

# Carmina Gadelica

## Hymns and Incantations

*With Illustrative Notes on Words, Rites, and Customs,  
Dying and Obsolete: Orally Collected in the Highlands  
and Islands of Scotland*

By Alexander Carmichael



Volume V

Edited by Angus Matheson

McCallum-Fleming Lecturer in Celtic, University of Glasgow

Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd










# CARMINA GADELICA

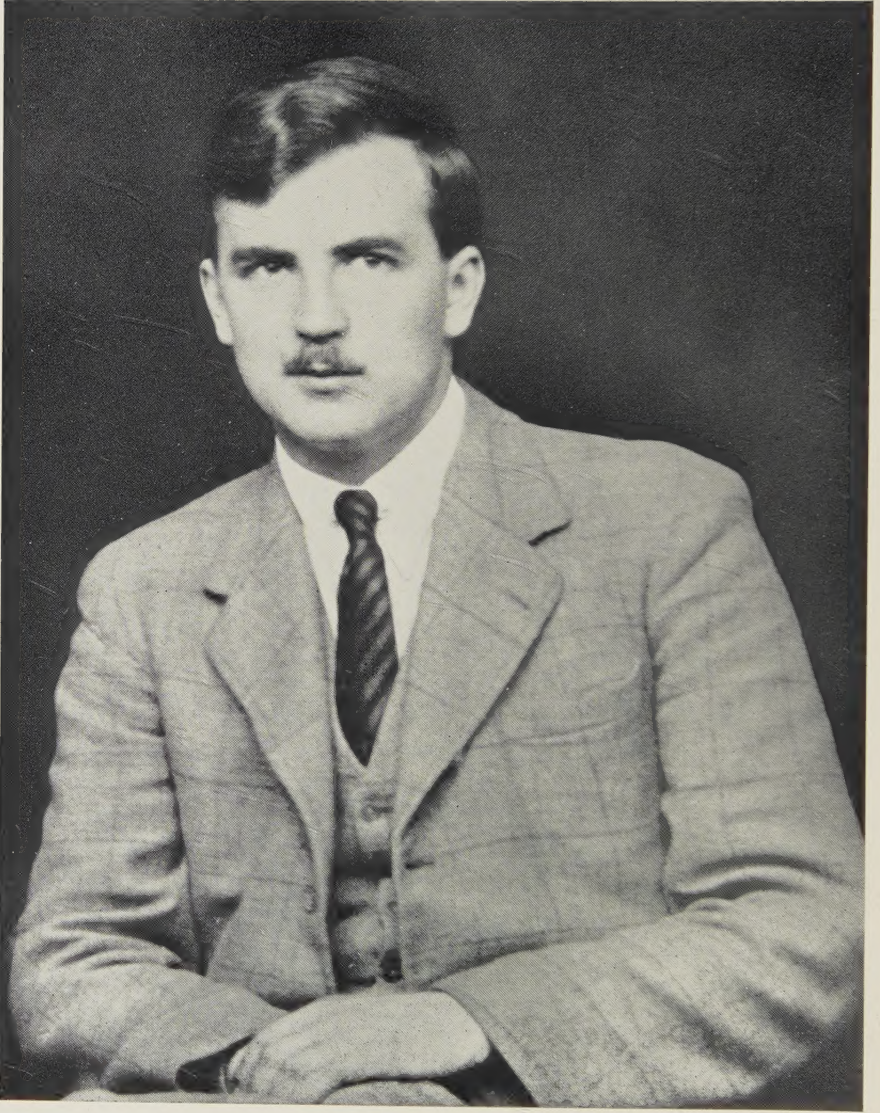
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JAMES CARMICHAEL WATSON

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DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF  
JAMES CARMICHAEL WATSON

Mise mé go mairim buan  
d'éis shuadh na bhfocal bhfionnuar ;  
gan fhear d'fhoghuim mo leabhair  
feadh an ghormfhuinn Ghaidhealaigh.

. . . . .

Don ord éigeas nochan fhuil  
neach ré gcuirim ceisd focuil  
a gceartas nó a luas laoidhe  
nó chleachtas cruas comaoine.

CATHAL MAC MUIREADHAIGH.



## EDITOR'S NOTE

THE late Professor James Carmichael Watson regarded the completion of *Carmina Gadelica* as of the greatest importance, and before enlisting in the Royal Navy in 1941 he made provision for ensuring that the work would be continued should he himself be prevented from returning to it. His tragic death in action in 1942 deprived Celtic scholarship in Scotland of its most promising figure and *Carmina Gadelica* of an enthusiastic editor. Tributes from his Professor of Greek at Edinburgh University and from his fellow-student in Classics, Mr John Maclean, Rector of Oban High School, are included in this volume. To a fellow-student in Celtic has fallen the melancholy privilege of taking his place as editor.

It appears from the editorial note to Volume IV that Watson anticipated that the work would be completed by a fifth volume, which would contain 'a large body of prose and verse concerning fairies and other supernatural beings; some miscellaneous poetry; proverbs, riddles, and similar lore; notes on some hundreds of words; and (from the editor's hand) the indices, in particular that of the rare or otherwise noteworthy words throughout the work.' It soon became apparent that it would be impossible to contain this mass of material within the limits of a volume of like size with the others and so I decided to include all verse of any merit or interest in Volume V and to print the remainder of the material (or as much of it as possible) in a sixth volume. The title of the volumes is no longer strictly applicable to the categories mentioned by Watson. Nevertheless it was obviously his intention to continue publication under the well-known name.

In view of the fact that statements have been made that one or more volumes were ready for the press, it may be advisable for me to indicate what my part as editor has been.

In the majority of cases I found that typescripts of the Gaelic texts had been made. These I collated with the originals, wherever possible, but in some instances I could not trace the originals among the papers which had been separated from the other Carmichael manuscripts for the purposes of this volume. This circumstance may occasionally lead to a reading being given in the footnotes as manuscript when it is actually typescript, although this may be the same thing. In a few cases I had to prepare typescripts of the Gaelic texts. For the final selection I am responsible, but I had the benefit of advice from Mr Derick Thomson and Rev. William Matheson. As regards the present volume, I am responsible for approximately half the translations and revision of the remainder, and I have also supplied nearly all the footnotes. It is hoped that the latter, while not exhaustive, cover the main printed sources for other versions. It has not, in general, been considered of practical value to take account of manuscript sources, although many of these songs, in some cases better versions, are to be found in the Henderson Papers in Glasgow University, Father Allan MacDonald's Collections, and in collections made by, or in the possession of, Mr John Lorne Campbell of Canna, to mention only a few. Considerations of space have imposed the necessity for a minimum of annotation, and doubtful matters (e.g. the historical background of the Mackintosh Laments) have usually been passed over silently.

It has to be remembered that nearly all the verse in this volume was meant to be sung, and it is to be regretted that, owing to the nature of the collection, no account can be taken of the music in editing these volumes. As the collector was only concerned with noting the words, and often perhaps noted them without troubling about repetitions of verse or chorus, some of the songs may not be set out in the best way. Dr Carmichael was also extremely sparing in the use of accent marks, and the accentuation of many of the refrains must

be regarded as tentative. As the chief interest of many of these songs is in conjunction with the airs, it is to be hoped that these will be recorded, where this has not been done already. It may be that the publication of some of them may help to rescue half-forgotten airs from oblivion, a grateful task.

In editing the Gaelic text I have deviated slightly from the usage of Volumes III and IV in a few spellings, accentuations, use of the hyphen, etc., but, in general, I have attempted to preserve the look of the page as in those volumes, and this accounts, for example, for the absence of many apostrophes to which the Gaelic reader is accustomed. Whatever my own predilections might be, I could not afford to differ too radically from the usage of the earlier volumes in such matters. Nor have I considered it desirable, in the interest of 'correct grammar,' to alter locutions which doubtless reflected the idiom of the reciters.

In some cases the provenance of the material is not stated. In one instance Mr J. L. Campbell has pointed out, with tolerable certainty, Dr Carmichael's indebtedness to Father Allan MacDonald's Collections and this has been mentioned in a footnote to the section in question. It is known from correspondence between Dr Carmichael and Father Allan that Dr Carmichael had the latter's Collections on loan for some time. It is to be hoped that these will be published in due course and any relationship between material found in the Carmichael Collection and Father Allan's will then be apparent, always allowing, of course, for the fact that on some points they might have consulted the same informants, or informants with substantially the same information.

The whole of the Carmichael Collection was gifted to Edinburgh University by Professor Carmichael Watson. That portion of it which he had separated from the rest for the purpose of publishing a further volume or volumes, and which includes typescripts made by himself as well as many of

the originals, was transferred to Glasgow for my use and will be returned to Edinburgh University when the work is completed.

I have to acknowledge indebtedness to various friends for valued help: Mr John Lorne Campbell of Canna and Mr Angus MacLeod, Oban, read the galley-proofs of the book and gave me valuable information on a number of points; my colleague, Mr Derick Thomson, gave me advice on the selection of material and read the book in page-proof; and my brother, Rev. William Matheson, Lecturer in Celtic, Edinburgh University, assisted me generously at all stages of the work and revised both galley- and page-proofs. For any errors of fact or judgment I accept responsibility.

Thanks are due to Professor W. M. Calder, Mr John Maclean and the editors of the *University of Edinburgh Journal* and *Scottish Gaelic Studies* for permission to reprint the obituary notices of Professor Carmichael Watson. The late Professor's brother, Mr Hugh Watson, Edinburgh, has always been ready to give me help and advice. Mr Robert Grant, of Messrs Oliver and Boyd, has taken a personal and lively interest in the work, and the careful and intelligent printing of Messrs T. and A. Constable has greatly reduced the cares of editing.

ANGUS MATHESON

GLASGOW,  
*April 1954*

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THE LATE  
PROFESSOR JAMES CARMICHAEL WATSON\*

REPORTED MISSING PRESUMED KILLED, 26TH MARCH 1942

IN the autumn of last year James Carmichael Watson joined the Royal Navy as a volunteer, despite the representations of Edinburgh University, which offered to secure him reservation from military service. After a period of training on shore he was posted to H.M.S. *Gurkha*, and when she was lost, Prof. Watson was rescued after being in the water for some time. Thereafter he spent a few weeks in Egypt until he joined H.M.S. *Jaguar*. It was while serving in her in the Mediterranean last March that he lost his life. Of few men can it be said with more truth that their passing is a loss to their country as a whole; to Gaelic Scotland the death of James Watson is a calamity such as she could not have suffered in the person of any other of her sons.

James Carmichael Watson was born in Edinburgh on 12th March 1910, and was the youngest son of Prof. W. J. Watson by his marriage with Miss Carmichael, daughter of the celebrated editor of *Carmina Gadelica*. It was only to be expected that the son of such parents should be pre-eminent in whatever branch of study he took up, and still more was it to be expected that he would apply himself to the study of Gaelic, which both sides of his family had prosecuted with such distinction. The advantages of the cultural atmosphere into which he was born were not lost on James Watson, for he grew up to be a gentleman as well as a scholar.

He was educated at the Royal High School, of which his father had been rector from 1909 to 1914, and thereafter at Edinburgh University. At both those seats of learning Watson

\* *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, v. 185-7 (Sept. 1942).

proved to be a most distinguished student. Bent on following in the footsteps of the distinguished scholar who was his father, he laid the foundations of his future career by reading for Honours in Classics, into the study of which he threw himself with all the enthusiasm displayed by him in tackling everything to which he put his hand. Even in his early days as a student he showed the unerring taste and the feeling for language which cannot fail to impress those who are acquainted with his editions of *Mary MacLeod* and *Carmina Gadelica*, and when he graduated with First Class Honours in Classics in 1932 it came as no surprise to those who knew his ability that he was placed first in his year and was awarded the premier scholarship in Classics for 1932. Had James Watson decided to make Classical studies his career there is no doubt that he would have been as brilliant in that field as he was in Celtic scholarship.

When he began the serious study of Celtic in 1932, Watson brought to bear on his subject a fluency of diction and a correctness of accent which would have amazed those who did not know his background. He had already in the earlier part of his Classical course taken the ordinary class in Celtic, and so remarkable was the progress which he made in two years that by the time he took his First Class Honours in Celtic he had finished an edition of *Mary MacLeod*, which, with its perfection of workmanship and the polished literary value of its accurate translation, might well be a model for editions of Gaelic poets.

After completing his Honours course in Celtic he proceeded to Bonn to study Old Irish under the late Prof. Rudolf Thurneysen, one of the greatest Indo-European philologists, and certainly the foremost Old Irish expert on the Continent. With Thurneysen he studied for a year, and it was in Bonn that he started work on *Mesca Ulad*, his edition of which was published in Dublin on the very day on which the Irish papers reported his death.

In 1935 Watson was appointed Lecturer in Celtic at Glasgow University, where he taught for three years and where most of his work on *Mesca Ulad* was done. In 1938, when his father retired from his professorship at Edinburgh, James Watson was appointed his successor in the Celtic Chair, the only one in Scotland, at the age of twenty-eight.

On his return to Edinburgh, Watson spent most of his time on his labour of love, the editing of the immense amount of material collected by his grandfather, of which Dr Carmichael himself had published two volumes in his lifetime, under the title *Carmina Gadelica*. By the autumn of 1941, when he joined the Navy, Watson had published two further volumes, and another was almost ready for the press. These beautiful books, Volumes III and IV, are, to say the least of it, worthy of the first two and the high standard of editing set in them. Watson's translations, based on the style adopted by Dr Carmichael, are extremely fine, recapturing the spirit and dignity of the original and being in themselves literary gems; and no praise can be greater than that, coming, as it does, from one who is bi-lingual and who fully realises the usual futility of translation.

Watson's industry and output were almost unique. As the Rev. William Matheson points out in *Life and Work*, no book was published in the last few years by the Scottish Gaelic Texts Society without being first subjected to Watson for criticism and, it might be, correction. Without taking into account numerous articles which appeared from his pen in various periodicals, and lectures which he was invited to deliver here and there to Gaelic Societies, he achieved within a space of seven years or so what is not given to many men to do in a lifetime, and his achievement is all the more remarkable when one considers the high standard he set himself and the painstaking accuracy, the exquisite taste and the finished scholarship which characterised all his works, works which are now applauded in Scotland and in Ireland and wherever

Gaelic literature is studied. His achievement speaks for itself, for he had raised up a monument more enduring than bronze before he was cut off in his prime and in his usefulness.

But James Carmichael Watson will be remembered by those who knew him not so much for his scholarship as for what he himself was. His was a fine strong character tempered, as all really strong characters are, by great gentleness. The nobility of his nature was not thrust into the shade by the brilliance of his talents, and his modesty increased with his distinctions. His sympathy with others, a clearly defined trait of his, became deeper and deeper with his greater experience of life, while none could fail to respond to his impulsive generosity, his boyish idealism and his youthful outlook. His striking personality, his width of interest, his sparkling wit and his beautiful turn of phrase made him, with no obtrusion on his part, the dominant member of any company in which he happened to be. 'Mens sana in corpore sano' fitted James Carmichael Watson. He was no pale student. On the contrary, despite his hard work, he found time for outdoor sports such as ski-ing, swimming, canoeing, riding and shooting, and as he was great in mind and character, so, too, was he great and handsome in his person.

Bu tù am fear curanta mór  
 Bu mhath cumadh is treòir  
 O t'uilinn gu d' dhòrn  
 O d' mhullach gu d' bhròig :  
 Mhic Mhuire mo leòn  
 Thu bhith an innis nan ròn  
 'S nach faighear thu.

JOHN MACLEAN

JAMES CARMICHAEL WATSON, O.S. \*

Och nan och 's mi fo léireadh  
Mar a dh'éirich do'n ghaisgeach.

O alas for the hero  
Whom the sea-wave is hiding.

(J. C. W.'s trans., p. 101)



THE lines are from *The Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod*, published by Watson on the day in 1934 on which he received the diploma adding Honours in Celtic to the brilliant Classical Degree he had taken in 1932. He had already spent a summer in Phrygia studying the setting of the Galatian civilisation, and a winter conducting the Ordinary Class during his father's illness. Behind this unusual undergraduate record lay more than high gifts: he came to the University already steeped in Gaelic lore, and dedicated by inclination and by filial piety to Celtic studies. In 1941, refusing reservation and rejecting all advice to seek other forms of service, he volunteered for the Royal Navy. As a good waterman, he was keen to serve where he felt he could serve best, on the Lower Deck of a fighting ship.

The years 1935 to 1941 will shine in the record of Celtic studies. That record will tell how a man between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-one, busied first with the Lectureship in Celtic and the Wardenship of MacBrayne Hall in Glasgow, and next with the work of the Chair of Celtic in Edinburgh, and throughout spending his labour generously on the work of

\* *University of Edinburgh Journal* (Summer Number 1942), 243.

fellow-scholars, yet found time to publish three substantial volumes, and left the MSS. of four more ready for the printer. And of the most exacting of these tasks, the posthumous *Mesca Ulad*, the Irish scholar best qualified to judge writes that it is 'a model for others, and one of the best editions of an Irish text.' In the Editor's Note to Volume III of *Carmina Gadelica* (1940) he refers to information to be given in Volume V, and sums it up now, 'lest the opportunity should be withheld.' The stress under which he worked from 1939 to the spring of 1941 has left no other trace in the stately Volumes III and IV of this great family enterprise, to be rounded off by the publication of yet two more, the material for which is now in manuscript in the University Library.

Such was the measure of James Carmichael Watson's achievement and of his promise. His loss is unique. I can recall no comparable disaster to the cause of humane learning in Scotland.

W. M. CALDER

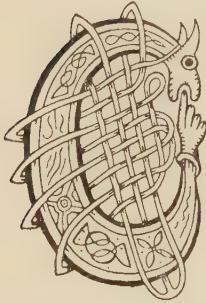


ÒRAIN LUATH  
WAULKING SONGS



## CRAOBH NAN UBHAL

Bho Mhóir Nic Néill (Mór nighean Alasdair mhic Ruairidh Bhàin),  
coitear, Ceann Tangabhal, Barraidh. 8mh de'n Mhàirt 1869.



HRAOBH nan ubhal,  
Gheug nan abhal,  
Chraobh nan ubhal,  
Abhal ubhlan.

'N uair a théid thu 'n choill g'a rùsgadh,  
Aithnich féin a' chraobh as lioms ann,  
Chraobh as buige 's as mils ùbhlan,  
A' chraobh gheugnach pheurach ùbhlach,  
Bun a' fàs 's a barr a' lùbadh.

Tha craobh agam sa Chreig Uaine,  
Craobh eile 'n ursainn a' ghàrraidh;  
Nam biodh Mac Aoidh anns an làthair,  
No Niall anbharrach a bhràthair,  
Cha bhiodh mo thochra-sa gun phàigheadh,  
Le crodh-laoigh 's le aighean-dàire,  
Le caoirich dhubha agus bhàna,  
Le gearrain gu dèanamh àitich.

'S e Mac Aoidh an duine treubhach,  
Nì e sìoda de'n chlòimh Chéitein,  
Nì e sròl de'n fhraoch nam b'fheudar,  
Nì e fìon de uisg an t-sléibhe.

Cf. J. L. Campbell, *Gaelic Folksongs from the Isle of Barra*, 36, 53-4;  
*Eilean Fraoich*, 65. Mr Campbell has an unpublished version from the

## THE APPLE TREE

From Marion MacNeil (Marion daughter of Alexander son of Fair Roderick), cottar, Ceann Tangabhal, Barra. 8th March 1869.

O APPLE tree,  
Apple branch,  
Apple tree,  
Tree of apples.

When thou goest to the wood to strip it,  
Recognise the tree which is mine there,  
The tree of softest, sweetest apples,  
The branching pear-like tree full of apples,  
Its roots growing and its top bending.

I have a tree in the Green Rock,  
Another tree hard by the garden gate;  
If Mackay were but here,  
Or the redoubtable Neil, his brother,  
My dower would not go unpaid,  
With milch kine and heifers in calf,  
With sheep black-faced and white,  
And with geldings for the ploughing.

A versatile man is Mackay,  
He can make silk of May wool,  
And satin of heather if need were,  
He can make wine of mountain water.

