered. Among these were some officers and men with whom he had served in the early part of the campaign, but he had become so altered in condition that they scarcely believed him to be the Alan Cameron they knew. His relative (Colonel Maclean) sent his aide-camp to have him conveyed to head-quarters, on arrival at which he was most attentive to do everything that could be done. Medical inspection however, pronounced Alan unfit for active service for at least a year. This was disappointing news to him, as he feared his career in the army was likely in consequence to come to an untimely end. Colonel Maclean recommended him to repair at once to Europe and procure the most skilful advice for the treatment of his wounds and broken limbs. Alan concurred and returned to England on sick leave, where he arrived in 1780.

He had not been many months at home when news arrived of the conclusion of the war; and with that happy consummation Colonel Maclean's corps was reduced, the officers were placed on the "provincial list"—a grade not known in the army at the present day—Government, in addition to their pay, giving them and the other men grants of lands in the following proportions—5000 acres to a field officer; 3000 to a captain; 500 to a subaltern; 200 to a sergeant; and a 100 to each soldier. These conditions were applicable only to those who remained in or returned within a given time to the colony. In the case of absentees one-half of the above number of acres was the extent of the grants, but they were allowed to sell their lots. As Alan had been promoted to the rank of Captain he had 1500 acres which he turned into cash. This capital and his pay was the only means possessed by this "provincial officer." He was, however, only one of many similarly situated on the termination of the American War.

Chapter V.

The transport ship brought home other invalids besides Alan Cameron, one of whom, Colonel Mostyn, and himself came to be on terms of warm friendship. This gentleman, descended from one of the best families in Wales, and having many relatives resident in London, was of considerable service to Alan in the matter of introductions to the society of these relations and [Pg 125] other friends. "American officers," as those returned from the war, were termed, were welcomed wherever met with. Among them Alan was not the least distinguished, perhaps the more so on account of his unfortunate adventure with his Lochaber adversary in the duel; and his subsequent distinguished career in America.

At the house of one of Colonel Mostyn's relatives, Alan met a young lady who was destined not many months after to become his wife. This was the only child of Nathaniel Philips of Sleebeich Hall, Pembrokeshire. The heiress of a wealthy squire was beyond Alan's expectations; besides he understood there were more than one aspirant for her hand, who were themselves possessors of many broad acres, therefore it could scarcely occur to the mind of the "provincial officer" to enter the lists against such influential competitors. However that may be, Alan's success with the lady may have been much the same as that of another with Desdemona: "Her father bade me tell the story of my life, the battles, sieges, and fortunes I had passed. I ran it through, even from my boyish days; of the moving accidents by flood and field; of the hair-breadth 'scapes and the imminent deadly breach; and of being taken by the insolent foe. To these things would Desdemona seriously incline, and devour up my discourse. When I did speak of some distressful stroke, that I had suffered, she gave me a world of sighs. She wished she had not heard it; but bade me, if I had a friend that loved her, I should teach him how to tell my story, and *that* would woo her." Duke—"I think this tale would win my daughter too."

Alan Cameron became the favoured suitor of Miss Philips, but both felt the barrier of the Squire's consent to be insurmountable. Nor was there any circumstance likely to arise in favour of Alan's worldly position to make him acceptable to Mr Philips as his son-in-law. Honourable conduct acted on Alan's feelings, and directed the proper course to be pursued. He made his visits to the house of their mutual friend less often and at greater intervals. Squire Philips was at the time, and had for some few years, been a widower; and it was reported and believed that he was contemplating a second marriage. Moreover, the intended spouse was scarcely yet out of her teens, while he was past middle age, and his daughter was also her senior. Her father's intentions created disappointment, if not dissatisfaction in Miss Philips' mind, which, it is alleged, was one of the causes that moved her not to view elopement with serious objection. There is no record of the occurrence to guide further reference than that Alan Cameron and Miss Philips had betaken themselves to Gretna Green without the knowledge or consent of her father, where marriages were solemnised without the preliminary formalities necessary at Hanover Square. Notwithstanding that a pursuit ensued either by the parent or other friends, it was not successful in interrupting the marriage of the runaway pair.