'S e Mac Aoidh an duine buadh-mhor,  
 Nì e an cruadh-chadh gun chonnadh,  
 'S ann l'a dhuirn a nì e phronnadh.

'S e Mac Aoidh a' chòtain eangaich  
 Nach iarradh an t-earradh troma,\*  
 Marcaiche nan eachu donna, [eachaibh  
 Chuireadh crùidhean òir fo'm bonnaibh,  
 Coisiche nan talamh tolla.

Mo ghaol, mo ghràdh an t-òg euchdail,  
 Reachainn leat troimh choille gheugaich,  
 Chumainn is dh'fhuaighinn do léine  
 Le snàthaid chaoil 's le snàth glégheal;  
 Nighinn a rithist 'na dhéidh sin  
 Air lic shleamhainn abhainn ghléghlain;  
 Thiormaichinn air bharr nan geug i,  
 Chuirinn paisgt an làimh do phéid i.†

Chraobh nan ubhal, gun robh Dia leat,  
 Gun robh gile, gun robh grian leat,  
 Gun robh gaoh an ear 's an iar leat,  
 Gun robh gach nì a thànaig riamh leat,  
 Gun robh gach mathas agus miann leat,  
 Gun robh gach brioghais agus briain leat,  
 Gun robh Somhairle mór 's a chliar leat,  
 Gun robh gach neach mar tha mi fhian leat. [fhéin

Mo ghaol, mo ghràdh an t-òg beadrach,  
 Dhannasadh lùthmhor sunndach aigneach;  
 Am barr nam beann bhiomaid aighreach,  
 Am bràigh nan gleann bhiomaid . . .  
 Am bun nam beann bhiomaid . . .  
 Air bharr nan tonn bhiomaid . . .

\* leg. *droma*?

† Cf. Craig, *Òrain Luaidh*, 9, and p. 44 *infra*.

An ingenious man is Mackay,  
 He can dry grain without fuel,  
 It is with his fists he bruises it.

Mackay of the gusseted coat  
 Would not require heavy armour,  
 Rider of the chestnut horses,  
 He would put golden shoes on their hooves,  
 Traverser of the broken ground.

My dear, my love is the valiant youth,  
 I would go with thee through the branchy wood,  
 I would fashion and sew thy shirt  
 With slender needle and pure-white thread;  
 I would wash it thereafter  
 On slippery slab in the bright river;  
 I would dry it on the tips of the branches,  
 I would place it folded in thy page's hand.

O apple tree, may God be with thee,  
 May the moon and the sun be with thee,  
 May the east and west winds be with thee,  
 May everything that ever existed be with thee,  
 May every bounty and desire be with thee,  
 May every passion and divinity (?) be with thee,  
 May great Somerled and his band be with thee,  
 May everyone, like myself, be with thee.

My dear, my love is the sportive youth,  
 Who would dance vigorously, merrily, spiritedly;  
 On the tops of the bens we would be mirthful,  
 On the brae of the glens we would be . . .  
 At the base of the bens we would be . . .  
 On the top of the waves we would be . . .

## CRAOBH NAN UBHAL

Is i a leannan a rinn an t-òran seo do Mhac Aoidh na Ranna, ann an Ìle.



HRAOBH nan ubhal, gheug nan ubhal,  
 Ó chraobh nan ubhal o ho,  
 Chraobh nan ubhal, abhall ùrail,  
 Ó chraobh nan ubhal o ho.

Chraobh nan ubhal, gu robh Dia leat,  
 Gu robh gealach, gu robh grian leat,  
 Gu robh gaoth an ear 's an iar leat,  
 Gu robh Dùile mór nan sian leat,  
 [dùrachd rùn  
 Gu robh gach nì thàna riamh leat,  
 Gu robh Somhairle Mór 's a chliar (?) leat.

Tha craobh agam sa Chreag einich (??)\*,  
 Craobh eile 'n dorus a' ghàrraidh.

'N uair a théid thu 'n choill g'a rùsgadh  
 Aithnich fhéin a' chraobh as lioms ann,  
 A' chraobh gheugach pheurach ùbhlach,  
 Bun a sàs 's a barr a' lùbadh,  
 Chraobh as buige 's as mìls ùbhlán.

'S e Mac Aoidh an duine buadhar,  
 Nì e an cruadhchadh gun chonnadh,  
 'S ann le chasan nì e chalgadh (?),  
 'S ann le fearg a nì e phronnadh.

[dhuirn

\* ? for *eunaich*, pronounced *ednaich*.

## THE APPLE TREE

It was his sweetheart who made this song to Mackay of the Rinns in Islay.

O APPLE tree, apple branch,  
O apple tree o ho,  
Apple tree, flourishing apple tree,  
O apple tree o ho.

O apple tree, may God be with thee,  
May moon and sun be with thee,  
May east and west winds be with thee,  
May the great Creator of the elements be with  
thee,  
May everything that ever existed be with thee,  
May great Somerled and his band be with thee.

I have a tree in the Fowling (?) Rock,  
And another tree hard by the garden gate.

When thou goest to the wood to strip it  
Recognise the tree which is mine there,  
The branching pear-like tree full of apples,  
Its base firmly rooted and its top bending,  
The tree with softest and sweetest apples.

An ingenious man is Mackay,  
He can dry grain without fuel,  
With his feet he removes the awns,  
And with anger he bruises it.

[fists

'S e Mac Aoidh an duine treubhach,  
 Nì e sloda dha'n chlàimh Chéitein,  
 Nì e flon a dh'uisg an t-sléibhe  
 'S nì e im dha'n chobhar ghlégheal.

[bhùrn

Nam bitheadh Mac Aoidh san làthair,  
 No Nialt anbharrach a bhràthair,  
 Cha bhiodh mo thochar gun phàigheadh,  
 Bhiodh crodh-laoigh is aighean-dàir ann,  
 Bhiodh caoirich dhubh agus bhàn ann,  
 Bhiodh gearrain ann gu dèanadh àitich  
 'S bhiodh gobhair ann a' dol gu fàsaich.

'S e Mac Aoidh a' chòtain eangaich  
 Marcaiche nan eachaibh donna,  
 Marcaiche nan steudaibh seanga,  
 Chuireadh crùidhean òir fo'm bonna,  
 Choisich an talamh toll.

Mo ghaol, mo ghràdh an t-òg beadrach,  
 Dhannsadh eutrom ròghail aigheach,  
 Air bharr nan tonn bhiomaid beudrach (?),  
 Fo bhun nam beann bhiomaid togarrach.

[feadach ?

[bhonn

Mo ghaol, mo ghràdh an t-òg feucant  
 Tha muigh fo choill mhór nan geugan,  
 Reachainn leat thar chuan na h-Éireann.

A versatile man is Mackay,  
He can make silk of May wool,  
He can make wine of mountain water,  
He can make butter of the pure-white foam.

↪ If Mackay were but here,  
Or the redoubtable Neil, his brother,  
My dower would not be unpaid,  
Milch kine and heifers in calf would be there,  
Sheep black-faced and white would be there,  
Geldings would be there for ploughing  
And goats going to mountain pastures.

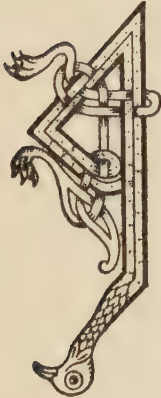
Mackay of the gusseted coat  
Is the rider of chestnut horses,  
Rider of the slender steeds,  
Who would put shoes of gold on their hooves,  
Who traversed the broken ground.

My dear, my love is the sportive youth,  
Who would dance lightly, royally, spiritedly,  
On the top of the waves we would be sportive,  
At the base of the bens we would be cheerful.

My dear, my love is the splendid youth  
Who is out in the great branchy wood,  
With thee I would cross the Irish Sea.

ÙISDEAN MAC GILLE-EASBUIG  
CHLÉIRICH

O — Camshron, croitear, Leideag, Barraidh. An t-Iuchar 1902.



FHIR mhóir o shliabh a' Chuilinn,  
'S làidir thu féin, 's treun do bhuille;  
Mo sheachd mollachd aig do mhuinte  
Nach d' leag i glùn ort na uileann  
Mun d' mharbh thu na bràithrean uile!

Bha mi 'n raoir an taigh na bòilich,  
Tha mi nochd an taigh na feòlaich;  
Fhuair mi am mart mór air chomhrainn,  
Mart bu reamhra, mart bu bhòidhche.

Dh'iarr an còcair orm rud itheadh:  
'Bhodaich, nach seall thu ad litir? \*  
Seall thu 'n trìuir ud air an islig, [eislinn  
'S am fear ud eile sa chistidh,  
Aonghus air an Dùn 'ga chuipeadh.' [Dùn an Sticir

Ghabh Domhall Odhar a' chuartach,  
'S olc am faothachadh a fhuair e,  
'Ga ruith le biodagan fuara,  
'S na coin mhór 'ga chur gu ruagadh,  
Na coin sheanga loma luatha  
'Ga chur fo chrùidhean each uaislean.†

\* Perhaps > E. *litter*. Cf. p. 32 *infra*.

† Tha an earrann seo aig feadhainn eile roimh an chóigeamh atharrachadh:

'S a bhean ud thall a leig an lasag,  
A bhuaill gu cruaidh na basan,  
Mo leanabh beag 's e gun bhaisteadh,  
Nam bu phiuthar thu do Eachann,  
Do Iain Donn na d' Aonghus maiseach.

## HUGH SON OF ARCHIBALD THE CLERK

From — Cameron, crofter, Leideag, Barra. July 1902.

THOU tall man from the Coolin hills,  
Strong art thou, mighty thy blow;  
My seven curses on thy foster-mother  
That she did not press on thee with knee or elbow  
Before thou didst slay all the brothers!

I was last night in the house of delirium,  
I am to-night in the house of carnage;  
I got my share of the large cow,  
The fattest and the finest cow.

The cook asked me to eat something :  
'Thou churl, wilt thou not look in thy letter?  
See yonder three on the bier,  
And that other one in the coffin,  
And Angus being lashed at Dùn an Sticir.'

Dun Donald was taken with the fever,  
An ill way did he pass the crisis,  
Being pursued with cold dirks,  
The great hounds putting him to flight,  
The lean spare swift hounds  
Driving him under the hooves of gentlemen's horses.

† Before the fifth section a second version has :

Thou woman yonder who didst vent thine anger,  
Who didst loudly clap thy hands,  
My little child is unbaptised,  
If thou wert a sister to Hector,  
To brown-haired John or handsome Angus.

Thànaig am Pìocair far Galldachd  
 'S cha d'fhuair e h-aon do na bràithrean;  
 Fhuair e Mór is fhuair e Màiri,  
 'S fhuair e mise, ceann an ànraidh—  
 Cha deachaidh mi anns an àireimh.  
 Gur truagh nach faicim féin mo mhàthair  
 A' ruith bho àite gu àite,  
 Gun fhasgadh gun àite tàmh,  
 Aig olcas 's a chaoidh i na bràithrean.

Uist, a bhean gun chiall gun tuigse!  
 'S mic dhomh fhéin mas bràithrean dhuts iad,  
 A ìochdar mo ghuim a thuit iad, [chuim  
 Is i mo ghlùn fhéin a dh'fhurtaich,  
 'S i mo léine lìn a fhliuch iad,  
 Bainne mo dhà chhìch a shluig iad.

Thog mi 'n gàrradh 's lòn mi 'n iodhlann,  
 Chan ann dha'n èorna ghlan thioram,  
 Na dha'n choirce gheal na mine, [mhine, innich  
 Ach a dh'ògradh òg mo chinnidh.

Ùisdein mhóir 'ic Leasba Chléirich,  
 Far an laigh thu slàn na h-éirich!  
 Sgeul do bhàis gu mnathan Shléite,  
 Do mhionach a bhith 'n cirb do léine,  
 Agus dhomhsa mo chuid fhéin dheth!

The Great Vicar came from the Lowlands  
And did not find one of the brothers alive;  
He found Marion and he found Mary,  
And he found me, wretch that I am—  
I was not of the number (of the dead).  
Would that I would see my mother  
Running from place to place,  
Without shelter or place to rest,  
Because of how ill she lamented the brothers.

Be quiet, thou woman without sense or understanding!  
They are sons to me, if they are brothers to thee;  
From my womb they were delivered,  
It was my own knee that succoured them,  
It was my linen shirt they wetted,  
It was the milk of my breasts they swallowed.

I raised the wall and I filled the corn-yard,  
Not of the clean dry barley,  
Or of the white mealy oats,  
But of the young men of my clan.

Tall Hugh, son of Archibald the Clerk,  
Where thou liest down, arise not whole!  
May the news of thy death reach the women of Sleat,  
May thy entrails be in the tail of thy shirt,  
And may I have my share in it!

A ró ho làil eo éile  
 Him bò ho laoil è  
 Ro hó no làil eo éile  
 Him bò ho laoil è

Cf. Craig, *Òrain Luaidh*, 23. The song refers to the rooting out of the MacVicars in North Uist by *Ùisdean mac Gille-easbuig Chléirich* (Hugh MacDonald, grandson of Donald Gruamach, 4th of Sleat). Donald, *Am Pìocair Mòr*, and his youngest son John (*Iain Donn*) held Baleshare and Eaval. Angus (*Aonghus Mhannta*) had Baleloch, Balemartine and Balone. Donald (*Domhnall Odhar*) had Carinish and Cladach Carinish.

A ro ho lail eo eile  
Him bo ho laoil eo  
Ro ho no lail eo eile  
Him bo ho laoil eo

Hector (*Eachann*) had Kyles Bernera, Baile Mhic Phàil and Baile Mhic Conain. His widow helped with the capture of Uisdean. Mór and Màiri were probably daughters of *Am Pìocair Mór*. See *Clan Donald*, iii. 30-48. The song was composed by a third daughter, name unknown. Earlier reference than *Clan Donald* is Cameron, *History and Traditions of the Isle of Skye*, 53-5.

## AN IORRAM DHARAICH

From the manuscript of the Rev. Angus Macphail, a native of Barvas, Lewis, and Free Church minister of Kilmartin, Argyll.



' EUDAIL-sa dh'fhearaibh na gréine,  
 Chan fhaca mi 'n diugh no 'n dé thu.  
 Chan fhaca mise fear t'eugais,  
 Ach an tig thu, Eòin mhic Sheumais,  
 'Nad aois òig mus do bhuin eug riut.  
 Bu [tu] ogha Ruairidh na féile,  
 'S iarogha Thorcaill nan geurlann,  
 Sliochd na mnà a choisinn ceutadh ;  
 Dh'fhàg thu m'aighe tùrsach deurach.

Comh-sheirm na luinneig.

'S na hada hia hì 's na hì hó hua

M'eudail a dh'fhearaibh nan àlach,  
 'N uair a dheigheadh tu gu d' bhàta  
 Siod an obair nach biodh cearr dhut,  
 Bhiodh do ghillean anns an àlach,  
 Bhiodh tu fhéin air stiùir do bhàta,  
 Fear curantach treubhach làidir.

'S na hada hia hì 's na hì hó hua

The subject of this song appears to have been Iain Òg mac Sheumais, son of James MacDonald of Castle Camus. His son was the famous warrior Domhnall mac Iain 'ic Sheumais, ancestor of the MacDonalds of Kingsburgh. Iain Òg mac Sheumais was killed in Mull in 1585. It

## ROWING SONG OF THE OAKEN GALLEY

The poem was written down from the recitation of an old man in Lewis.

My treasure among the men of the sun,  
 I have seen thee not to-day nor yesterday.  
 I have seen no man thy like,  
 Except thou come, O John son of James,  
 In thy youth before death has struck thee.  
 Thou wast the grandson of Roderick the generous,  
 And great-grandson of Torquil of the keen blades,  
 Seed of the woman who won esteem;  
 Thou hast left my spirit grieving and tearful.

The refrain.

'S na hada hia hi 's na hi ho hua

My treasure among the men of the oar-banks,  
 When thou wouldst go to thy boat  
 That was the work that well became thee,  
 Thy lads would be in the oar-bank,  
 Thyself wouldst be at thy boat's helm,  
 A champion-like, valiant, powerful man.

'S na hada hia hi 's na hi ho hua

would appear from the song that his mother was of the MacLeods of Lewis. See *Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis*, 11; R. C. MacLeod, *MacLeods of Dunvegan*, 85; Mackenzie, *History of the MacLeods*, 25; *Clan Donald*, iii. 231, 469, 499.

M'eudail is m'euraig is m'eallach  
 Iain Òg mac Sheumais nam meallshul,  
 Sùil ghorm 'nad eudainn 's cha b'fhanaid,\*  
 Sheòl thu 'n dé troimh chuan na Hearadh,  
 'S mo dhùrachd fhéin dhut ruighinn fallain.

'S na hada hia hì 's na hì hó hua

M'eudail a dh'fhearaibh na beinne,  
 'N uair a dheigheadh tu dha na beannaibh  
 'S e do lòsan nach biodh falamh, [lòistean  
 Gum b'ann le gunna bheòil thana  
 No le iubhar nam meallan,  
 Briseadh cnàimh 's gach àit ri 'm beanadh,  
 Sior chur fàilt air fear nan langan.

'S na hada hia hì 's na hì hó hua

M'eudail-sa dh'fhearaibh na dìle,  
 Chunna mi dol seachad sìos thu ;  
 Gu meal thu gruagach na stìoma,  
 Nighean tighearn Ghleanna Sìthe, [Lìbhe?  
 'Gan robh 'n cinneadh leathann lìonmhor,  
 Céis ghlan bho leitir an fhìon † thu,

Gheibh thu buaile de'n chrodh chòrdhubh.

'S na hada hia hì 's na hì hó hua

M'eudail-sa dh'fhearaibh na seòltachd,  
 'N uair a shìneadh tu ri seòladh  
 Ghlacadh i eadar na sgòide,  
 Cneadan a cléithe bu cheòl dhut,  
 Stiùir 'na déidh 's fear treubhach eòlach  
 'Ga stiùradh san iùl bu chòir dhi.

'S na hada hia hì 's na hì hó hua

\* leg. *anaid*, *ainid*, bad, vexing; cf. E. Ir. *anait*, unpleasant, displeasing;  
 so 's *cha b'anaid*=and a right kind one. † Place Name?

My treasure and my ransom and my dower is  
 Young John, son of James, of the full round eyes,  
 Blue is thine eye, and it is no mockery,  
 Yesterday thou didst sail through the Sound of Harris,  
 And my own good wish to thee for thy safe coming.

'S na hada hia hi 's na hi ho hua

My treasure among the men of the mountain,  
 When thou wouldst go to the peaks  
 Truly thy lodging (?) would not be empty,  
 But with slender-muzzled gun  
 Or with the knobbed bow of yew,  
 Breaking bones wherever it struck,  
 Welcoming ever him of the belling. [i.e. the stag

'S na hada hia hi 's na hi ho hua

My treasure among the men of the flood, [sea?  
 I saw thee passing downward by;  
 Mayest thou enjoy the tressed maiden of the snood,  
 Daughter of the lord of Glen Shee, [?  
 Of kindred wide-spread and many,  
 A bright form (?) from the vine-slope art thou,  
 [harp-string, harp-key?  
 Thou shalt get a fold of jet-black cattle.

'S na hada hía hi 's na hi ho hua

My treasure among the men of deftness,  
 When thou wouldst turn to sailing  
 She would catch the breeze between the sheets,  
 The creak of the oars was music for thee,  
 Rudder behind her and a valiant, skilful man  
 Steering her in her proper course.

'S na hada hia hi 's na hi ho hua

M'eudail is m'euraig is m'ulaidh  
 Luchd nan leadan dubh is donna  
 Dhèanadh an fhairge a phronnadh,  
 Dhèanadh a darach a sgeolladh, [sgeoltadh  
 'S a dh'òladh fìon dearg 'na thonnan,  
 Thogadh creach bheir motach Thomman.\*

'S na hada hia hì 's na hì hó hua

M'eudail is m'euraig is m'callach,  
 'N uair a dheigheadh tu chum na mara  
 'S e do làmh nach faight air lapadh  
 Ged nach robh thu féin ach leanabh;  
 Crann taraig 'ga shníomh á darach  
 'S i tilgeadh lann bharr cheann gach taraig;  
 Cha robh do luingeas air crìonadh,†  
 'S cha robh do sheòladh gu ìosal.‡

'S na hada hia hì 's na hì hó hua

M'eudail is m'euraig is m'ulaidh,  
 'S ann ort dh'fhàs a' mhaise mhullaich,  
 Gruag leadanach sheudach § dhuilleach [theudach?  
 Air a cìreadh 's air a cumadh;  
 'S nam bu bhard mi dhèanainn iorram,  
 'S nam bu shaor mi dhèanainn luingeas,  
 Is 'nad dhéidh-sa 's éiginn fuireach.

'S na hada hia hì 's na hì hó hua

\* Cf. Dearbhail Nic-a-Bhriuthain: thigeadh steach air mòintich Tholl-aidh / 's a thogadh creach o mhuinntir Thomaidh, *Sàr Obair* (1872), 57 b.

† leg. *crannadh*?

‡ leg. *air aineoil*?

§ leg. *steudach*? cf. *Eilean Fraoich*, 64.

My treasure and my ransom and my hoard  
 Are the men of the black and brown locks  
 Who would pound the ocean,  
 Who would souse her oaken timbers,  
 Who would drink red wine in waves  
 And who would carry off a spoil . . .

'S na hada hia hi 's na hi ho hua

My treasure and my ransom and my dower,  
 When thou wouldst go to sea  
 Truly thy hand was not found feeble  
 Though thou wast but a child;  
 Wooden pins would be twisted from her oaken planks,  
 She would shed the rove from every rivet's head;  
 Thy craft was not decayed,  
 And thy sailing was not inshore.

'S na hada hia hi 's na hi ho hua

My treasure and my ransom and my hoard,  
 Beauty of head grew richly on thee,  
 Hair in luxuriant precious locks  
 Well combed, of goodly cut;  
 And were I a bard I would make an oar-song,  
 And were I a carpenter I would make ships,  
 And here behind thee I needs must abide.

'S na hada hia hi 's na hi ho hua

## IAIN ÒG MAC MhIC NÉILL

Bho Mhóir nighean Alasdair Mhic Néill (Alasdair mac Ruairidh Bhàin),  
Ceann Tangabhal, Barraidh. 2a de'n Dùdlachd 1870.

THUBHAIRT am beulaiche: Is i a mhuime a rinn an t-òran seo do Iain Òg mac Mhic Néill Bharraidh. Thànaig an tòir air Iain Òg mac Mhic Néill, agus rugadh air a' tighinn air tìr á sgoth iasgaich, agus thugadh air falbh e 'na phrìosanach do Ghlascho. Is e am bàs a thug iad dha a chur ann an togsaid agus an togsaid a leigeil leis a' bheinn, an dala h-àite an Dùn Éideann no an Sasann. Bha bioran a staigh troimh an togsaid, agus dar a rànaig an togsaid bonn na beinne bha Iain Òg mac Mhic Néill marbh.



O ho éile hó i o hù o

Hó i o hù o

Ho ho éile hó i o hù o

Is mis a' bhean bhochd

Th'air mo chreachadh,

Hó i o hù o

Chan e mo chrodh

No mo chapaill,

No mo chruachan

Air an sgapadh;

Chan e m'iodhlann

Dhol 'na lasair,

No mo dhaisean

Air an creachadh;

Chan e mo nighean

Dh'fhalbh le h-asaid,

Gum b'fhiach do mhnaoi

Tuireadh tacan;

gualadh MS.]

Cf. W. C. Mackenzie, *The Western Isles*, 180. This is no doubt John Òg MacNeil of Barra who was taken prisoner to Glasgow in 1610 and then

## YOUNG JOHN SON OF MACNEIL

From Marion daughter of Alexander MacNeil (Alexander son of Fair Roderick), Ceann Tangabhal, Barra. 2nd December 1870.

THE reciter said: It was his foster-mother who composed this song to Young John, son of MacNeil of Barra. John Òg son of MacNeil was pursued, and he was caught landing from a fishing skiff, and he was carried away prisoner to Glasgow. The death they inflicted on him was to put him in a barrel, and to let the barrel roll down the mountain-side, either in Edinburgh or in England. There were spikes thrust through the barrel, and when the barrel reached the foot of the mountain John Òg son of MacNeil was dead.

Ho ho eile ho i o hu o  
 Ho hi o hu o  
 Ho ho eile ho i o hu o

I am the poor woman  
 Who has been harried,

Ho hi o hu o

It is not my cattle  
 Or my horses,  
 Or that my corn-stacks  
 Have been scattered;  
 It is not that my corn-yard  
 Has gone up in flames,  
 Or that my mows  
 Have been plundered;  
 It is not that my daughter  
 Has died in childbed,  
 That drives a woman  
 To lament a space;

transferred to the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, where he died (*The Clan MacNeil*, 67-9; *Miscellany of Maitland Club*, iii. 30).

Chan e chreach mi,  
 Ach mo chùirtear  
 'N làimh an Glascho,  
 'S iad a' maoidheadh  
 Chur a Shasann  
 No Dhùn Éideann  
 Nan ceud fasan. [glasán  
 Nan gabht éirig  
 As mo leanabh,  
 Cha bhiodh an crodh  
 Sìos na gleannaibh;  
 Cha bhiodh eich  
 A' feamnadh feamain;  
 Cha bhiodh caoirich  
 Bhàn air bheannaibh!  
 Dheagh mhic Mhic Néill  
 'N tùs o'n Chaisteal,  
 'S i mo làmh-sa  
 Bha 'gad fhalcadh,  
 'S i mo ghlùn-sa  
 Bha 'gad altram,  
 'S i mo chìoch-sa  
 Bha 'gad atadh.  
 Dheagh mhic Mhic Néill  
 Bho'n tùr 's bho'n Chaisteal,  
 Mharbh thu 'n coirneal,  
 Leòin thu 'n caiptean;  
 Thug thu do shluagh  
 Fhéin leat dhachaigh,  
 Luchd nan cùl donn  
 'S nan leadan clannach;  
 Dh'fhàg thu na Goill  
 Marbh gun anam,

. . . . .  
 It is not that has harried me,  
 But that my courtier  
 Is in prison in Glasgow,  
 And that they are threatening  
 To send him to England,  
 Or to Edinburgh  
 Of the hundred fashions.  
 Were a ransom accepted  
 For my child,  
 The cattle would not be  
 Adown the glens;  
 Horses would not be  
 Carrying seaweed;  
 There would be no white  
 Sheep on the hills.  
 Goodly son of MacNeil  
 Once of the Castle,  
 It is my hand that  
 Used to bathe thee,  
 It is my knee that  
 Used to nurse thee,  
 It is my breast that  
 Used to swell thee.  
 Goodly son of MacNeil  
 From the tower and the Castle,  
 Thou didst kill the colonel,  
 Thou didst wound the captain;  
 Thou didst bring thine own  
 Force home with thee,  
 The host with brown hair  
 And curling locks;  
 Thou didst leave the Lowlanders  
 Dead without life,

[locks

Luchd nan gruaga  
Ruadha greannach.  
'S mi th'air mo ghualadh,  
Th'air mo sgaradh,  
'Nam thaigh mór,  
'Nam thaigh taisgidh;  
Mo chadal-taigh,  
M'àite leapa,—  
Ge b'oil liom sin,  
Chan e chreach mi!

The host with polls  
Red and bristly.  
I am tortured  
And tormented,  
In my mansion,  
In my store-house ;  
My sleeping-chamber,  
My bed-room,—  
Though woe is me for that,  
It is not what has harried me !



## ÒRAN LUaidH

O Mhàiri Nic Rath, banchag, Na Hearadh.

UG òireannan o hì a bhó  
Hì ri rì o hì ri a bhó

'S ann a raoir nach d'fhuair mi 'n cadal.  
Ged rinn mi mhocheirigh mhadainn,  
Cha b'e mhìod 's a rinn mi chadal,  
Ach cùram nan gamhn 's an oidhch fada,  
'S cùram gach nì dh'an robh agam.

'S trom an cadal ort, a Sheumais,  
Nach tànaig thu 'n diugh na 'n dé mì.

[d'rànaig?

Chuirinn comhlan steach an leacaich.  
Fhleasgaich, lùb thu mì 'nad bhreacan,  
'S ged a lùb gun thàr mì as uat.  
Cha b'e gràin do phòig bhith agam,  
Ach feagal na cliù sa mhadainn,  
Feagal a' choirean 's a' phearsan.

Chuir mi comhlan seach a' bhuaile,  
Shaoil liom fhé gum bu daoine uails iad;  
Cha robh sìod ach balaich shuarach.  
Rànaig iad doras na h-uamha,  
Mo thriuir bhràthair fhé 'nan suain ann,

Cf. Craig, *Òrain Luaidh*, 96; K. N. MacDonald's *Puirt-a-Beul*, 46; *Gesto Collection*, App., 22; *An Gàidheal*, March 1951, 22. There is a version in the MacLagan MSS., printed in *The Highland Monthly*, i. 211, which ascribes

## WAULKING SONG

From Mary Macrae, dairywoman, Harris.

HUG oireannan o hi a bho  
Hi ri ri o hi ri a bho

Last night it was I did not sleep.  
Though my morning rising was early,  
It was not that I had slept much,  
But I was worrying about the stirks since the night  
was long,  
And worrying about all in my charge.

Heavy is thy sleep, James,  
When thou didst not reach me to-day or  
yesterday.

I would escort a company in along the hillside.  
Young gallant, thou didst wrap me in thy plaid,  
But though thou didst, I gave thee the slip.  
It was not that I hated to have thy kiss,  
But for fear of my fair fame in the morning,  
For fear of the fault-finder and the parson.

I escorted a company past the cattle-fold,  
I thought that they were gentlemen;  
They were but contemptible churls.  
They reached the mouth of the cave;  
My own three brothers were asleep there;

it to 'Bean Mhic Mhàrtuinn na Leitireach,' i.e. the wife of MacMartin of Letterfinlay in Lochaber (Maclagan MSS., nos. 129 and 117).

Shàth iad annt an sgionan fuara ;  
 'S e mo bhasa fhé bu chuach dhaibh,  
 Tarraing uisg dh'an lotan fuara ;  
 Thilg mi 'n cuman, chaill mi bhuarach.

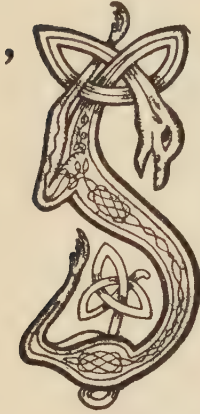
Chunnaas bàta steach an caolas,  
 Bean 'na deireadh 's i slor chaoineadh,  
 Bean 'na toiseach 's a ceann sgaoilte.  
 Dh'fharraid mi diubh 'd é fàth an caoinidh.  
 'Chan ann ri cumha nan laogha,  
 Na ri cumha nan gamhna caola,  
 Na ri cumha nan caigeann caora,  
 Ach mo thriùir mhac sa bhlàr gun fhaotainn,  
 Tha 'n triùir bhràthair air gach taobh dhaibh.'

They thrust their cold dirks in them ;  
My own palms were a cup to them,  
Drawing water to their cold wounds ;  
I had thrown away the cogue and lost the spancel.

A boat was seen entering the narrows,  
A woman in its stern ever weeping,  
A woman in its prow with hair dishevelled.  
I asked them the reason for their weeping.  
'It is not a lament for the calves,  
Nor a lament for the lean stirks,  
Nor a lament for the pairs of sheep,  
But my three sons are lost in the battle,  
And the three brothers are on either side of them.'

## ÒRAN LUaidH

Bean Dhomhnaill 'ic an Tòisich, tàillear, Baghasdal fo Dheas,  
Uibhist a Deas.



MULADACH, 's muladach thà mi,  
Dìreadh na beinne 's 'ga teàrnadh.  
Thuit mo chridhe, 's fhad o'n là sin,  
Cha tog fidheall e no clàrsach,  
Na piob-mhór nam feadan arda.  
Agam fhéin a bhiodh na bràithrean  
Dh'imireadh, dh'òladh 's a phàigheadh,  
Chuireadh imirt air an tàileasg  
'S air na cairte breaca bàna,  
'S air na dìsne geala cnàmha.  
Thuirt mo Mhuime ri mo Shlàn'ear

Nach i 'n Aona bha 'gan àrach,  
Ach an Luan an tùs na ràithe,  
No Di-Domhnaich, là na Sàbaid.  
Mharbh a' bhadhbh an Colla 's Ràghall,  
'S an t-Eachann beag, mac an càrrghlais.\*

Siod, a Rìgh, nach tigeadh ise,  
'S a làmh leònta 's a cas briste,  
Sireadh léigh am beul gach litreach, †  
Gun aon léigh san tùr ach mise,  
'S air mo làimh gun dèanainn misneach,  
Lùbainn cnàimh 's gun tàirninn silteach;  
'N uair a dhùininn beul do chiste,  
Chuirinn ùir air bruaich do lice.

\* leg. *èarlais*?

† ? < E. *litter*. Cf. p. 10 *supra*.

Cf. Craig, *Òrain Luaidh*, 102 and 9; *Trans. Gael. Soc. Invs.*, xxvii. 396 (MacNicol MSS.).

## WAULKING SONG

From the wife of Donald Macintosh, tailor, South Boisdale,  
South Uist.

SAD, sad am I,  
Climbing the hill and descending it.  
My heart fell since many a day,  
Fiddle nor harp will raise it,  
Nor war-pipe of the shrill reeds.  
It was I who had the brothers  
Who would gamble, drink and pay,  
Who would play at backgammon  
And with white and speckled cards,  
And with white ivory dice.  
My foster-mother said to my Saviour  
That it was not Friday that was rearing them (?)\*,  
But the Monday at the beginning of the quarter,  
Or the Lord's Day, the Sabbath day.  
The witch killed Coll and Ranald,  
And little Hector, the son of the . . .

Would, O King, that she would come,  
With her hand wounded and her leg broken,  
Seeking a leech in every port (?),  
And no leech in the land but I;  
By my hand, I would take courage,  
I would bend bone and draw blood;  
When I would close thy coffin's lid,  
I would pile earth on the brink of thy tomb.

\* Other versions have *àireamh*. It was unlucky to count things on a Friday (Nicolson, *Gaelic Proverbs*, 407; J. G. Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Scottish Highlands*, 299).

Mhic Iain Mhùideartaich na féile,  
 'S mise bhean bhochd dhubhach dheurach ;  
 Chan ann air lughad mo spréidhe.  
 Mar Iain Mùideartach na féile  
 Cha deachaidh luingeas fo bhréid dut,  
 Cha deachaidh làmh dhearg gu feum dut,  
 Ach bataichean \* geala gleusda.  
 Mhic Iain Mhùideartaich na féile,  
 Cha deach ort an tuiream bhréige ;  
 Is cumha liom bhith 'gad réiteach ;  
 Chunna mi latha bha feum ort ;  
 Latha Chnoc nan Dos bha géir ort ;  
 Latha Ghlinn Saighid bha gleus ort,  
 Dhòirt thu fuil is ghearr thu féithean,  
 Dh'fhàg thu nàmhaid air dhroch reubadh,  
 Mnathan a' fàgail an céille,  
 Fir 'gan ceangal o 's e b'fheudar.

Cha chadal dhomh ach am dhùsgadh,  
 Mire cha dèan mi no sùgradh ;  
 Chunna mi do choill 'ga rùsgadh,  
 Marcraich an eich dhuibh air thùs ann,  
 Marcraich na fàlaire dhùbhghorm.

Marcraich an eich chrùdhaich chlisgich  
 Le spuir òir 's le bhròg nach bristeadh.

'S muladach, 's muladach thà mi  
 Dìreadh na beinne 's 'ga teàrnadh.

Hill-irinn ó hò huill ó ró bha hò  
 Hill-irinn è hó ho ró huill ó ho ró

\* *bàtaichean*, Craig.

Son of the generous John of Moidart,\*  
 I am the poor sorrowful tearful woman;  
 It is not for the fewness of my cattle.  
 Like the generous John of Moidart  
 Ships went not under sail for thee,  
 The Red Hand did not go into action for thee,  
 But white trimmed staves (?).  
 Son of the generous John of Moidart,  
 No lying dirge was chanted over thee;  
 Woe is me that thou art being shrouded;  
 I saw a day when there was need of thee;  
 The day of Cnoc nan Dos thou wast keen;  
 The day of Kilsyth (?) thou wast active,  
 Thou didst spill blood and cut sinews,  
 Thou didst leave the enemy badly mangled,  
 Women taking leave of their senses,  
 Men being bandaged as was needful.

There is no sleep for me; I lie awake,  
 I cannot make merry or divert myself;  
 I have seen thy wood being stripped,  
 The rider of the black horse was in the van,  
 The rider of the sable steed.

The rider of the prancing well-shod charger  
 With his golden spurs and his boots that would not crack.

Sad, sad am I, climbing  
 The hill and descending it.

Hill-irinn o ho huill o ro bha ho  
 Hill-irinn e ho ho ro huill o ho ro

\* Donald, eleventh of Clan Ranald, who died in Canna in 1686. He had played a distinguished part in the Civil War in Scotland and Ireland.

## ÒRAN LUaidH

Bho Mhàiri Bhòid, croitear, Gleann, Barraidh.



S anmoch chuala mi 'n fhaghaid  
 Eadar Ceann a' Bhàigh 's an fhadhail,  
 'S cha ghuth cànrain 's cha ghuth gaghair,  
 Guth na mnà 's i 'm barr a meadhail.  
 Comhlan fhear òg as mo dheaghaidh,  
 'S mas tu fhéin a bha dh'an taghadh,  
 Ghabh thu 'n diù is dhiùlt thu 'n raghainn  
 'S dhiùlt thu 'n t-òigear seòlta seaghach.  
 Buanaiche math ri là faghair,  
 Théid thu dha'n bheinn am bi 'n fhaghaid,  
 'S bidh do chù 's do ghille 'd dheaghaidh,  
 'S bheir thu 'm fiadh far tùs na graighe.\*

M'iarratas air Rìgh na gréine  
 Nar millear thu 'n còir no 'n eucoir,  
 An iomlaid chlaidhimh no sgéithe,  
 Na ma òl na beòire bréige.

Thug mi gaol a mhac na bainich,  
 Céile nan gruagach banail,  
 'S ann riut féin a dh'earbainn m'anam  
 Dol timcheall Rubha na Gaillinn,  
 'S dol air tìr am Port na h-Eala

E ho hao rì ho hó gu  
 E ho haoi ri ri hao ri rì  
 Hi hó ri rì  
 E ho hao rì ho ró  
 E ho hao rì ri ó

\* *tur na cridhe?* MS. (The reading in the text is that in Canon Cf. Craig, *Òrain Luaidh*, 99.)

## WAULKING SONG

From Mary Boyd, crofter, Glen, Barra.

'Twas late that I heard the hunt  
 Between Bay Head and the ford,  
 Not voice of wrangling nor voice of hound,  
 But voice of woman on the crest of her joy.  
 A band of young men after me,  
 And if it was thyself who didst choose them,  
 Thou didst take the worst and reject the choice  
 And refuse the youth of skill and courage.  
 A good reaper on a harvest day,  
 Thou shalt go to the hill where the hunt will be,  
 Thy dog and thy lad shall be after thee,  
 And thou shalt take the deer from the forefront of the herd.

My petition to the King of the sun  
 That thou be not destroyed in right nor in wrong,  
 In exchange of sword nor of shield,  
 Nor at the drinking of deceiving beer.

I gave my love to the son of the weaving-woman,  
 Spouse of the womanly maidens,  
 'Tis to thee I'd trust my life  
 Going around Rubha na Gaillinn,  
 And going on land at Port na h-Eala

·   ·   ·   ·   ·   ·   ·  
 E ho hao ri ho ho gu  
 E ho haoi ri ri hao ri ri  
 Hi ho ri ri  
 E ho hao ri ho ro  
 E ho hac ri ri o

Maclean's Collection. Cf. *MacDonald Collection*, 228.)