Instead of returning to London with his bride, Alan went towards the capital of his native country, where he and his wife remained for several months. It now, however, became almost a necessity that he would get into some office, the emoluments of which would add to his slender income. [Pg 126] After some delay he was fortunate in getting an appointment through the intercession of a friend with whom he had served in America. This appointment was on the militia staff of one of the English counties. Alan retained it until the fortune of events reduced the displeasure of the father-in-law to that state when mutual friends thought they could do something to induce the Squire to forgive and forget. These friends did not fail to take advantage of this state of feeling, and embraced the opportunity to obtain for Alan an interview with his wife's father, which resulted, as desired by all, in full forgiveness to both son and daughter. This reconciliation, like the wooing of Miss Philips, was also somewhat after the manner of that of Desdemona's father, who replied, "I had rather adopt a child than get it. Come hither. I do give thee that with all my heart, which—but thou hast already—with all my heart, I would keep from thee. For your sake I am glad I have no other child, thy escape would teach me tyranny." This act of grace was important to Alan, as the allowance to his wife, which followed, enabled them to live in affluence in comparison with their past state.

Squire Philips had not married at the time rumour had formerly assigned, but he did enter into that state, and that after he had become a sexagenarian. By the second marriage the Squire—unlike the father in the play—"had another child." This child is yet living, in the person of the venerable Dowager Countess of Lichfield, herself the mother of a numerous family of sons and daughters, including the present peer, as also the wife of the noble lord the member for the county of Haddington.

(To be Continued).

Highland Melodies.—The Gaelic Society of London finding that regret has been frequently expressed that the plaintive melodies of the Highlands should be allowed to pass away, have, we are glad to learn, taken steps to preserve them in a permanent form, and are now preparing for publication a selection of the best and most popular airs. The verses will be given in Gaelic and English, and the pianoforte accompaniments are arranged with special attention to their distinctive characteristics by Herr Louis Honig, Professor of Music, London; while slight variations are introduced to render the melodies more acceptable to the general taste. Editions of the Dance Tunes of our country are numerous, but the Gaelic vocal airs, set to music, have not hitherto been attainable. The issue is limited to 250 copies, which the Society are patriotically supplying at cost price—namely, 10s 6d per copy; or free by post to the Colonies for 12s. We feel assured that this want has only to be known to secure the necessary number of subscribers for the few remaining copies.

LITERATURE.

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THE "ARYAN ORIGIN OF THE CELTIC RACE AND LANGUAGE."

THE above is the title on the outside of a book by the Rev. Canon Bourke, president of St Jarlath's College, Tuam, Ireland. The book is in every respect a wonderful and interesting one to the Celt, at home and abroad, whether he be Scotch or Irish. Time was when the Scottish Celt looked with great suspicion on his Irish cousin, while the Irishman had no great love for his Scottish neighbour. Even yet a good deal of this feeling prevails, particularly among the uneducated.

Our own experience, however, has been that the Irish Celt is not behind the Scotch Gael in generosity and all the other virtues which are the special characteristics of the race. The book before us is in several respects calculated to strengthen the friendship which is being rapidly formed, and which ought to subsist among the intelligent of each of the two great branches of the Celtic family—Scotch and Irish. Frequent references of an appreciating and commendable kind are made in this work to the labours of Scotchmen in the field of Celtic literature. Canon Bourke, like a true-hearted son of Ireland, with that magnanimity characteristic of the race, holds out his right hand to every Scottish scholar in the field of Celtic or Keltic research, and says in effect —*Cia mar a tha thu? Buaidh gu'n robh air d'obair!*

Although the "Aryan Origin of the Celtic Races and Language" is all the title on the cover, inside the book, the title is much more comprehensive, consisting, as it does, altogether of 27 lines. But even this large and comprehensive title-page does not give anything like an adequate idea of the extent and variety of the contents of the book. Taking it up with the expectation of finding a learned treatise on the Aryan origin of the Celtic race and Celtic languages one will be disappointed; but no one will be disappointed with the work as a whole, for though its contents do not bear throughout on the above subject, they are all thoroughly Celtic; and as a collection of Celtic gleanings, will well repay a perusal. It is, indeed, a sort of Celtic repository—the writer's Celtic reading for many years being apparently thrown into a crucible, and having undergone a certain process there, are forged out into the handsome and bulky volume before us. It has, however, all the appearance of having been very hastily got up. Indeed, in the preface, which is dated, "Feast of the Nativity of the B.V.M., 1875," we are told that a mere accident has given the first impulse to the composition of the work, and that accident appears to have been that at a social meeting of Irish clergymen in 1874 the subject of conversation turned on the language and antiquities of Ireland.