## DONNCHADH MAC CUILCEIN

Is i nighean Dhomhnaill 'ic Cathain \* 'ic Mhuirich Stadhlaigearraidh a rinn an t-òran seo do Dhonnchadh Mac Cuilcein. Is e Donnchadh Mac Cuilcein a thog a' cheud mhuileann riamh ann an Uibhist. A chum uisge fhaighinn dha'n mhuileann chuir e stad air na lochan a ruith; agus dh'at an t-uisge suas anns na lochan agus sgaoil na lochan a mach a sìos agus a suas, thall agus a bhos, anns gach àite, gus an do chomhdaicheadh gach àite agus gus an deachaidh gach àite fodha mun cuart Hogh Mór.



S e Donnchadh Mac Cuilcein

Thug tuil air gach rathad;

Thug tuil air gach àite

'S am Bràth gun tighinn fhathast.

Cha robh fiodh no iarann

No sian a ghabhadh tarraing

Nach robh sìos an Cùlath

Le strùladh na h-abhainn.

Chì mi Caibeal Dhiarmaid

'Na chreig iasgaich fhathast,

'S ma leumas an Garbhath

Bidh arbhar gun cheangal.

Chì mi Teisteamal an eòrna

'S an lòn m'a theis-meadhon,

Is Caibeal Chlann 'ic Colla

'S muir m'a tholla fraighibh.

\* For *Cathail*?

## DUNCAN MAC CUILCEIN

THE daughter of Donald son of Cathan Mac Mhuirich of Stadhlaigearraidh composed this song to Duncan Mac Cuilcein. Duncan Mac Cuilcein built the first mill in Uist. In order to get water for the mill he closed the outflow of the lochs ; and the water of these rose, and the lochs spread out at either end, this way and that, everywhere, until every place was covered and submerged around Hagh Mór.

It is Duncan Mac Cuilcein  
Who has brought a flood on every road ;

Who has brought a flood on every place  
Though the Judgment has not yet come.

There was neither timber nor iron  
Nor anything that could be dragged

But was down in the Back Ford  
With the scouring of the stream.

I shall see Diarmaid's Chapel  
A fishing-rock yet,

And if the Rough Ford rises  
There will be corn unbound.

I shall see Teisteamal of the barley  
With the water in its midst,

And the Chapel of the Clan MacColl  
With the sea about its breached walls.

## ÒRAIN LUaidH

Cà 'n iodhlann no 'n àtha  
No 'n àit an robh m'athair?

Chan e sin tha mi 'g àrach  
Ach làrach nan cnamhan.

E ho ì bho ì a bhó  
A hóill a bhó  
E ho ì a bhó hì ri ho ró  
E ho ì a bhó hóill a bhó ho ró

Where is the cornyard or the kiln  
Or the place where my father was?

It is not of that I complain  
But the resting-place of the bones.

E ho i bho i a bho

A hoill a bho

E ho i a bho hi ri ho ro

E ho i a bho hoill a bho ho ro

## SGIAN AIR CHALL

Bho Mhàiri Nic Gille Mhaoil, croitear, Lianacuidh,  
Ìochdar, Uibhist a' Chinn a Deas.



A hó ì eadh hó hó ill a bhì  
Na hó ibh ó hao rì ho a ró  
Na hó hao rì ó bho leathag

Chaill mis an sgian bhòidheach  
Di-Domhnaich seo chaìdh,

Cha b'fhaid i na snàthad  
'S gum b'fhearr i na claidhe.

Thuit i anns an luachair  
'S cha d'fhuair mi i fhathast;

Tha mi sgìth 'ga h-iarraidh  
Air ìochdar an leathaid.

Cha tugainn i 'n iasad  
A mhàthair no dh'athair,

No dh'Aonghus Mac Dhiarmaid,—  
Ged iarradh chan fhaigheadh.

## A MISSING KNIFE

From Mary Macmillan, crofter, Lianacuidh, Ìochdar,  
South Uist.

NA ho i eadh ho ho ill a bhi  
Na ho ibh o hao ri ho a ro  
Na ho hao ri o bho leathag

I lost the beautiful knife  
On Sunday just past,

It was no longer than a needle  
And it was better than a sword.

It fell among the rushes  
And I have not found it yet;

I am tired searching for it  
At the foot of the slope.

I would not give it on loan  
To mother or father,

Or to Angus MacDiarmid,—  
Were he to ask, he would not get it.

## ÒRAN LUaidH

Is e seo an ceud òran a bhite a' seinn aig an luadh an Cola.



HÓ haoi ri hó ro

Mhic Fhir Shórasdail, mo rùn ort!  
 'S oil liom fhéin a chuir air chùl thu,  
 Is air-san a chall a dhùthcha  
 Gun tig siod fhathast gu cunntas,  
 Gum bi Caimbeulaich 'gan sgiùrsadh,  
 Sgabadh air prasgan an t-sùghain.

'S truagh gun mi 's mo rogha céile  
 Anns a' choill ud thall ag éirigh;  
 Gur math a nighinn do léine,  
 Thiormaichinn i air bharr nan geugan,  
 Bheirinn glan an làimh do phéid i.

'S truagh nach robh mis 's an t-òg gasd  
 Air mullach nam beann geura casa,  
 Gun duine beò bhith 'gar faicinn.  
 Thigeamaid gu cliùiteach dhachaigh,  
 Reachadh an stiom dhearg am pasgadh,  
 Reachadh am bréid beannd san fhasan. [caol

Cf. Craig, *Òrain Luaidh*, 9-10; parts correspond to a song beginning 'Tha caolas eadar mi 's Iain.' In a version of this 'gar faicinn is 'nar faice (i.e. *f+aice*), near us.

## WAULKING SONG

THE following was the first song to be sung at the waulking in Coll.

I HO haoi ri ho ro

My love is to thee, son of the laird of Sórásdal!  
 I hate the man who has cast thee down,  
 And against him who destroyed his country  
 That will yet come to be reckoned,  
 The Campbells will be driven out,  
 And the rabble of the sowens scattered.

Sad that I and my chosen love  
 Were not in yonder wood arising;  
 Well would I wash thy shirt,  
 I would dry it on the tips of the boughs,  
 I would set it clean in thy page's hand.

Sad that I and the splendid youth  
 Were not on the summit of the sharp steep peaks,  
 With no living man beholding us.  
 In good repute we would come home,  
 The red snood would be folded by,  
 The peaked kertch would come into fashion.

## ÒRAN LUaidH IORTACH

THE song was composed by a maiden of St Kilda, who had been carried away and married in Lewis. She was not happy in Lewis, and yearned for her native home and her St Kilda lover.



ILL hù hill hó  
Hill hó ro bha hó  
Hill hù hill hó

Bu tu mo thrò nan tigeadh tu. [mar thigeadh

B'fhearr liom na na shuair mi nithinn  
Bhith 'n Iort a' spìonadh nan ian dubha,  
Hill hù hó

Mar ri sùlaire a' ghuib liath  
Bheir an t-iasg á druim an t-srutha.  
Hill hù hó

Òganaich nam brògan arda,  
Théid thu 'n bhàthach mun  
tàr mi suidhe. [thu?  
Hill hù hó

Dhannsadh tu gu làidir lùthmhor,  
Do dhà ghlùn cha lùbadh lughadh.  
Hill hù hó

Bheir thu 'm fulmair 's bheir thu 'n gearrball,  
'S bheir thu 'n sgarbh á calg an rubha.  
Hill hù hó

Théid thu mhórthir mhór Chinn tSàile  
Ard?] Mar ri Ìomhar ard a' Bhruthaich.  
Hill hù hill hó

## A ST KILDA WAULKING SONG

HILL hu hill ho  
 Hill ho ro bha ho  
 Hill hu hill ho

Thou wouldst be my support (?) \* didst thou come.

I should prefer to all the cattle I have got  
 To be in St Kilda plucking the guillemots,  
 Hill hu ho

Along with the grey-billed solan goose  
 Which snatches the fish from the surface of the current.  
 Hill hu ho

Thou youth with the top-boots,  
 Thou wilt go to the byre before I can [thou canst?  
 sit down.  
 Hill hu ho

Thou wouldst dance strongly and vigorously,  
 Without ever bending thy knees.  
 Hill hu ho

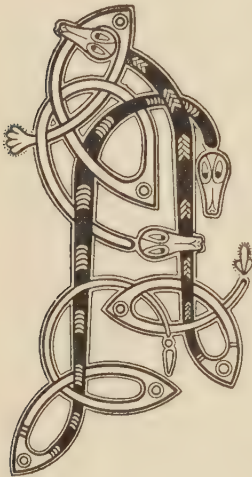
Thou wilt bring the fulmar and the garefowl,  
 And the cormorant from the point of the cape.  
 Hill hu ho

Thou wilt go to the great mainland of Kintail  
 Along with tall Ivar of the Brae. [With Ivar of Ardbrae?  
 Hill hu hill ho

\* (?) cf. *treó, Ériu*, xiii. 214.

## A PHIÛTHRAG NAN RÙN

THERE were two sisters and one brother in a family in Barra. The brother went over to Ireland. One of the sisters died, and her spirit



PHIÛTHRAG nan rùn,  
A bheil thu 'd chadal?

Ill-i-rinn is hò rò  
Ill-i-rinn is hò rò

Ma tha, chan e  
Fàth a th'agad;

Thoir sin leat ma chuala tu.  
Hì-ibh ò hò hì  
Na hì hiùraibh ò ro hì

Am bràthair a bha  
'N Éirinn againn,

O hoireann o hò ro ì  
Hoireann ò hì ri éile

Moch an dé ac  
Air na maidean.

Bha mi 'nan sgàth  
'S càch gun m'fhaicinn;

Greis air làr dhomh,  
Greis air each dhomh,

[Treis

Cf. Frances Tolmie's Collection (*Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, vol. iv.), no. 21; two versions contributed by Rev. John Macrury to *Trans. Gael. Soc. Invs.*, xvi. 105; Air in Patrick MacDonald's Collection, no. 1;

## LITTLE SISTER OF LOVE

came back to tell the living sister that their brother had died in Ireland.

LITTLE sister of love,  
Art thou asleep?

Ill-i-rinn is ho ro  
Ill-i-rinn is ho ro

If thou art, thou  
Hast no cause;

Take that with thee if thou hast heard it.  
Hi-ibh o ho hi  
Na hi hiuraibh o ro hi

The brother of ours  
Who was in Ireland,  
  
O hoireann o ho ro i  
Hoireann o hi ri eile

Yesterday early they had  
Upon the staves.

I was beside them  
And the rest not seeing me;

Awhile on the ground I was,  
Awhile on horseback,

see also Amy Murray, *Father Allan's Island*, 124, and J. Gregorson Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Scottish Highlands*, 179.

## ÒRAIN LUAIDH

Is greis an sgàil  
Uain am pasgadh.

A phiùthrag nam piùthrag,  
Bheil thu 'd chadal?

Thoir siod leat mar chuala tu e.  
Hì-ibh ò hò hì  
Na hì hiùraibh ò ro hì

Am bràthair a bha  
'N Éirinn againn,

Bha e 'n dé ac  
Air na maidean.

And awhile from their sight  
In a green veil folded.

Little sister of sisters,  
Art thou asleep?

Take that with thee as thou hast heard it.  
Hi-ibh o ho hi  
Na hi hiuraibh o ro hi

The brother of ours  
Who was in Ireland,

Yesterday they had him  
Upon the staves.

## A PHIÛTHRAG, A RÙIN

THERE were two sisters and a brother in a family in Barra. The brother went over to Ireland. One of the two sisters died, and after



PHIÛTHRAG, a rùin,  
Bheil thu 'd chadal?

Ill-i-rinn is hò rò  
Ill-i-rinn is hò rò

Am bràthair a bha  
'N Éirinn againn,

Hì-ibh ò hò hì  
Na hì hiùraibh ò ro hì

Am bràthair a bha  
'N Éirinn againn,

Ill-i-rinn is hò rò  
Ill-i-rinn is hò rò

Moch an dé ac  
Air na maidean.

Hì-ibh ò hò hì  
Na hì hiùraibh ò ro hì

Moch an dé ac  
Air na maidean.

Ill-i-rinn is hò rò etc.

## LITTLE SISTER, MY LOVE

her death her spirit came back to tell that their brother had died in Ireland.

LITTLE sister, my love  
Art thou asleep?

Ill-i-rinn is ho ro  
Ill-i-rinn is ho ro

The brother of ours  
Who was in Ireland,

Hi-ibh o ho hi  
Na hi hiuraibh o ro hi

The brother of ours  
Who was in Ireland,

Ill-i-rinn is ho ro  
Ill-i-rinn is ho ro

Yesterday early they had  
Upon the staves.

Hi-ibh o ho hi  
Na hi hiuraibh o ro hi

Yesterday early they had  
Upon the staves.

Ill-i-rinn is ho ro etc.

D\*

## ÒRAIN LUAIDH

Bha mi 'nan sgàth  
 'S càch gun m'fhaicinn,

Treis air làr dhomh,  
 Treis air each dhomh,

Is treis an sgàil  
 Uain am pasgadh.

Bheir mi comharr  
 Dhut air th'aislig :

Bhàthach mhór tha  
 Fo na martaibh,

Bidh i màireach  
 'Na dearg lasair ;

'S an leanabh beag sin  
 Tha 'nad asgail,

Gheobh thu marbh e  
 'N calp do leapach.

Thoir siod leat mar  
 Chual thu dhachaigh.

Am bràthair a bha  
 'N Éirinn againn,

Moch an dé ac  
 Air na maidean.

I was beside them  
And the rest not seeing me,

Awhile on the ground I was,  
Awhile on horseback,

And awhile from their sight  
In a green veil folded.

I shall give thee a sign  
Of thy dream :

The great byre that  
Holds the cattle,

It will be to-morrow  
In red flames ;

And that little child  
Thou hast in thine arms,

Thou wilt find him dead  
At the edge \* of thy bed.

Take that home with thee  
As thou hast heard it.

The brother of ours  
Who was in Ireland,

Yesterday they had him  
Upon the staves.

\* Reading *calbha*.

Dòigh eile :

A PHÌÙTHRAG, a rùin, bheil thu 'd chadal?  
 O hoireann o hò ro ì  
 Ma tha, chan e fàth a th'agad;  
 I hoireann ò hì ri éile  
 Am bràthair a bha 'n Éirinn againn,  
 Bha e 'n dé aca sa chlachan.  
 Bha mis ann 's gun chàch 'gam fhaicinn,  
 Greis de m' chois is greis air each dhiom,  
 'S greis eile an sròl am pasgadh.  
 Phìùthrag, a ghaoil, a Chatrìona,  
 Dh'fhàg sibh mis am mòintich fhiadhaich,  
 Mòinteach chas is càch 'gam iarraidh.  
 Phìùthrag, a ghaoil is a thasgaidh,  
 Falbhaidh sibh gu moch sa mhadainn  
 'S gheobh sibh mo chnàmhan sa ghlaicich;  
 Chì sibh an dath anns a' bhreacan,  
 Bràiste mo mhàthar 'na fhaisge.

Dòigh eile :

PHÌÙTHRAG nan rùn, hù rù,  
 Bheil thu 'd chadal, hù rù,  
 Fhathast, a rùin? hao ri a hù,  
 Na cum agad, hù rù!  
 Bheir mì comharr, hù rù,  
 Dhut air th'aislig, hù rù,  
 An t-arbhar tha, hao ri a hù,  
 'S t-sobhal agad, hù rù!  
 Gur h-iad na maoir, hù rù,  
 Bhios 'ga sgathadh, hù rù!  
 A' bhàthach sin, hù rù,  
 'M bheil na marta, hù rù,  
 I dol 'na gual, hao ri a hù,  
 Suas 'na lasair, hù rù!

## Another Version :

LITTLE sister, my love, art thou asleep?  
     O hoireann o ho ro i  
 If thou art, thou hast no cause;  
     I hoireann o hi ri eile  
 The brother of ours who was in Ireland,  
 They had him yesterday in the kirktown.  
 I was there and the rest not seeing me,  
 Awhile I was on foot and awhile on horseback,  
 And awhile shrouded in satin.  
 Little sister, my love, Catriona,  
 You have left me on a wild moorland,  
 A rugged moorland with the rest seeking me.  
 Little sister, my love and darling,  
 You will set out early in the morning  
 And you will find my bones in the hollow;  
 You will see the colour in the plaiding,  
 And my mother's brooch hard by it.

## Another Version :

LITTLE sister of my love, hu ru,  
     Art thou asleep, hu ru,  
 Still, my dear? hao ri a hu,  
     Do not be silent, hu ru!  
 I shall give a sign, hu ru,  
     To thee of thy dream, hu ru,  
 The corn, hao ri a hu,  
     Thou hast in the barn, hu ru,  
 It is the bailiffs, hu ru,  
     Who will scutch it, hu ru!  
 That byre, hu ru,  
     In which the cattle are, hu ru,  
 Will go up in flames, hao ri a hu,  
     And be burnt to cinders, hu ru!

An companach sin, hù rù,  
Air do leaba, hù rù,  
Marbh a màireach, hao ri a hù,  
Moch sa mhadainn, hù rù!  
Gur h-e 's dùsgadh, hù rù,  
Dhut romh latha, hù rù,  
Gleadhraich nan arm, hao ri a hù,  
'S toirm a' chatha, hù rù!

The spouse thou hast, hu ru,

In thy bed, hu ru,

Will be dead to-morrow, hao ri a hu,

Early in the morning, hu ru!

What will waken thee, hu ru,

Before daybreak, hu ru,

Is the clangour of weapons, hao ri a hu,

And the din of battle, hu ru!

## SEATHAN MAC RÌGH ÉIREANN

FHUARADH an t-òran seo bho chaochladh òranaiche: Mór Nic Néill, nighean Alasdair 'ic Ruairidh Bhàin, coitear, Ceann Tangabhal, Barraidh; Màiri Dhomhnallach agus Màiri bean Aonghuis Chaimbeul, coitearan ann am Miughalaidh am Barraidh, Di-Sathuirn an 22a Màgh 1869; Màiri Nic Fhearghuis ann an Càirinis an Uibhist a' Chinn a Tuath, boireannach bochd truagh ach làn ciùil agus seanchais, an 29amh Màgh 1869; Màiri Bhòid, Gleann, Barraidh; Màiri Nic Rath, croitear, Dùnan, Leitir Fhearna, Gleann Seile, an 22a Ògust 1903; Màiri Nic Eanraig anns a' Mhorbhairne, dearbh-phiuthar do'n Anna; Jessie Nic Mhathain (bean a' Chamshronaich), bean-eiridinn anns an Òban Latharnach, a rugadh an Cill Mhoire; cailleach Chnòideartach nach 'eil a h-ainm air sgeul, High Street, an t-Òban; Seònaid Nic Leòid, an taigh-sgoile, Eilean Eige, ann an ceud mhìos na bliadhna 1905. Is e an t-òran aig Seònaid Nic Leòid a tha seo shìos.

Thubhairt Mór nighean Alasdair 'ic Ruairidh Bhàin: 'Rinneadh an tuirim seo le mhnaoi do Sheathan mac Rìgh Éireann. Is e spùillire mór a bha ann an Seathan, a' marbhadh agus a' creachadh anns gach cearna mar a b'fhearr a gheobhadh e cothrom. Bha e fo choill agus an tòir air a mhuin, agus e am falach aig a mhnaoi an dùil an tòireachd a chur seachad agus a bheatha a ghlaidheadh dhi fhéin.'

Màiri Dhomhnallach agus Màiri bean Aonghuis Chaimbeul. Sheinn an dithis boireannach seo an tuirim comhla agus air leth,—an dara té am fonn agus an té eile an tuirim. Sheinn an dithis am fonn slàn an ceann a h-uile ceathramh. Bha té dhiubh a' càrdadh agus té dhiubh a' snìomh, agus bha guth làidir binn aca le chéile agus bu mhath fhéin a sheinneadh iad.

Sheinn Màiri Nic Rath an t-òran mar gum bitheadh i 'ga ghabhail aig cléith-luathaidh; sheinn, agus sheinn i snasail e, agus bu toileachadh do neach a bhith dh'a h-éisdeachd.

Màiri Nic Fhearghuis. Chuala i seo bho sheann duine a bha anns a' Bhaile Shear agus chuala an seann duine an tuirim ann am brugh sidh ann am broinn cnoc fraoich. 'Bha an duine a mach latha a' buain fraoich shiaman a muigh anns a' bheinn. Bha an latha blàth brutharnach. Agus chuala an duine an aon cheòl a bu bhòidheche a chuala e riamh air a dhà chluais. Shuidh e sìos an sgàil a' chnuic bho ghathan blàtha na gréine agus dh'éisid e gu cùramach ris a' cheòl. An uair a thànaig an duine,

## SEATHAN SON OF THE KING OF IRELAND

THIS song was obtained from a number of singers: from Mór MacNeil (daughter of Alexander son of fair-haired Roderick), cottar, Ceann Tangabhal, Barra; from Mary MacDonald and Mary the wife of Angus Campbell, cottars in Mingulay, Barra, on Saturday 22nd May 1869; from Mary Ferguson, Carinish, North Uist, a poor miserable woman but full of music and old lore, on 29th May 1869; from Mary Boyd, Glen, Barra; from Mary Macrae, crofter, Dunan, Letterfearn, Glen Shiel, on 22nd August 1903; from Mary Henderson, Morvern (sister of the great Ann); from Jessie Matheson (Mrs Cameron), nurse, Oban, a native of Kilmuir; from a 'cailleach Chnòideartach,' old woman from Knoydart, whose name is not recorded, High Street, Oban; and from Janet MacLeod, the School-house, Island of Eigg, January 1905. It is Janet MacLeod's song that is printed first below, with variants of other versions in the margin.

Mór MacNeil said: 'This lament was composed by his wife for Seathan son of the King of Ireland. Seathan was a great marauder, killing and plundering in every quarter as he best got the chance. He was an outlaw and fugitive and his wife hid him in hope of sending his pursuers past and saving his life for herself.'

Mary MacDonald and Mary wife of Angus Campbell. These two women sang the lament together and separately,—in the latter case one sang the refrain and the other the lament. Both sang the whole of the refrain at the end of each line. One of them was carding and one of them spinning, and each had a strong sweet voice and right well could they sing.

Mary Macrae sang the song as though at the waulking frame, and sang it finely, and it was a pleasure to one to listen to her.

Mary Ferguson. She heard this from an old man who was in Baile Sear (Baleshare), and the old man heard the lament in a fairy bower inside a heather-clad hill. 'The man was one day pulling heather for ropes out in the hill. The day was warm and sultry. And the man heard the most beautiful melody that he had ever heard with his two ears. He sat down in the shadow of the hill away from the warm rays of the sun and listened carefully to the melody. When the man came home in the

dhachaigh feasgar agus eallach fhraoich shiaman air a mhuin, dh'innis e facal air an fhacal mar a chuala e, gun ghuth a chur a null no a nall. Sheinn an duine an t-òran mar a chuala e aig an t-sidheach anns a' bhrugh shìdh e. Thànaig sluagh a' bhaile a mach g'a éisdeachd agus a leòra fhéin b'fhiach e sin.' B'e a b'ainm dha'n duine Iain mac Aonghuis Mac Amhlaimh anns a' Bhaile Shear. Is ann aig Cnoc Dubh Abhainn an Iasgaich a bha an duine a' buain an fhraoich dar a chuala e an ceòl. Bha an Cnoc Dubh daonnan uamhalt agus a chon an latha an diugh cha chaomh le daoine dhol 'na chòir.

BHA Coinneach Mac Leòid agus an t-Ollamh comhla ri chéile ag iarraidh sheanchais ann an Eige ann an ceud mhìos na bliadhna 1905, agus seo an conaltradh a bha eadar an dithis agus Seònaid Nic Leòid.

*Sinne.* Càit an cuala sibh an t-òran seo?

*Freagairt.* 'S ioma sin duine aig an cuala mis e, agus is iomadh uair a thug mi fhìn faram air aig a' chléith-luathaidh. Bha cuideachda m'athar, Clann a' Chomhairlich, iomraiteach air son seann òran is nithean dhe'n t-seòrsa sin,—nach ann mu'n deighinn a thuirteadh 'nach do chaill iad bardachd no beul-aithris riamh, ach a' sìor chur ris a' charn'? 'S nar a thànaig m'athair gu Trondarnis, ma thug no nach tug e leis cuid is codach á Dùthaich 'ic Leòid, thug e co dhiùbh leis làn cruinne de bhardachd 's de bheul-aithris.

*Sinne.* Cha mhór a b'fhiach an dìleab sin!

*Freagairt.* Nach mór? 'S mi nach abradh e! 'S math gach nì a mhaireas. 'Riaghladh goirid air an òr, ach riaghladh fada air an òran.' Chan fhada théid bonn òir ann an cuideachd, ach ruigidh òran math air làn cruinne de shluagh. Ach 's e bha mi dol a ràdh gum b'e 'Seathan mac Rìgh Éireann' roghainn nan òran luathaidh. Chan 'eil aig na brathan an diugh ach sprùilleach dheth; ri mo chiad chuimhne, air rìghinnead an aodaich, luathadh 'Seathan' leis fhéin e. 'S beag na th'agamsa mi fhìn deth nis seach na bh' agam nar nach bu luathadh e as m'aonais,—chan ann le moit tha mi 'ga ràdh, ach ge liutha gille chuireadh a fiacha dhomh, cha d'fhàg mi colann diubh riamh san dubhradh. 'S beag orm an rud nach toigh liom, 's gu dearbh cha bu bheag an tàmailt

evening with a load of rope-heather on his back, he related word for word what he had heard without changing a syllable. The man sang the song as he had heard it from the fairy in the fairy dwelling. The folk of the townland came out to listen to him, and by the Book it was worth that.' The man's name was John son of Angus MacAulay in Baile Sear.\* It was at the Black Hill of the River of the Fishing that the man was pulling the heather when he heard the music. The Black Hill was always uncanny and to the present day people do not like to go near it.

KENNETH MACLEOD and the Collector were together in Eigg in January 1905, in search of traditional lore, and this is the conversation that took place between the two and Janet MacLeod.

*We.* Where did you hear this song?

*Answer.* I have heard it from many a person, and many a time have I myself sung it lustily at the waulking frame. My father's people, the tribe descended from the Counsellor, were famous for old songs and things of that kind,—was it not about them it was said that they never forgot any poetry or lore, but were constantly adding to the cairn? And when my father came to Trotternish, whether or not he brought any property with him from MacLeod's Country, he at least brought with him enough poetry and lore to fill the world.

*We.* That legacy was not worth much!

*Ans.* Was it not? I would not say so! Everything that endures is good. 'Shared gold goes not far, but a shared song lasts a long time.' A gold coin does not go far in company, but a good song will suffice for a whole world of people. But what I was going to say was that 'Seathan son of the King of Ireland' was the choice of waulking songs. The women to-day have only fragments of it; when I first remember, 'Seathan' by itself would be sufficient to complete the waulking, however tough the cloth. I myself remember but little of it to-day, compared with what I knew when no waulking was complete without me,—it is not through vainglory I say it, but though many a lad was matched with me, I never left one of them in obscurity (unsung). I detest what I dislike, and indeed

\* Cf. *Clan Donald*, iii. 660; Angus MacAulay, tenant in Iolaraidh (Baleshare).

liom gun d'rachadh gille bochd a shiamachadh dhomh 's nach togainn air bharr ruinn e os cionn chàich.

*Sinne.* Ach có bh'ann an Seathan?

*Freagairt.* Có ach mac Rìgh Éireann. Ach a réir an sgeòil, cha robh e idir cho math 's a tha an t-òran 'ga dhèanamh. Am fear nach marbhadh e tuath mharbhadh e deas, 's an creachadh nach dèanadh e siar dhèanadh e sìod 's a chorr sear. Mu dheireadh bha gach baile 's gach athbhaile air a luirg 's air a thòir, 's bha e trì bliadhna fo choill is trì fo chaim is trì dhàimh.

*Sinne.* Trì fo chaim,—'d é tha sin?

*Freagairt.* Tha, gu robh e fo chomraig eaglaise, sa Chill Chumhann, ge brith càite bheil sin, 's nach fhaoidte làmh a chur ann.

*Sinne.* 'S trì bliadhna fo dhàimh,—'d é idir tha sin?

*Freagairt.* Tha, gu robh e am falach aig a mhnaoi 's nach robh fhios aig fiù an luchraig càit an robh e.

*Sinne.* 'S an deach breith air mu dheireadh?

*Freagairt.* Chaidh sin air, le chlibe fhéin 's le ribe bhan. Bha cailleach ann an Éirinn ris an cainte 'Cailleach nan Trì Deilgne,' 's bha gràin na dunach aice air Seathan. Bu dhearbh-phiuthar i do Rìgh na h-Éireann, 's bha i an dùil, na faighte Seathan as an rathad, gum b'e a mac fhéin a b'òighre air an rìgh. Badhbh an uilc a bh'innte, 's bha guin is nimh a' bhàis anns gach deilg. 'Falbh thusa,' arsa ise ri mac, ' agus faigh an seisear fhear as treise ann an cóig ranna ruadh na h-Éireann, agus aig dol fodha na gréine ruigidh sinn uile taigh Sheathain.' Rinneadh seo. Aig dol fodha na gréine bha bean Sheathain anns a' bhualidh, 's cha d'fhuaraich an taigh mus robh Cailleach nan Trì Deilgne staigh air an urlar. 'A Sheathain ghaoil,' ars ise, 'lot calg tuirc mo chorrage, trobhad 's leig fuil.' Ghrad-leum Seathan á àite falaich, agus sìod air a mhuin bha na ceathairnich, 's ma chaidh cóig dhiubh a mharbhadh thug an siathamh fear a bhuille-bàis do Sheathan.

I would consider it no small disgrace that a poor lad should be matched (?) with me and that I would not raise him above the rest in the fore-front of a verse.

*We.* But who was Seathan?

*Ans.* Who but the son of the King of Ireland. But according to the tale he was not at all as good as the song makes him out to be. The man he would not kill in the north he would kill in the south, and the rapine he would not commit in the west, he would commit that and more in the east. At last every town and village (?) was on his track in pursuit of him, and he was three years an outlaw, and three years in sanctuary (*caim*), and three years among his kin.

*We.* Three years in *caim*? What is that?

*Ans.* That he was under the protection of the church, in Cill Chumhann (the Narrow Church), wherever that is, and that he could not be touched.

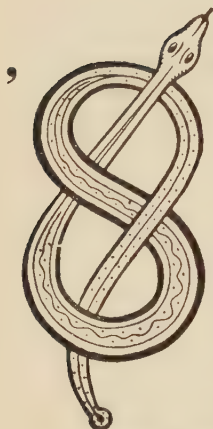
*We.* And three years among *dàimh*? What on earth is that?

*Ans.* That his wife had him hidden and that not even the tiny mouse knew where he was.

*We.* And was he caught at last?

*Ans.* He was indeed, by his own clumsiness and the snares of women. There was a hag in Ireland called the 'Hag of the Three Thorns' and she loathed Seathan. She was a sister of the King of Ireland, and she hoped, if Seathan could be got out of the way, that her own son would be the king's heir. She was a wicked witch, and there was a deadly venom in each of the thorns. 'You go,' she said to her son, 'and get the six strongest men in the five great provinces of Ireland, and at sunset we shall all arrive at Seathan's house.' This was done. At sunset Seathan's wife was in the cattlefold, and her place in the house was hardly cold before the 'Hag of the Three Thorns' was inside on the floor. 'Seathan, my love,' said she, 'a boar's bristle has wounded my finger; come and let blood.' Seathan sprang quickly from his hiding-place, and in a trice the warriors were upon him, and though five of them were killed, the sixth man gave his death-blow to Seathan.

## SEATHAN MAC RÌGH ÉIREANN



MAIRG a chual e nach do dh'innis e,  
 Hù rù na hur i bhi ò  
 'S mairg a chual e nach do dh'innis e,  
 Na bhi hao bhò hao bhi ò an \*  
 Gu robh mo leannan-sa am Minginis;  
 Nam bitheadh, a ghaoil, 's fhad o thilleadh  
 Chuirinn long mhór g'a shireadh ann, [tu:  
 Sgioba cliùiteach ùr-gheal innicheil,  
 Gum bitheadh fir òg agus gillean ann,  
 Thadhladh e 'n seo dar a thilleadh e,  
 Bheirinn fhéin là féill a' mire ris,  
 Shuidhinn air cnoc 's dhèanainn miodal riut,  
 Chaisinn do cheann mar bu mhinig liom,  
 Laighinn ad ghlaic 's chumainn an sileadh uat,  
 Chuirinn léine chaol an gilead dhut  
 Fhad 's a mhaireadh bùrn san linnidh dhomh,  
 'S thiormaichinn air geug san fhireach i.

Ach tha Seathan a nochd 'na mharbhan, [bhalbhan  
 Sgeul as bochd le fearaibh Albann,  
 Sgeul as goirt le luchd a leanmhainn,  
 Sgeul as moit le luchd a sheilge, [shealga  
 Le mac Caillich nan Tri Deilgne. [nan Naoi Dealga

\* Seo mar a tha an t-òran a' dol air adhart, gach ceathramh dheth air a aithris agus an lunneg an ceann gach ceathramh.

For printed versions see: *Trans. Gael. Soc. Inuss.*, xiii. 204-8; Frances

## SEATHAN SON OF THE KING OF IRELAND

WOE to him who heard of it and did not tell it,  
     Hu ru na hur i bhi o  
 Woe to him who heard of it and did not tell it,  
     Na bhi hao bho hao bhi o an \*  
 That my darling was in Minginish ;  
 If thou wert, my love, thou hadst returned long since :  
 I would send a great ship to seek him there,  
 With a famed crew, fresh and bright and expert,  
 Young men and lads would be there,  
 He would visit here when he returned,  
 I would spend a festal day dallying with him,  
 I would sit on a knoll and engage in sweet converse,  
 I would curl thy hair as I did oft-times,  
 I would lie in thy arms and keep the dew from thee,  
 I would wash a fine-spun shirt full white for thee  
 So long as any water remained in the pool,  
 And I would dry it on a moorland branch.

But Seathan to-night is a corse, [mute  
 A sad tale to the men of Scotland,  
 A grievous tale to his followers,  
 A joyous tale to his pursuers,  
 To the son of the Hag of the Three Thorns. [Nine

\* Each line of the song is repeated, followed by half the refrain.

A Sheathain chridhe nan sùl socrach,  
 Gur minig a dhearg thu na cnocan :  
 Cha b'ann le fuil chruidh no chapall,  
 No fuil féidh a théid 'na astar,  
 No fuil earb an cearb a' gharta,  
 Ach fuil do nàmh an rùn do thachdadh.

Dar a shaoil mi thu san tòireachd  
 'S ann a bha thu marbh san chomhdhail,  
 'S tu air ghuaillibh nam fear òga,  
 'S tu air thuar do chur san tòrradh.

[móra]

Dar a shaoil mi thu sa Ghaillinn  
 'S ann a bha thu marbh gun anail,  
 'S tu air ghuaillibh nam fear bearraidh,  
 'S tu cho fuar ri sneachd nam beannaibh.

[anam  
[fearail]

Mo ghaol do làmh dheas ge fuar i,  
 Bu tric agam, b'ainneamh uam i,  
 Bu tric a fhuair mi le duais i,  
 'S cha b'ann le dad a bha suarach,  
 Cha b'ann le bata no le cuaille,  
 Cha b'ann le bladadh no le buaireadh,  
 Ach le sròl uaine 's sìoda buaidheach,  
 Leis na preasanan a b'uaisle.

A Sheathain duinn, a laoigh mo chéille,  
 'S fhada, ghaoil, a dh'fhalbhainn fhéin leat,  
 Rachainn leat troimh choill nan geugan  
 Far am bi na h-eòin a' séisdrich,  
 Rachainn leat thar cuan na h-Éireann  
 Far am bi muir ard ag éirigh,  
 Rachainn leat thar cuan na Gréige  
 Far am bi na Duibhich reubal.

[Géige]

Dear Seathan of the tranquil eyes,  
 Oft didst thou redden the hillocks:  
 It was not with the blood of cattle or horses,  
 Or the blood of the swift deer,  
 Or the blood of the roe in a nook of the corn-field,  
 But the blood of thine enemy bent on strangling thee.

When I thought thou wast giving chase,  
 Thou wast dead in the conflict,  
 Borne on the shoulders of the young men, [tall  
 And on the point of being buried.

When I thought thou wast in Galway (?),  
 Thou wast dead without breath, [soul  
 Borne on the shoulders of scornful (?) men, [manly  
 And as cold as the mountain snow.

My love thy right hand, though now cold,  
 Oft did I have it, seldom was it away from me,  
 Oft did I have a present from it,  
 And never with aught that was mean,  
 It was not with stick or cudgel,  
 It was not with abuse or quarrelling,  
 But with green satin and fine silk,  
 With the noblest of gifts.

O brown-haired Seathan, calf of my love,  
 I would go far away with thee, my love,  
 I would go with thee through the branchy wood  
 Where the birds are wont to warble,  
 I would cross the Irish Sea with thee  
 Where the swelling ocean surges,  
 I would cross the Sea of Greece with thee,  
 The haunt of swarthy corsairs.

Mis is Seathan a' siubhal sléibhe,  
 Mise lag is Seathan treubhach,  
 Nach giùlanainn ach beag éididh,  
 Còta ruadh mu leth mo shléisne,  
 Bréid dhe'n anart caola glégheal, [stìom  
 Is mi falbh le Seathan m'eudail.

A Sheathain, a Sheathain gun anam, [nan anam  
 Dhearbh mhic mo rìgh a Tìr Chonaill,  
 Is tric a laigh mi fo t'earradh;  
 Ma laigh, cha b'ann aig a' bhaile,  
 Ach lagan uain an cluain a' bharraich  
 Fo leth-taobh nan gormbheann corrach,  
 Gaoth nam beann a' taomadh tharainn,  
 Gaoth nan gleann le gaoir a' gabhail  
 Tula-làn dhe'n nodhas earraich.

'S iomadh gleann is meall a shiubhail sinn,  
 Bha mi 'n Ìle, bha mi 'n Uibhist leat,  
 Bha mi 'n Sléite nam ban buidhe leat,  
 Bha mi 'n Ì nan cailleacha dubha leat, [Aoi, tìr  
 Bha mi 'n tìr nan ian 's nan uighean leat, [i.e. Hìrt?  
 Bha mi 'n Éirinn, bha mi 'n Liutha leat. [an Cóig Mhumhainn  
 Thaisteil mi Bhreathann 's a' Bhruthann leat,  
 Thaisteil mi Mhórthìr 's a' Mhuthairn leat,  
 Thaisteil mi Bhòinn, thaisteil mi Mhumha leat,  
 Dh'éisd mi Aifreann sa Chill Chumha leat, [Chumhann  
 Dh'éisd mi ceòl na sìdh-bhrughha leat,  
 Dh'òl mi deoch a tobar an t-siubhail leat,  
 Bha mi an airne 's an uiridh leat,  
 Bha mi o rubha gu rubha leat,  
 Bha mi 'n Cill Donnain a' ghiuthais leat,  
 Bha mi trì bliadhna air a' bhruthach leat.

The translation of some of these place names is quite tentative. *Liutha* probably represents older *Letha*, which meant both Brittany (Welsh *Llydaw*) and Latium. *A' Mhuthairn* may represent Munster, but, as *Mumha* also

I and Seathan traversing mountains,  
 I was weak, but Seathan was strong,  
 I could endure but little clothing,  
 A russet coat to the middle of my thigh,  
 A kerchief of fine pure-white linen, [snood  
 As I fared with my darling Seathan.

O Seathan, Seathan, bereft of life, [of the souls  
 Own son to my king from Tyrconell,  
 Oft have I lain beneath thy cloak;  
 If I did, it was not in a homestead,  
 But in a green hollow in a tree-sheltered field,  
 Under the slope of the rugged blue peaks,  
 The wind from the mountains sweeping over us,  
 The wind from the glens with a sough taking  
 Its fill of the first burgeoning of spring.