After doing justice to the "Four Masters," of whom Irishmen are, with good reason, so very proud, [Pg 128] the decay of the Gaelic language in Ireland is alluded to, and the cause of that decay described at some length, and it is pointed out that, in consequence of this neglect, when an Irish patriot appeals to the sentiment of his race, the appeal must be made, not in the language of old Ireland, but in the language of the conquering Saxon. Father Mullens in his lament for the Celtic language of his countrymen "must wail his plaint in Saxon words and Saxon idiom, lest his lamentation should fall meaningless on the ears of Ireland." And this decay Father Mullens pathetically describes:—

> It is fading! it is fading! like the leaves upon the trees,
> It is dying! it is dying! like the Western Ocean breeze,
> It is fastly disappearing as the footsteps on the shore,
> Where the Barrow and the Erne, and Loch Swilly's waters roar;
> Where the parting sunbeam kisses the Corrib in the west,
> And the ocean like a mother clasps the Shannon to its breast:
> The language of old Eire, of her history and name,
> Of her monarchs and her heroes, of her glory and her fame;
> The sacred shrine where rested through her sunshine and her gloom
> The spirit of her martyrs as their bodies in the tomb!
> The time-wrought shell, where murmured through centuries of wrong
> The secret shrine of freedom in annal and in song,
> Is surely fastly sinking into silent death at last,
> To live but in the memory and relics of the past!

In Ireland as in some other countries (perhaps we may say with some degree of truth in our own Highlands of Scotland) the simple uneducated peasants are, in the law courts, treated with the greatest display of harshness because they cannot give evidence in the English tongue. Canon Bourke refers to a case of this nature that occurred during the last year in Tuam. A witness, Sally Ryan, who appeared to have understood English, but could not speak it, and consequently would not give her evidence in that language, was removed as an incompetent witness! Is that justice? We know that in the courts in Scotland a good deal of harshness is occasionally used towards witnesses who cannot speak English.

The fact remains, that in the Highlands there are many whose only language is Gaelic, and if their Saxon rulers have a desire to administer the law justly they must learn to deal more gently with such as are ignorant of the English language. We also know from personal observation that

Gaelic witnesses frequently give evidence by means of very incompetent interpreters, thoroughly ignorant of the idiom of the language, and are thus very often misrepresented. A bungling interpreter bungles a witness, and nothing is more calculated to invalidate evidence than being given in a loose incoherent manner. On this point we are at one with the learned Canon Bourke.

Considerable space is devoted to the pronunciation of the word Celtic—the question being whether it should be pronounced Keltic or Seltic. Professor Bourke argues, and gives good reasons, that it should be written Keltic and pronounced Keltic. He is unquestionably right in his contention for the pronunciation, but as we have no K in the Scotch or Irish Gaelic alphabet it is difficult to agree with him as to the spelling, but the fact remains that it is almost universally pronounced Seltic and written Celtic, and has in that form taken such a root that it can scarcely be ever altered. What then is the use of fighting over it? In the compass of this necessarily short [Pg 129] review it is quite impossible to give an adequate idea of the work before us. While the work exhibits great learning and research, we think the rev. author might have bestowed more care on such a valuable work. Several typographical errors present themselves, and in many cases the Professor's composition exhibits clear evidence of undue haste in the writing and arrangement. But *humanum est errare*. Nothing is perfect, and the book before us is no exception to the general rule. The Celtic student will, however, find it invaluable, and no one who takes an interest in Celtic philology, antiquity, manners, and customs (indeed everything and anything Celtic), should be without a copy; for it is a perfect store of Celtic learning.

THE SCOTTISH GAEL, OR CELTIC MANNERS AS PRESERVED AMONG THE HIGHLANDERS. By the Late James Logan, F.S.A.S. Edited with Memoir and Notes by the Rev. Alex. Stewart, "Nether Lochaber." *Issued in 12 Parts at 2s each. Inverness: Hugh Mackenzie, Bank Lane. Edinburgh: Maclachlan & Stewart. Glasgow:* John Tweed.