Many a glen and ben we traversed,  
 I was in Islay and in Uist with thee,  
 I was in Sleat of the yellow-haired women with thee,  
 I was in Iona of the nuns with thee, [Aoi; land  
 I was in the land of birds and eggs with thee, [St Kilda?  
 I was in Ireland, I was in Latium with thee, [Province of Munster  
 I traversed Brittany and Burgundy (?) with thee,  
 I traversed the Continent and the Mearns (?) with thee,  
 I traversed the Boyne, I traversed Munster with thee,  
 I heard Mass in Cill Chumha with thee, [Narrow Church  
 I heard the music of the fairy-mansions with thee,  
 I drank a draught from the well of wandering with thee,  
 I was the day before yesterday (?) and last year with thee,  
 I was from cape to cape with thee,  
 I was in Kildonan of the pines with thee,  
 I was three years on the hills with thee.

occurs here, it has been equated, somewhat arbitrarily, with *A' Mhaoirne*,  
 the Mearns.

Chaithris mi là am barr nan cranna leat,  
 Chaithris mi tràth san tiùrr fheamad leat,  
 Chaithris mi oidhche air sgeir mhara leat,  
 Chaithris, a ghaoil, is liom cha b'aithreach e,  
 Mi an cirb do bhreacain bhallaich,  
 Siaban nan tonn sìor dhol tharainn,  
 Uisge fìorghlan fuarghlan fallan e.

Mo ghaol Seathan nan sùl socrach,  
 Laighinn leat air leabaidh dhochairt,  
 Leaba fhraoich 's mo thaobh air chloichibh;  
 B'annsa Seathan an cuaich shìomain  
 Na mac rìgh air leabaidh lìona;  
 B'annsa Seathan air chùl gàrraidh  
 Na mac rìgh le sìod air clàraidh,  
 Ged bhiodh aige leaba shocrach  
 An déidh na saoir a bhith 'ga locradh,  
 An déidh na draoidh a bhith 'ga cosnadh;  
 B'annsa Seathan sa choill bharraich  
 Na bhith sa Mhaigh Mhild le h-Airril,  
 Ged bhiodh sròl is sìod fo chasaibh,  
 Cluasagan òr-dhearg air lasadh.

Nam faicte Seathan ag éirigh  
 Ri sgàth cnuic air madainn chéitein,  
 Éile gearr mu leth a shléisne,  
 Criosan caol dubh air a léinidh,  
 Gaol a mhuime, gràdh a chéil e,  
 Seachd seallaidh a mhàthar fhéin e,  
 Leannan falaich dhomh féin e.

A Sheathain duinn, a shaoi na mìne,  
 Is beag an t-àit an cuirinn fhìn thu,  
 Chuirinn am barr mullaich mo chinn thu, [an currac, càramh  
 Chuirinn an tarr mo dhà chich thu, [eadar

I kept watch for a day in the treetops with thee,  
I kept watch for two days in the sea wrack with thee,  
I kept watch for a night on a sea rock with thee,  
I kept watch, my love, and I did not regret it,  
Wrapped in a corner of thy tartan plaid,  
The spindrift ever breaking over us,  
Water that is very pure, cool and wholesome.

My love is Seathan of the tranquil eyes,  
I would lie with thee on an uneasy bed,  
A bed of heather with my side on stones;  
Dearer Seathan in a coil of heather rope  
Than a king's son on bed of linen;  
Dearer Seathan behind a dyke  
Than a king's son in silks on deal flooring,  
Though he should have a restful bed  
Which had been well-planed by wrights,  
And protected by power of druids;  
Dearer Seathan in the birch wood  
Than to be in Magh Meall with Airril,  
Though he had satin and silk under his feet,  
And pillows lustrous with red gold.

If Seathan were seen as he arose  
In shade of hill on a May morning,  
A short kilt to the middle of his thigh,  
A narrow black belt about his tunic,  
His foster-mother's love, his wife's darling,  
The sight seven times dearest to his own mother,  
A secret lover he is to me.

O brown-haired Seathan, thou gentle hero,  
Small is the place in which I would put thee,  
I would put thee on the very top of my head,  
I would put thee between my breasts,

Eadar Brìghde 's a bréid mìn thu,  
 Eadar maighdean òg 's a stìom thu,  
 Eadar òigh ghil 's a brat sìod thu,  
 Eadar mi fhìn 's mo léine lìn thu.

Ach tha Seathan san t-seòmar uaigneach, [uaine, uachdrach  
 Gun òl cupa, gun òl cuaiche,  
 Gun òl flon á pìosan uaibhreach,  
 Gun òl beòir le còil 's le uaislean,  
 Gun òl ceòil, gun phòg bean buairidh, [uasail  
 Gun cheòl cruite, gun cheòl cluaise,  
 Ceanglaichean teann air a ghualainn,  
 Ceanglaichean dul air na fuaintean.

Piuthar a dh'Aodh 's a Bhrian Buidhe mi,  
 Bana-charaid do Fhionn mac Cumhaill mi,  
 Céile Sheathan donn an t-siubhail mi,  
 Ach 's mairg thuirt riumsa gum bu bhean shubhach mi,  
 Bean bhochd chianail thiamhaidh dhubhach mi,  
 Loma-làn leòin is bròin is mulaid mi.

Chuir m'athair mi an àite carraideach [caithriseach  
 An oidhche sin a rinn e banais dhomh,  
 Och a rìgh nach b'i m'fhalaire,  
 Nach do rinneadh an t-anart a ghearradh dhomh,  
 Nach do rinneadh an giuthas a ghlanadh dhomh,  
 Nach do chuireadh dul a cheangal orm,  
 Nach do chuireadh san ùir am falach mi,  
 Eagal a bhith beò air thalamh dhomh.  
 Is lìonor bord an toirear bearradh dhomh,  
 Nach cagainn mo dheud dhomh 'n t-aran ann,  
 Nach mò bhios mo spàin a' tarraing ann,  
 Nach mò bhios mo sgian a' gearradh ann,  
 Nach mò bhios mo mhiann a' tathaich ann.

Between Bride and her soft kerchief,  
Between a young maiden and her snood,  
Between a fair virgin and her silken mantle,  
Between myself and my shirt of linen.

But Seathan is in the lonely chamber, [green, upper  
Without drinking of cups or goblets,  
Without drinking of wine from splendid silver tankards,  
Without drinking of ale with his cronies and gentlemen,  
Without drinking to music, without kiss from seductive woman,  
Without music of harp, without listening to melody,  
But strait bands on his shoulders,  
And looped bands on the bier poles.

I am a sister of Aodh and yellow-haired Brian,  
I am a kinswoman of Fionn son of Cumhall,  
I am the wife of brown-haired Seathan, the wanderer,  
But alas! for those who said I was a joyous wife,  
I am a poor, sad, mournful, sorrowful wife,  
Full of anguish and grief and woe.

My father put me in a distressing place  
On that night he made a wedding-feast for me,  
Alas, O King! that it were not my lyke-wake,  
That the linen shroud had not been cut for me,  
That the pine planks had not been polished for me,  
That the loops had not been tied on me,  
That I had not been hidden in the mould,  
For fear I should be alive on earth.  
There is many a table where I shall be slighted,  
Where my teeth shall no more chew bread,  
Where my spoon shall no more draw,  
Where my knife shall no more cut,  
Where my fancy shall no more linger.

Nam faighte Seathan ri fhuasgladh,  
 Gheobhte 'n t-éirig mar an luachair,  
 Gheobhte 'n t-airgead mar an luatha, [guailean  
 Gheobhte 'n t-òr air oir nan cuantan,  
 Gheobhte 'm flon mar uisg an fhuarain,  
 Gheobhte bheòir mar chaochan fuarghlas;

[cheò nam fuarbheann

Cha bhiodh meann an creig no 'n cruadhlaigh,  
 Cha bhiodh miseag ann an cluanaig,  
 Cha bhiodh cìob an carr no 'n cruachan,  
 Cha bhiodh crodh air magh no buaile, [marc  
 Cha bhiodh orc no arc air cluana; [morc (*for* orc)  
 Thigeadh na bradain as na cuantan, [gheobhte, thogte  
 Thigeadh na bric as na bruachan, [gheobhte, thogte  
 Thigeadh na gearrain as an luachair; [gheobhte, thogte

Cha bhiodh bó dhubh no bó ghuailionn  
 An ard no 'n ìseal na buaile,  
 An iomall baile no 'm buabhall,  
 Nach cuirinn, a ghràidh, gu t'fhuasgladh,  
 Gu ìre mo bhreacain uaine, [ghuaille  
 Ged bheireadh siod an aona bhó uamsa,  
 'S cha b'e aona bhó dhubh mo bhuaile,  
 Ach na treudan dhe'n chrodh ghuailionn,  
 Dhe'n chrodh chinnionn dhruimionn chluasdhearg.

Ach tha Seathan a nochd sa bhail uachdrach, [cheann  
 Cha dèan òr no deòir a bhuannachd,  
 Cha dèan òl no ceòl a bhuaireadh, [pòg (*for* òl)  
 Cha toir àr no sàr o'n luain e,  
 Cha toir stairn no spairn o'n t-suain e;  
 'S tha mo chridhe briste bruailleach,  
 Tha mo shilteach ruith 'na fhuaran,  
 Neo-shocrach a chaidleas mi air clusaig,  
 'S tu gun duine sam bith le 'n truagh thu  
 Ach mise 'nam ruith chuig is uaidhe.

If Seathan could be but redeemed  
 The ransom could be got like rushes,  
 Silver could be got like ashes, [cinders  
 Gold could be got on the fringe of meadows,  
 Wine could be got like spring water,  
 Beer could be got like a cool verdant stream ;  
 [mist of the cold bens

There would not be a goat in rock or stony upland,  
 There would not be a young she-goat in meadow,  
 There would not be a sheep on rocky shelf or mountain top,  
 There would not be cattle on plain or in fold,  
 There would not be pig or cow in pastures ;  
 The salmon would come from the seas,  
 The trout would come from the river-banks,  
 The geldings would come from the rushes ;  
 There would not be a black or white-shouldered cow  
 High or low in the fold,  
 At the edge of township or in stall,  
 That I would not send, my love, to redeem thee,  
 Even to my green plaid, [shoulder  
 Though that should take the one cow from me,  
 And it was not the one black cow of my fold,  
 But herds of white-shouldered cattle,  
 Of white-headed, white-backed, red-eared cattle.

But Seathan is to-night in the upper town,  
 Neither gold nor tears will win him,  
 Neither drink nor music will tempt him,  
 Neither slaughter nor violence will bring him from his doom,  
 Neither tumult nor force will wake him from his slumber ;  
 And my heart is broken and distraught,  
 My tears flow like a well,  
 Uneasily I sleep on a pillow,  
 For thou hast no one who pities thee  
 Save me, running to and fro.

A Sheathain chridhe! a Sheathain chridhe!  
 Cha toirinn do lagh no rìgh thu,  
 Cha toirinn dh'an Mhoire mhin thu,  
 Cha toirinn dh'an Chro Naoimh thu,  
 Cha toirinn do dh'Ìosda Crìosd thu,  
 Cha toireadh, eagal 's nach faighinn fhìn thu.

A Sheathain, mo ghile-gréine,  
 Och dha m'aindeoin ghlac an t-eug thu,  
 'S dh'fhàg siod mise dubhach deurach  
 'S iargain ghointeach orm ad dhéidh-sa;  
 'S masa fìor na their na cléirich  
 Gu bheil Irinn 's gu bheil Nèamh ann,  
 Mo chuid-sa Nèamh, di-beath an éig e,  
 Air son oidhche mar ris an eudail,  
 Mar ri Seathan donn mo chéile.

*Ceist.* Càite bheil Liutha 's a' Bhreathann 's a' Bhruthann?

*Freagairt.* An Éirinn, tha mi 'n dùil,—'s iomadh ainm neònach a th'innnte.

*Ceist.* 'S càite bheil a' Mhagh Mhild?

*Freagairt.* Aig an t-Sealbh 's aig na sidhichean tha brath, ach tha e coltach gur h-e àite bòidheach ceòlor a bh'ann, far nach robh olc no mulad, 's far nach b'fhaochadh atharrachadh.

*Ceist.* Có bh'ann am Brian Buidhe?

*Freagairt.* Ceatharnach ainmeil an Éirinn, 's air liom gum bu rìgh e.

*Ceist.* Agus Airril?

*Freagairt.* Gràinne mullaich na h-uir-thalmhanta ann am maise pearsa 's ann an subhailcean cridhe.

CHA robh an t-òran cho iomlan aig na mnathan eile, ach 'na bhloighean. Seo a' chuid deth a bha aig Màiri Nic Eanraig anns a' Mhorbhairne.

'S maig a chual e nach do dh'innis e,  
 Gun robh mo leannan-sa am Minginis;  
 Thadhladh e 'n seo 'n uair a thilleadh e,  
 'S bheirinn fhéin là féill a' mire ris.

O Seathan dear! O Seathan dear!  
 I would not give thee to law or king,  
 I would not give thee to the gentle Mary,  
 I would not give thee to the Holy Rood,  
 I would not give thee to Jesus Christ,  
 I would not, for fear I would not get thee myself.

O Seathan, my brightness of the sun!  
 Alas! despite me death has seized thee,  
 And that has left me sad and tearful,  
 Lamenting bitterly that thou art gone;  
 And if all the clerics say is true,  
 That there is a Hell and a Heaven,  
 My share of Heaven—it is my welcome to death—  
 For a night with my darling,  
 With my spouse, brown-haired Seathan.

*Query.* Where are Liutha and Breathann and Bruthann?

*Ans.* In Ireland, I think,—many a queer name there is there.

*Query.* And where is Magh Mell?

*Ans.* Goodness and the fairies only know, but it seems that it was a beautiful, merry place, where there was no sin or sorrow, and where a change would be no improvement.

*Query.* Who was yellow-haired Brian?

*Ans.* A renowned warrior in Ireland, and methinks he was a king.

*Query.* And Airril?

*Ans.* The topmost grain of the whole world in beauty of person and virtues of heart.

THE other women did not have the song so perfectly, but in a fragmentary state. This is that part of it which Mary Henderson in Morvern knew.

WOE to him who heard of it and did not tell it,  
 That my darling was in Minginish;  
 He would visit here when he returned,  
 And I would spend a festal day dallying with him.

'S iomadh gleann is meall a shiubhail sinn,  
 Bha mi 'n Ìle 's bha mi 'm Muile leat,  
 Bha mi 'n Éirinn 's bha mi 'n Lunnainn leat,  
 Bha mi 'n tìr nan cailleachan dubha leat.

Chaidil mi oidhch air sgeir mhara leat,  
 Chaidil, a ghaoil, 's liom cha b'aithreach e,  
 Mi an cirb do bhreacain bhallaich,  
 Siaban nan tonn sìor dhol tharainn,  
 Uisge fìorghlan fuarghlan fallain e.

'S maireg thuirt riumsa gum bu bhean shubhach mi,  
 Ach bean bhochd chianail thiamhaidh dhubhach mi,  
 'S neo-shocrach a chaidleas mi air clusaig,  
 'S tu gun duine sam bith leis an truagh thu,  
 Ach mise 'nam ruith thuig is bhuidhe.

Agus seo i a' chuid a bha aig Jessie Nic Mhathain ann an Cill Mhoire  
 anns an Eilean Sgitheanach.

'S maireg a chual e nach do dh'innis e,  
 Gun robh mo leannan-sa am Minginis;  
 Thadhladh e 'n seo 'n uair a thilleadh e:  
 Bheireadh féin là féill a' mire rium,  
 Shuidhinn air cnoc 's dhèanainn miodal riut,  
 Chaisinn do cheann mar bu mhinig liom.

Ach tha Seathan a nochd 'na mharbhan,  
 Sgeula bochd le luchd a leanmhainn,  
 Sgeula b'ait le luchd a shealga.

Mo ghaol do làmh dheas ge fuar i,  
 Bu tric agam, b'ainneamh bhuam i,  
 'S cha b'ann le nitheana suarach  
 Ach gu tric le nitheana uasal.

Many a ben and glen we traversed,  
 I was in Islay and in Mull with thee,  
 I was in Ireland and in London with thee,  
 I was in the land of the nuns with thee.

I slept for a night on a sea rock with thee,  
 I did, my love, and I did not regret it,  
 Wrapped in a corner of thy tartan plaid,  
 The spindrift ever breaking over us,  
 Water that is very pure, cool and wholesome.

Alas! for those who said I was a joyous wife,  
 For I am a poor, sad, mournful, sorrowful wife,  
 Uneasily I sleep on a pillow,  
 For thou hast no one who pities thee,  
 Save me, running to and fro.

And this is that part of it which Jessie Matheson, Kilmuir, Skye,  
 knew.

WOE to him who heard of it and did not tell it,  
 That my darling was in Minginish;  
 He would visit here when he returned,  
 He would spend a festal day in dallying with me,  
 I would sit on a knoll and engage in sweet converse with thee,  
 I would curl thy hair as I did oft-times.

But Seathan is to-night a corse,  
 A sad tale to his followers,  
 A joyous tale to his pursuers.

My love thy right hand, though now cold,  
 Oft did I have it, seldom was it away from me,  
 And never with aught that was mean,  
 But often with noble gifts.

Mo ghaol Seathan nan sùil socrach,  
 Laighinn leat air leabaidh dhochairt,  
 Leaba fhraoich 's a taobh air chloichibh.  
 Gur e Seathan dearg nan cnoc thu,  
 'S chan ann le eòrna no coirce  
 Ach fuil an fhéidh an déidh a lot leat.

Tha Seathan a nochd sa cheann uachdrach, [Cheann Uachdrach?  
 'S neo-shocrach a chaidleas mis air cluasaig,  
 'S tu gun duine sam bith leis an truagh thu,  
 Ach mise 'nam ruith thuig is bhuaidhe.  
 Nam faighinn-sa Seathan ri fhuasgladh,  
 Chan fhàginn-sa bó air buaile,  
 Chan fhàginn-sa dubh no ruadh iad,  
 Ged bheireadh siod an aona bhó bhuamsa,  
 'S cha b'i aona bhó dhubh mo bhuaile  
 Ach na treudan de'n chrodh ghuaillionn,  
 De'n chrodh chinnionn dhruimionn chluasdhearg.

Bha aig Ciorstai Nic Mhathain, a bharrachd air sin, na sreathan,  
 'Chuirinn léine chaol an gilead dut' *et rel.*, agus 'S iomadh gleann is meall  
 a shiubhail sinn' *et rel.*, facal air an fhacal, gu ìre bhig, mar a bha aig  
 Seònaid Nic Leòid. Bha an t-òran aig 'a' chaillich Chnòideartaich' glé  
 choltach ris na tha againn an clò; cha robh a' bhean chòir furasda a  
 thuigsinn.

My love is Seathan of the tranquil eyes,  
I would lie with thee on an uneasy bed,  
A bed of heather with its side on stones.  
Thou art red Seathan of the hills,  
And not with barley or oats  
But the blood of the deer wounded by thee.

Seathan is to-night in the upper chamber,  
Uneasily I sleep on a pillow,  
For thou hast no one who pities thee,  
Save me, running to and fro.  
If I could but ransom Seathan  
I would not leave a cow in the fold,  
I would leave neither black nor red of them,  
Though that should take my only cow from me,  
And not the one black cow of my fold  
But herds of the white-shouldered cattle,  
Of the white-headed, white-backed, red-eared cattle.

Kirsty Matheson had, in addition to that, the lines 'I would wash a fine-spun shirt full-white for thee' *et rel.*, and 'Many a glen and ben we traversed' *et rel.*, almost word for word as Janet MacLeod had them. The 'old lady from Knoydart' had the song very much like the printed version; the good lady was not easy to understand.





AM BRÒN BINN  
THE SWEET SORROW



## AM BRÒN BINN

Eight versions of *Am Bròn Binn* were collected by Dr Carmichael:

- A Version contributed by him to a Northern newspaper with the note: 'This version was written down for me by a schoolmaster in North Uist in 1866. No reciter's name was given in the MS., but the schoolmaster told me that he wrote it down for me from the dictation of his own wife, who learnt the ballad from her mother, a woman who was famous for her old songs, stories, and proverbs.'
- B Version from John MacLeod, Ìochdar, South Uist, 1865.
- C Version from Catherine MacQuien, Clachan a' Ghluip, North Uist, 1865.
- D Version from Catherine Pearson (Macpherson?), Ceann Tangabhal, Barra.
- E A version without reciter's name being given.
- F A version from Mary Maclellan, Taigh a' Gheàrraidh, North Uist, 1868. The reciter heard this from Fionnghal nighean Eòghain, Hoghgearraidh, who died in 1860, aged 80 years. This version was published in the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, ix. 68-9. The following corrections or variants may be noted:

1. 6 Astar nam buadh
- 10 àillidh dealbh
- 11 finne-ghil ùir; *var.* na h-ùire-ghil òig
- bet.* 11 and 12: 'S guirme sùil 's as gile deud; *var.* as mìlse pòg
- 12 Ge glan 's ge bu ro mhath gnè
- 14 'S ann a thuit an rìgh 'na shuain
- 18 Chan fhacar a beò no marbh
- 19 Shìn e fhéin
- 21 Fad sheachd
- 22 iad sgìth
- 23 iad caladh
- 26 buaidheach mìngeal
- 29 Bha ghruagach
- 32 gnùis ghlain; *var.* ghil
- 33 bhios an long
- 34 'S luaithe chuireas tonn 'na
- 35 bhios an
- 36 Is luaithe chuir dùil an
- 37 bhios an t-each

1. 38 Is luaithe chuir cas  
 39 bhios a' bhean  
 41 bheannaich Brian thu, fhir; Brianair?  
 42 thar cuan; *var.* thar sàl; bho thuinn  
 43 nighean bhàn; *var.* bharr (*for* làimh?)  
 46 suidheamaid cealg  
 49 air an fhear *omitted*  
 50<sup>r</sup> geal glan  
 51 Ghoid mis  
 52 gun fhiosd  
 53 Ògain thànaig oirnn bho lear; *var.* thugam  
 56 Có do shloinneadh no có e t'ainm  
 57 *var.* Bile Buadhach  
 59 thoir leat  
 64 bu ghloine snuadh  
 68 do ghualainn

G A version from Flora MacLeod, Baleshare, North Uist, 1869. *Trans. Gael. Soc. Invs.*, ix. 70-1. The following corrections or variants may be noted:

1. 3 ghrianain  
 6 air do ghualainn; *var.* a bhuachaill  
 7 Là dh'Artair; *var.* Astar  
 10 tulach nam buadh gu sealg; *var.* dubh nam Fiann  
 13 *var.* finbhinn; h-ainnir  
 14 gile deud  
 15 *var.* ceòl  
 16 shiorram sèimh; *var.* shiorram suain  
 20 Thug e làmh gu luath air arm  
 22 gu dé beò  
 28 Air luing ùir  
 29 Bha iad; ràithean, *var.* seachdainean  
 30 fac iad  
 32 Chunnacas a meadhon  
 33 buaidheach  
 40 sloda fo dà  
*for lines 41-3 (which come in at the end):* 'S bu ghile na cobhar nan tonn  
 a cneas  
 44 Cùl  
 46 dhionadh  
 50 feall; fial?  
 55 'S nach loisg teine 's nach dearg arm air  
 56 geal  
 60 beachd dhomh  
 61 Boinne Bòidheach; fath, *var.* feart

- l. 63 thoir leat  
65 Threachaidealh an uaigh as a til

*After line 68 (cf. lines 19-22):*

'N uair dhùisg an rìgh as a shuain,  
Ochadan an cadal truagh,  
Bha ghruagach a sheinn an ceòl  
Gun fhios có a beò no marbh.  
Bheannaich mise dh'a gnùis ghil;  
'Na bheannaich Dia thu, fhir,  
'S mór an cion thug thu thar tuinn;  
Ma tha fear na cloich seo slàn,  
Cha d'fhidir e càs no suim.'

H A version from Margaret MacDonald (Mairead nighean Aonghuis Duinn), Gearraidh Iain, Malacleit, North Uist, 1870. Published in *Trans. Gael. Soc. Inuss.*, ix. 71-4. The following corrections or variants may be noted:

- l. 1 Astar nan stuagh  
2 Gu tulach nam buadh a shealg  
3 Chunnaig e teannadh bho'n mhaigh  
5 na finne-ghil  
6 'S milse pòg 's as gile gnè  
8 Bu bhinne na puirt leig i lè  
10 Chaidh an Rìgh  
*bet.* 10 *and* 11: 'S 'n uair a dhùisg e as a shuain / Thug e làmh gu luath air arm  
12 a beò no marbh  
*bet.* 13 *and* 14: Théid mi féin g'a h-iarraidh dhut, / Mi féin 's mo ghille 's mo chù, / 'Nar trùir a dh'iarraidh na mnè  
*bet.* 14 *and* 15: Bha mi seachd seachdain 's trì mìos / Mum facas caladh no fonn  
15 an long  
17 le fiollairean  
*bet.* 17 *and* 18: Unneagan gloin air a stuaigh  
18 Bu lìonar ann cuach is corn  
19 An aisir gheal bha  
20 Leig i slabhraidh dhubh a nuas  
22 Thug i esan  
25 nach tig  
*bet.* 26 *and* 27: Dèanamaid suidhe 's glaothamaid ceòl  
*bet.* 28 *and* 29: 'S nach tu laoch as fearr fo'n ghréin  
30 a chlaidh geal glan  
31 Goideas an  
32 sinn dheth

- bet. 32 and 33: Mu'n ghruagaich a sheinn an ceòl, / 'S i 'n cathair  
an òir a staigh
- bet. 33 and 34: Bheannaich mi féin dh'a gnùis ghlain
- 35 far tuinn
- 37 air guin
- 39 a dheise
- 45 'S e fear marbh a bha
- 47 'S deirge leac 's as gile deud
- 48 'S ann agam
- 49 feur
- 51 seilbh; var. seilg
- 53 chuir tonn 'na déidh
- 54 Marcrachd
- 56 omitted
- 57 an steud
- 58 Bu luaithe bhuaile ceum air cluan
- 59 Corra Rìgh Clach
- 61, 62 omitted
- 63 a chuirim
- 68 an ceud fhear
- 76 ghile snuadh
- 79 agamsa léigh
- 88 mar a sheinnear am

Here only versions A and B (with some variants from C, D, E) are given. For published versions see: *Leabhar na Féinne*, 208; *Clàrsach na Coille* (1st ed.), 263; Henderson, *Arthurian Motifs in Gadhelic Literature*, in *Miscellany in Honour of Kuno Meyer*, 18-33; *Reliquiae Celticae*, i. 368; Miss Frances Tolmie's Collection (*Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, vol. iv.), no. 90.

In some versions the following lines are included, but they do not properly belong. They are the prophecy made to MacDonald of Sleat, by his follower, Maclean of Boreray, before the battle of Leac a' Lì, fought against the Macleans. Maclean of Boreray secretly sympathised with the Macleans and he hoped that this forecast, purporting to have been revealed to him in a dream, would discourage the MacDonalds and contribute to their defeat:

A Dhùin Duibh! a Dhùin Duibh!  
 A ghrianain àlainn fad o mhuir,  
 Is moch a ghoireas a' chuach  
 Air a ghualainn, a Dhùin Duibh!

A Dhùin Duibh! a Dhùin Duibh!  
 Ort a dhòrtar móran fuil;  
 Marbhar ort an Ridire Ruadh  
 Mun till lann d'a truaill duibh.

A Lic Lì! a Lic Lì!  
 Ort a dh'éibhear an t-sith;  
 'S iad Clann 'ic 'ille Sheathain a bheir buaidh  
 Air an t-sluagh a thig dh'an tìr.\*

\* See *Account of the Clan MacLean* (1838) by 'Seneachie,' 60-3; *An t-Eileanach* (1921), 284-5.

O Dùn Dubh! O Dùn Dubh!  
Beautiful sunny knoll far from the sea,  
Early shall the cuckoo call  
On thy shoulder, O Dùn Dubh!

O Dùn Dubh! O Dùn Dubh!  
On thee shall much blood be spilt;  
On thee shall be slain the Red Knight  
Before sword is returned to its black sheath.

O Leac a' Li! O Leac a' Li!  
On thee shall peace be proclaimed;  
It is the Clan Maclean who shall have victory  
Over the host that invades their land.



## AM BRÒN BINN

## A

À a chaidh Astar nan stuagh  
 Gu tulach nam buadh a shealg,  
 Chunnacas a' tighinn o'n mhaigh  
 Gruagach b' àillidh cruth fo'n ghréin.  
 Cruit an làimh na h-ighinn òig  
 'S mìlse pòg 's as gile gnè;  
 Cho binn 's ga na sheinn i chruit,  
 'S binne 'n guth a leig i lè.

'S ann le fuaim a teudan binn  
 A chaidh an rìgh 'na shuain sèimh;  
 'S 'n uair a dhùisg e as a shuain,  
 Thug e làmh gu luath air airm.  
 M'an nighinn a sheinn an ceòl  
 Nach facas a beò no marbh,  
 Labhair Fios Falaich gu fial,  
 'Théid mi féin g'a h-iarraidh dhut,  
 Mi féin 's mo ghille 's mo chù,  
 'Nar triùir a shireadh na mnè.'  
 Dh'fhalbh e le ghille 's le chù  
 'S le a luing bhriagh bhréidgheal ard.  
 Bha e seachd mìosan air muir  
 Mum fac e fearann no fonn  
 'S an leigeadh e 'n long gu tìr.  
 Chunnag e 'n aiteal a' chuain  
 Clach a' buadhadh\* le biolar gorm,  
 Uinneagan gloin air a stuaigh,  
 Bu lìonar ann cuach is corn.

\* leg. *clacha buadhach?*

## THE SWEET SORROW

## A

A DAY that Arthur of the waves (leg. *sluagh*, hosts ?)  
 Went to the hill of triumphs to hunt,  
 There was seen coming from the plain  
 A maid of fairest form under the sun.  
 There was a harp in the hand of the young damsel  
 Of sweetest kiss and brightest mien ;  
 And sweetly though she played the harp,  
 Sweeter the voice which accompanied it.  
 It was at the sound of her sweet harpstrings  
 That the king sank into gentle sleep ;  
 And when he awoke from his slumber,  
 Quickly his hand reached for his weapons.  
 Concerning the girl who had played the music,  
 Who had not been seen alive or dead,  
 Sir Gawain spoke right generously,  
 ' I shall go myself to seek her for thee,  
 Myself, my lad and my hound,  
 The three of us the woman to seek.'  
 He set off with his lad and his hound,  
 And with his fair, white-sailed, lofty ship.  
 He was seven months at sea  
 Ere he saw solid earth  
 Where he could bring the ship to land.  
 He saw in the brightness of the sea  
 Stones of price with green water-cress,  
 Windows of glass on the gable,  
 Plenteous there were cups and horns.

Bha Sir Ghallabha 'na bhun, [Bhallabha  
 'S an t-slabhraidh dhubh as a nuas,  
 'S an t-slabhraidh nach do ghabh crith,  
 Thug i esan 'na ruith suas.  
 Chunnag e 'n nighean mhìn bhlàth  
 An cathair an òir a stigh, [nam fonn 's an dil  
 Streabhon sìoda fo dà bhonn,  
 'S bheannaich an sonn dh'a gnùis ghil.  
 'Na bheannaich Dia thu, fhir?  
 'S trom an cion thug thu thar  
 tuinn;  
 Ma tha fear na cloich seo slàn,  
 Cha d'fhidir e càs no truas.'  
 'Cùis as fhaide liom nach tig,  
 Comhrag ris dhèanaim gu luath.'  
 'Cia mar a dhèanadh tu sìod?  
 'S nach tu laoch as fearr fo'n ghréin,  
 Is nach dearg arm air an fhear  
 Ach a chlaidhe geal glan fhéin.'  
 'Dùisgeamaid bruidhinn 's traoghamaid fearg,  
 Suidheamaid cealg mu'n fhear mhór;  
 Goideamaid a chlaidh bho'n fhear,  
 Sin mar bheir sinn dheth an ceann.'  
 Chunnag mi 'n déidh tighinn o'n mhuir  
 Òganach air ghuin le airm;  
 Bha spuir òir air a chois dheis,  
 'S bu leòr a dheiseadh 's a dhealbh.  
 Bha spuir eile m'a chois chli  
 Do dh'airgead rìgh no dh'òr feall;\*  
 Thug mise làmh dh'ionnsaigh an spuir,  
 Dé ma thug cha bu mhath mo chiall;  
 Thug esan glacadh air airm  
 Is b'fhear marbh a bhith 'na nial.

\* Cf. 1. *òr peall* ('gold of rugs'), *Éigse*, vii. 82 § 10b; *mac rìogh Alban na n-òirphioll* ('of the golden tapestries'), *Aithdioghluim Dána*, i. 173 § 4b;

Sir Gawain was at its base,  
 A black chain was suspended from above,  
 And the chain which did not quiver  
 Carried him aloft at a run.  
 He saw the tender gentle maid  
 On a chair of gold within,  
 A carpet of silk beneath her soles,  
 And the hero greeted her fair face.  
 'Has God blessed thee, man?  
 Deep is the love that has brought thee across  
 the waves;  
 If the lord of this castle be in health  
 He knows no mercy or pity.'  
 'I am most impatient that he comes not,  
 I shall do battle with him speedily.'  
 'How wouldst thou do that when thou  
 Art not the best warrior under the sun?  
 For no weapon will draw blood from the man  
 But his own bright white sword.'  
 'Let us promote speech and abate wrath,  
 Let us lay a trap for the giant;  
 Let us steal his sword from the man,  
 So will we take off his head.'  
 I saw newly come from the sea  
 A young warrior wounded by weapons;  
 He had a golden spur on his right foot,  
 Full elegant were his dress and form.  
 He had another spur about his left foot  
 Of royal silver or inlaid (?) gold;      (*fial, fine?*)  
 I made to seize his spur,  
 But if I did, it was not good sense;  
 He grasped his weapon and to be  
 Near him was to be a dead man.

2. *cuach d'argut . . . cen fhell* ('a cup of silver . . . unalloyed'), *Ériu*, iv. 102  
 § 43c. Meaning influenced by Fr. *or en feuille*; E. *gold-foil*?

'Fosadh! fosadh! òglaich mhóir,  
 Mi beò agus am fochar m'airm,  
 Innis dhomh beachdaidh do sgeul,  
 Có thu féin no ciod e t'ainm.'

'S mi Bile Buadhach nan rath, [Buidheach  
 Agam a bhios teach nan teud;

'N teagamh gum bi mi 'nam rìgh?  
 Mu mo choinneamh do bhì Gréig.

'S ann agam féin a bhios a' bhean  
 'S àillidh leac 's as gile deud,

'S ann agam a bhios an long  
 Chuireas an tonn as a déidh;

'S ann agam féin bhios an t-each  
 As luaithe bhuail cas air feur,

'S ann agam a bhios an cù  
 Air nach laigheadh tnùth no treun.' [teinn

Ghluaiseadar gu teach air chloich,  
 'S ann a gheobh thu beachd mo  
 sgéil;

Sin mar mharcaich mi an t-each  
 Bu luaithe 's bu ghasda ceum.

Marcachd na fairge gu dian,  
 Fàlaireachd air druim a' chuain,  
 Chunnaig mi cath connachair triùir  
 Comhrag dlùth mu cheann na mnè.

Cuiridh mi 'n comhrag 'na thosd,  
 Cuiridh mi an cosg orm féin,

An triùir bhràithre, mo sgeul truagh,  
 Comhrag truagh mu cheann na mnè.

'S mi 'n curaidh nach do ghabh fiamh,  
 Chiad mhac a bh'aig Rìgh na Fraing;

Liom a thuit dis mhac Rìgh Gréig,  
 'S iad féin a mharbh an treas fear.

Mas àil leat mis a thoir leat,  
 Treachaid leachd a chlann Rìgh Gréig;

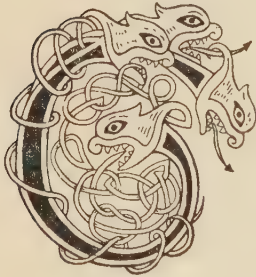
'A truce! a truce! great warrior,  
 I am alive and near my weapons,  
 Tell me of a truth thy tidings,  
 Who thou art or what thy name.'  
 'I am the victorious fortunate Bile,  
 It is I who shall have the house of melody;  
 Is there any doubt I shall be king?  
 Over against me were the Greeks.  
 It is I shall have the wife  
 With fairest cheek and whitest teeth,  
 It is I shall have the ship  
 Which will leave the wash behind;  
 It is I shall have the horse  
 Which swiftest struck hoof on grass,  
 It is I shall have the hound  
 Which malice or violence will not affect.<sup>3</sup>  
 They moved to the house on the  
     rock,  
 There thou canst verify my tale;  
 That is how I rode the horse  
 Of swiftest and most prancing pace.  
 Riding furiously across the ocean,  
 Cantering over the surface of the sea,  
 I saw the hound-loving battalion of three  
 In close combat about the woman.  
 I shall still the combat,  
 I shall take it on myself to check them,  
 The three brothers, my sad tale!  
 In sad combat about the woman.  
 I am the hero who was never affrighted,  
 The eldest son of the King of France;  
 By me fell the two sons of the King of Greece,  
 It is they themselves who killed the third one.  
 If thou desirest to take me with thee,  
 Dig a grave for the King of Greece's children;

Sin mar a threachaid mi 'n leachd  
 O 's i obair fir gun chéill,  
 A dhèanamh air chomhaich mnè,  
 Uaigh a threachaid dha deòin féin.  
 Thug ise leum a sìos dha'n t-sloc,  
 'S i bhean ghlic bu ghlaine snuadh;  
 Leum an t-anam as a corp,  
 Ochadan a nochd gur truagh.  
 Nam biodh agams an sin léigh,  
 Chuirinn e gu feum san uair,  
 Dhèanainn ath-bheothachadh as ùr,  
 Chan fhàgainn mo rùn san uaigh.  
 Air sliabh sligh nam briathra ceart,  
 Air a dheas làimh, a Mhic Dé,  
 Gun robh mi féin gu Là Luain.  
 Sin agaibh deireadh mo sgeòil,  
 'S mar a sheinneadh am Bròn Binn.

That is how I dug the grave,  
    Since it is the work of a madman  
To dig, at the request of a captive (?) woman,  
    A grave to please herself.  
She leapt down into the pit,  
    The wise woman of fairest hue ;  
The soul sprang out of her body,  
    Alas! to-night it is woe.  
If only I had then a leech,  
    I had used him at that time,  
I had brought her to life once more,  
    I had not left my love in the grave.  
On the mount of the way of the true words,  
    On Thy right hand, O Son of God,  
May I be on the Day of Doom.  
That is the end of my tale,  
    And how the Sweet Sorrow was sung.

Beulaiche: Iain Mac Leòid, croitear, Ìochdar, Uibhist.

THUBHAIRT am beulaiche: Bha rìgh ann uair ris an cante Rìgh Art. Bha móran do Ghàidheil ghasda aige 'na chùirt agus 'na chuideachd, agus gach fear riamh dhiubh a' toir barr air cach a chéile ann an cruadal, ann an uaille agus ann an gaisge. Chunnaig an Rìgh aislig air ainneir àlainn òig agus dh'innis e dh'a ghaigich na chunnaig e agus adhbhar a aislig. Thairg Sir Falaich, fear dha na gaisgich, falbh a mach air tòir na mnà, agus dh'fhalbh e, agus bha e fad fad air falbh mun d'fhuair e mach i; ach fhuair e i mu dheireadh ann an caisteal an druim-mheadhon a' chuain. Chuir Sir Falaich tàmailt oirre turas agus mharbh i e. 'D é bha innt ach badhbh ban-draoidh is i 'na suidhe ann an slige bhairnich. Bha tnuith aice ri Sir Falaich agus thug i air Rìgh Art bruadar oirre fhéin. Thug i clò cadail agus suain air Rìgh Breatann feuch am faigheadh i leisgeal air cur as dha'n ghaigeach ghasda, Sir Falaich nan Corn. Agus fhuair a' bhadbhbh gun tioma gun tròcair sin. 'Gheobh badhbh a guidhe, ge nach faigh a h-anam tròcair.'



B

HUNNAIG Rìgh Breatann 'na shuain  
An aon bhean b'fhearr snuadh fo'n  
ghréin,  
Is b'fhearr leis tuitim 'na cion  
Na comhradh fir mar e féin.