We have before us the first and second parts of this valuable work. The Frontispiece is a coloured plate of two Highland Chiefs dressed in the Stewart and Gordon tartans; and the other engravings, which are well got up, are in every case *fac-similes* of those in the original Edition, which had become so scarce that it was difficult to procure it even at a very high price. Logan's *Scottish Gael* has long been held as the best authority on the antiquities and national peculiarities of Scotland, especially on those of the Northern or Gaelic parts of the country where some of the peculiar habits of the aboriginal race have been most tenaciously retained.

The valuable superintendence and learned notes of "Nether-Lochaber," one of our best Celtic scholars and antiquarians, will very materially enhance the value of the work, which is well printed in clear bold type, altogether creditable to the printer and to the editor, but, particularly so, to the public-spirited publisher. We have no hesitation in recommending the work to all who take an interest in the Literature of the Gael.

[Pg 130]

SONG OF THE SUMMER BREEZE.

Dedicated by permission to the Rev. George Gilfillan.

When balmy spring
Has ceased to wring
The youthful bud from the old oak tree,
And the sweet primrose
No longer glows
On the glad hill-side by the sunfilled sea;
When the Cuckoo's wail
Has ceased to go
O'er hill and dale
In a pensive flow,
And the deepest shade
In the woods is made,
And the brightest bloom on the fields is laid;
When the lord of light
With a lover's pride
Pours a beauty bright
O'er his blushing bride,
That lies below
His glowing gaze,
In a woodland glow, and a flowery blaze;
When winter's gloom
Of wind and rain
Is lost in the bloom

Of the flower-lit plain,
And his ruins grey
Have died away
In the love-sent breath of the smiling day;
When the beauteous hours
Of the twilight still
With dewy tears in their joy-swelled eyes
See the peaceful flowers
On the cloudless hill
Send scented gifts to the grateful skies;
And the wave-like grain
O'er the sea-like plain
In peaceful splendour essays to rise;—
From my silent birth in the flowery land
Of the sunny south
At time's command.
As still as the breath of a rosy mouth,
Or rippling wave on the sighing sand,
Or surging grass by the stony strand,
I come with odour of shrub and flower
Stolen from field and sunny bower
From lowly cot and lordly tower.
Borne on my wings the soul-like cloud—
That snowy, mountain-shading shroud
That loves to sleep
On the sweet hill's crest,
As still as the deep
With its voice at rest,—
Is wafted in dreams to its peaceful nest;
At my command
The glowing land
Scorched by the beams of the burning sun,
Listing the sounds of the drowsy bees,
Thirsting for rain, and the dews that come
When light has died on the surging seas,
Awakes to life, and health, and joy;
I pour a life on the sickening trees,
And wake the birds to their sweet employ,
Amidst the flowers of the lowly leas;
From the sweet woodbine
That loves to twine
Its arms of love round the homes of men,
Or laugh in the sight
Of the sun's sweet light
'Midst the flower gemmed scenes of the song-filled
glen,
And the full-blown rose that loves to blush
'Midst the garden bowers
Where the pensive hours
Awaiting the bliss of the summer showers
List to the songs of the warbling thrush,—
I steal the sweets of their fragrant breath;
From the lily pale
That seems to wail
With snow-like face
And pensive grace
O'er the bed that bends o'er the deeds of death,
I brush the tears
That she loves to shed
For the early biers
Of the lovely dead.
When still twilight with dew-dimmed eye
Sees the lord of light from the snow-white sky,
Descend at the sight
Of the coming night,
'Midst the waves of the deathful sea to die!
When glowing day
Has passed away
In peace on the tops of the dim-seen hills,
That pour from their hearts the tinkling rills
That dance and leap
In youthful pride,
To the brimming river, deep and wide,
That bears them in rest to their distant sleep;
And the gladsome ocean

That ever presses
The bridal earth in fond caresses,
Rages no more in a wild commotion;
When the distant hills appear to grow
At the touch of evening bright,
And the sunless rivers seem to go
With a deeper music in their flow,
Like dreams thro' the peaceful night,
I fade away
With the dying day,
Like the lingering gleam of the sun's sweet ray!

DAVID R. WILLIAMSON.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES

The spellings "ahead" and "a-head" are both used in this text.

The following amendments have been made to the text:

p. 106 "wont" changed to "won't";

p. 114 "familar" changed to "familiar";

p. 115 "buccolic" changed to "bucolic";

p. 122 "Soverign" changed to "Sovereign";

p. 124 "similiarly" changed to "similarly";

p. 129 "errane" changed to "errare";

p. 130 full stop added after "DAVID R".

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