Labhair Sir Falaich gu fial,  
'Théid mi féin g'a h-iarraidh dhut,  
Mi féin 's mo ghille 's mo chù,  
'Nar triùir a shireadh na mnà.'

*Var. Lect.*

- 2 Bhean a b'fhearr, E
- 3 Gum b'fhearr, DE
- 4 comhrag fir, D; earlaid fir, E

Reciter: John MacLeod, crofter, Ìochdar, S. Uist. 10th January 1865.

THE reciter said: There was once a king called King Arthur. He had many goodly Gaels at his court and in his following, every one of them surpassing the other in hardihood, pride and valour. The King saw a dream about a beautiful young maiden and he told his warriors what he had seen and the substance of his dream. One of the warriors, Sir Gawain, offered to set out in search of the woman, and he departed, and he was a long long time away before he discovered her; but he found her at last in a castle in the very middle of the sea. On a certain occasion Sir Gawain offended her and she slew him. Who should it be but a wicked witch sitting in a limpet shell! She had a grudge against Sir Gawain and she caused King Arthur to dream about herself. She caused the King of Britain to fall into a sleep and slumber, that she might get an excuse to destroy the fine hero, Sir Gawain of the Horns (Goblets) (=Sir Gawain of Cornwall?). And the wicked woman without ruth or mercy got that. 'A wicked woman will get her wish, though her soul will get no mercy.'

## B

THE King of Britain saw in his sleep  
 The woman of fairest hue under the  
 sun,  
 And he would rather be beloved of her  
 Than have converse with a man like himself.

Then spoke Sir Gawain right generously,  
 'I shall go myself to seek her for thee,  
 Myself, my lad and my hound,  
 The three of us the woman to seek.'

5 Sir Bhalaidh, D; Fios Falaich, E

6 for *dhut* leg. *dhà*?

8 An triùir, D; na mnè, CDE

Seachd seachdainean is trì mìos  
 Bha mi sgìth ri siubhal cuain  
 Mun d'fhuaradh caladh no fonn  
 No àit an gabhadh an long tàmh.

Steach gu iomall a' chuain ghairbh  
 Chunnacas caisteal mìngheal gorm,  
 Uinneagan gloin ann ri stuaigh,  
 'S bu lìonar ann cuach is corn.

An am daibh teàrnadh gu bhun,  
 Thànaig slabhraidh dhubh a nuas;  
 Eagal cha d' ghabh mi no crith,  
 Ghabh mi oirr am dhianruith suas.

Chunnacas a' bhean bhréidgheal òg  
 An cathair dha'n òr a stigh,  
 Strefon sloda fo dà bhonn;  
 Bheannaich mi féin dh'a gnùis ghil.

'Fhleasgaich a thànaig o'n chuan,  
 'S fuara do bheannachadh oirnn;  
 Teann a nall do cheann air mo ghlùn  
 'S gun seinninn dut cruit is ceòl.'

- 10 sinn sgìth, C; for *cuain* leg. *sàil*?  
 11 Mum facas, CD; fearann no fonn, D  
 12 Air an dèanadh an long, D  
 13 Mach gu meadhon, C; Steach gu oir a' chuain mhóir, D; Chunnas  
 an iomall a' chuain, E  
 14 taigh mór mìngheal dreach, D; Caisteal ùrgheal mìngheal gorm, E  
 15 glan, E; air a stuagh, CE  
 17 Aig teàrnadh a staigh, C; Air dhomh bhith teàrnadh, E  
 19 Cha d' ghabh mi eagal no fiamh, E  
 20 *oirre am ruith* would be an improvement metrically.

Seven weeks and three months  
 I was weary traversing the sea  
 Ere harbour or land was won  
 Or a place where the ship might lie.

Nearing the edge of the rough sea  
 A smooth azure castle was seen,  
 It had windows of glass facing the waves, [*or* on its gables  
 And plenteous there were cups and horns.

When they won in to its base  
 A black chain came down;  
 Neither fear nor trembling seized me,  
 I went up on it at a run.

The young white-coifed lady was seen  
 On a chair of gold within,  
 A carpet of silk beneath her soles;  
 I greeted her fair face.

'O gallant who has come from the sea,  
 Cool is thy greeting to us;  
 Come, place thy head on my knee,  
 That I might play the harp to thee and sing.'

- 21 Chunncais a' bhean dhonnghéal òg, D; Bha bhean bhàn bhréidgheal òg, E  
 22 a steach, D                      23 Bha streafon, D; Stròl dha'n t-sìoda, E  
 24 Bheannaich an sonn dh'a gnùis ghil *or* ghlain, C; *sonn*, better metrically  
 25, 26 Ainnir òg bu mhlse fonn, / Bu bhinne na gach ceòl a guth, D; M'anam thu, m'aighear 's mo rùn, / 'S mór an gaol a thug mi dhut, E  
 27 Trobhad 's cuir do cheann, C; Thoir dhomhsa do cheann, D  
 28 ceòl is cruic, CDE

Cruit air uchd na finnèghil ùir  
 'S guirme sùil 's as gile deud,  
 Is binn 's ga na sheinn i chruit,  
 Bu bhinne na sin guth a béil.

Thuit esan 'na shiorram suain  
 'N déidh bhith cuartachadh cuain ghairbh

Thug is' an claidh geur bho chrios,  
 Sgrid i dheth gun fhios an ceann;  
 Sin agaibh deireadh mo sgeòil  
 'S mar a sheinnear am Bròn Binn.

*Var. Lect.*

30 'S caithreim chiùil a bheirinn dhut, D

31 'S ge binn dha na, C; 'S ge binn 's dha na, E

33 Thuit an laoch, C

35, 36 Cheangail iad a shluagh gu léir, / 'S bha bhean fhéin fo chaidh  
 a chuim (?), C; Chruinnich a sluagh gu léir, / 'S i bhean fhéin a  
 cumha chiùin (?), E; Loisg i a luath-san gu léir, / 'S a bhean fhéin  
 a chumhadh ann, D

A harp there was in the lap of the fair young damsel,  
 Of bluest eye and whitest teeth,  
 And sweetly though she played the harp,  
 Sweeter than that the song from her lips.

He fell into a deep sleep  
 After voyaging on the rough sea

. . . . .

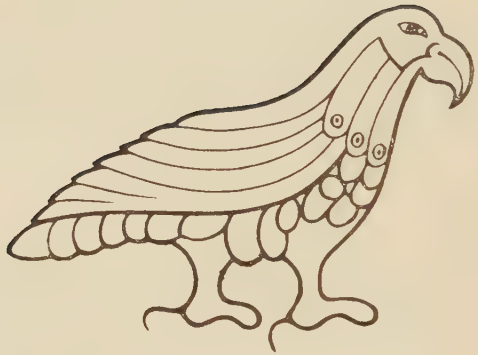
She took the sharp sword from his baldric,  
 And she swept off his head by stealth;  
 That is the end of my tale  
 And how the Sweet Sorrow is sung.

37 Ghoid iad an claidh geur bho thaobh, C

38 Thug i dheth, D; Le fhaobhar dh'aom iad a cheann, C

39 sgéil, C; gach sgeòil, E

40 sheinneadh, CE





ÒRAIN SÌDHE  
FAIRY SONGS



## ÒRAN SÌDHE

A MAN searching in the hill for sheep heard this 'òran sidh' in Creaga Gorma, Hèathabhal, Barra. The fairy woman in the rocks was grinding



AIN tàrr as!  
A hó a hau \*  
Iain tàrr as!  
A hó a hì

Thoir ionnsaigh an taighe,  
A hó a hau  
Co luath ris an t-saighid.  
A hó a hì

Iain tàrr as  
Le luas do chas,  
'S na tig air ais  
Le feachd dha'n tìr.

[an rìgh

Iain tàrr as!  
A hó a hau  
Iain tàrr as!  
A hó a hì

\* hò?

On fairies see *The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries* by W. Y. Evans Wentz (Oxford University Press, 1911).

## FAIRY SONG

at the quern while singing the song. The man could remember only a small fragment of what the fairy woman sang.

AWAY, John, away!

A ho a hau

Away, John, away!

A ho a hi

Make for the house,

A ho a hau

Swift as the arrow.

A ho a hi

Away, John, away,

With the speed of thy feet,

And come not back

With a host to the land.

[the king's

Away, John, away!

A ho a hau

Away, John, away!

A ho a hi

## ÒRAN SÌDHE

BHA dithis nighean anns an Ìochdar a' muigh a' fodradh cruidh an athar, agus chual iad ceòl ann an Sìdhean Chroise Beaga. Chuir a' chlann an cluas ri taobh an t-sidhein, agus chual iad an aon cheòl bu bhriagha chuala cluas riamh ann am broinn an t-sidhein, agus b'e seo an tàladh a bha na sìdhich a' seinn.



MHÓRAG bheag,  
 A' dìreadh bheann,  
 A' teurnadh ghleann,  
 A' dìreadh bheann;  
 A Mhórag bheag,  
 A' dìreadh bheann,  
 Gu bheil thu sgìth,  
 'S na laoiigh air chall.

## FAIRY SONG

Two girls in Iochdar were out feeding their father's cattle, and they heard music in the fairy hill of Croise Beaga. The children put their ears to the side of the hill, and within the fairy bower they heard the sweetest music that ear ever heard, and this was the lull-song that the fairies were singing.

O LITTLE Morag,  
A-climbing bens,  
Descending glens,  
A-climbing bens,  
O little Morag,  
A-climbing bens,  
Tired thou art,  
And the calves lost.

## ÒRAN SÌDHE

BHA té a muigh a' buachailleachd a' chruidh aice ann an Eilean Sanndraidh agus chual i an t-òran sìdh seo as an t-sidhean mhór.



CHRIOSAIN chridhe, na dèan éirigh,

Hù rù bhi hù hó

Ma dh'éireas tu bidh mi deurach,

Hù rù bhi hù hó

Hó hoile a bha ho hì

Ocha ró chall éile

Ma laigheas tu bidh mi eutrom,

Bidh mi subhach 's bidh mi éibhneach

Thu leigeil liom mo chead 's mo cheuma,

Cead mo mhire, cead mo leuma,

Cead mo mharcachd san là fhéille.

## FAIRY SONG

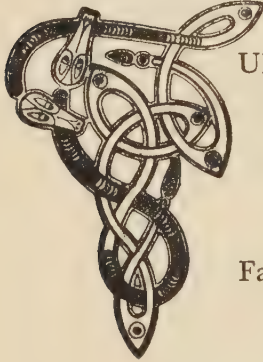
A WOMAN was out herding the cattle in the Isle of Sandray, and she heard this fairy song in the great fairy mound.

GIRDLE beloved, rise not,  
Hu ru bhi hu ho  
If thou rise I shall be tearful,  
Hu ru bhi hu ho  
Ho hoile a bha ho hi  
Ocha ro chall eile  
If thou rise not I shall be lightsome,  
I shall be merry, I shall be joyful,  
If thou leave me free to stride,  
Free to sport and free to leap,  
Free to ride on holiday.

## ÒRAN SÌDHE

From a black-haired fine-featured intelligent woman in Miughalaidh, with great intelligence.

CHUALA Ruairidh Mac Dhomhnaill an tuirim seo fo'n taigh aige ann am Bearnaraidh oidhche agus e 'na laighe 'na dhùsgadh. Bha a' bhean-shìdh 'ga sheinn agus i a' bleith na brathann fo'n urlar aig Ruairidh. Bha taigh Ruairidh air sìdhean, agus is iomadh oidhche nach leigeadh na sìdhich clò cadail leis, ach ri ceòl is ri dannsadh is ri ridhleadh is ri séideadh is ri sùgradh is ri làn-aighear gun tàmh gun fhois gun stad gun chlos air ceann no air cas san tolm. Leis an ùbraid agus leis an aileas \* b'fheudar do Ruairidh an taigh aige thogail am bad eile, far nach do chuir na sìdhich dragh tuillidh air fhéin no air a theaghlach.



URA mis th'air mo chràdh  
Mu'n bhean bhà an Dùn Trò.

Aparain duibh o hì hó  
Ró hù ill ó hó

Far na chaill mi mo bhràithrean  
'S mo thriùir phàisdean 's iad òg.

Aparain duibh o hì hó  
Ró hù ill ó hó

Tha m'athair 's mo mhàthair  
Air an càramh fo'n fhòid.

Aparain duibh o hì hó  
Ró hù ill ó hó

\* =aimhleas?

## FAIRY SONG

Mingulay. The woman first sang this very sweetly, and then dictated it

RODERICK MACDONALD heard this lament beneath his house in Bernera one night when he was lying awake. The fairy woman was singing it as she ground at the quern under Roderick's floor. Roderick's house was on a fairy mound, and many a night the fairies would not let him sleep, but were at music and at dancing and at reels and at blowing and at sport and at all merry-making without rest or repose or halt or stillness of head or of foot in the knoll. With the uproar and with the discomfort (?) Roderick had perforce to build his house in another spot, where the fairies no more troubled himself or his household.

'Tis I that am pained  
For the woman that was in Dùn Trò.

Aparain duibh o hi ho  
Ro hu ill o ho

Where I lost my brothers  
And my three young babes.

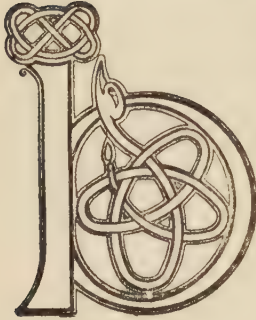
Aparain duibh o hi ho  
Ro hu ill o ho

My father and my mother  
Are laid under the sod.

Aparain duibh o hi ho  
Ro hu ill o ho

## ÒRAN SÌDHE

CHUALAS an t-òran sìdh seo ann an sìdhean am Miughalaidh.



IDH clann bheag a' bhile seo,  
A' bhile seo, a' bhile seo,  
Bidh clann bheag a' bhile seo  
A' bigirich air charnan.

[sìdhean

A' bigirich, a' bigirich,  
A' bigirich air charnan,  
A' bigirich gun tiomachadh,  
A' bigirich gun tàmhach.

Cha tugainn fhìn mo ghilleachan,  
Mo ghilleachan, mo ghilleachan,  
Cha tugainn fhìn mo ghilleachan  
Air fichead bótha bàna.

B'fhearr liom anns an innis thu,  
San innis thu, san innis thu,  
B'fhearr liom anns an innis thu  
Na gin a ghin do chairdean.

Bheir mi mìr is marrum dhut,  
Is bainne geal nam m'neag;  
Bheir mi fìon na brailis dhut,  
'S thig dhachaigh liom dha'n t-sìdhean.

## FAIRY SONG

THIS fairy song was heard in a fairy mound in Mingulay.

THE bairnies of this townland,  
 This townland, this townland,  
 The bairnies of this townland  
 Will be romping on a knoll.

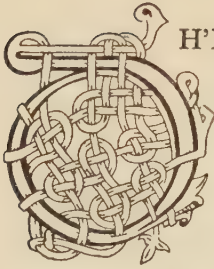
Romping, romping,  
 Romping on a knoll,  
 Romping untiringly,  
 Romping without pause.

I would not give my laddie,  
 My laddie, my laddie,  
 I would not give my laddie  
 For twenty white kine.

I'd rather have thee in the meadow,  
 In the meadow, in the meadow,  
 I'd rather have thee in the meadow  
 Than any of thy kindred's bairns.

Dainty and cream I'll give to thee,  
 And the white milk of the gentle cows;  
 Wine of the wort I'll give to thee,  
 So thou come home with me to the knoll.

## AN SÌFIRE



H'FHÀG mi ann am beul a' bhrugh  
 M'eudail fhéin an donngheal dhubh,  
 A sùil mar reul, a beul mar shubh,  
 A guth mar inneall theudan.

Dh'fhàg mi 'n dé an innis nam bó  
 An cailin donn as mìlse pòg,  
 A rasg mar reul, a leac mar ròs,  
 A pòg air bhlas nam peuran.

## THE FAIRY

I LEFT in the doorway of the bower  
My jewel, the dusky, brown, white-skinned,  
Her eye like a star, her lip like a berry,  
Her voice like a stringed instrument.

I left yesterday in the meadow of the kine  
The brown-haired maid of sweetest kiss,  
Her eye like a star, her cheek like a rose,  
Her kiss has the taste of pears.

## SEALGAIR AGUS SÌFEAG

FHUAIR sealgair sidhinne nam beann beanag bheag bhrònach ann an còs creige am bonn na beinne. Cha robh anns a' mhnaoi ach sìfeag bheag bhìodach bhrònach bhoireannaich, agus i co bòidheach ri dealbh. Bha i a' gul agus a' gal, a' bròn agus a' caoi, ag osmail agus ag osnaich, an annar a cridhe a bhristeadh. Dh'fheòraich an sealgair dhith 'd é a bha cur rithe, agus thubhairt i ris gun do chuir an saoghalach mór an stàilinn os cionn ardoras a brugh dar a bha i mach air tòir cuman uisge, agus nach b'urra dhi faighinn a staigh dh'a taigh fhéin. Thog an sealgair air bharrabhas agus air fras-mhullach a ghualne am boireannach beag bòidheach banail caomh ceanail camagach cuachach, agus thug e dhachaigh i, agus bha i aige ri buachailleachd na spréidhe. Ghléidh sealgair na sidhinne sìfeag an tolmair aige fhéin, agus bha i aige gabhail cùram nan treud [na treuid]. Dar a bhitheadh an t-sìfeag ris a' chrodh bhitheadh i ri tuiream agus ri caoi, agus chluinnt i fad as.



M bun a' chruidh cha chaithris mi,  
Am bun a' chruidh cha bhì mi;  
Am bun a' chruidh cha chaithris mi,  
Is m'aighear anns an t-sìdhean.

Ged a sguir mi 'n bhuachailleachd,  
Tha bruaillean beag air m'inntinn,  
Gum falbh mo leannan suairce bhuam,  
'S mo leanban uaine 's t-sìdhean.

Ach fhir a thug mo dhoras dhiom  
'S a chuir mo thoil dha m' dhìth-sa,  
Gun rùth gun rath gun sonas dhut,—  
Gur don an rud a rinn thu!

Ged tha mi nochd sa bhaile seo,  
Is bochd liom bhith dh'a ìnnseadh,—  
'S iomadh àit am bheil mo chairdean,  
'S pàirt dhiubh san tìr iseal.

## THE HUNTER AND THE FAIRY

A DEER-HUNTER of the hill found a sorrowful little woman in a rocky nook at the foot of the mountain. She was naught but a sorrowful little tiny fairy woman, and as pretty as a picture. She was weeping and lamenting, grieving and sorrowing, sobbing and sighing, like to break her heart. The hunter inquired of her the cause of her sorrow, and she told him that the big worldling had put the steel above the lintel of her bower when she was out seeking a pitcher of water, and she could not get into her own house. The hunter lifted the dear lovely little mild modest woman of curling coiling hair on the tops of his palms and the summit of his shoulder, and he took her home, and he had her herding the cattle. The hunter of the deer kept the little woman fairy of the knoll with himself, and she was tending the flocks. When the fay would be at the cows she would be mourning and sorrowing, and she could be heard afar off.

OVER the cattle I will not watch,  
 Over the cattle I will not be,  
 Over the cattle I will not watch,  
 For my joy is in the fairy hill.

Though I have ceased from the cattle-herding,  
 A little trouble is on my mind,  
 That my courtly lover will go from me,  
 And my green-clad child in the fairy hill.

But thou man who closed to me my door  
 And robbed me of my pleasure,  
 Without seed, without luck, without joy be thou—  
 Ill is the thing which thou hast done!

Though I am to-night in this townland,  
 I sorrow to be telling it,—  
 'Tis many a place where are my friends,  
 And some of them in the low land.

Ged tha mi nochd san ardraich seo, [astail  
 Nin e mo ghràdh bhith innte,—  
 'S iomadh àit am bheil mo chairdean,  
 'S pàirt dhiubh 'n cnoc an t-sìdhein.

Ach fhir a shiùbhlas garbhlaichean,  
 'S a rinn mo dhealbh a dhìobradh,  
 'S ann thuit mo dhud 's mo dhadann dhiom [ghadann  
 Ri t'fhaicinn anns an t-sìdhean.

Ach fhir a shiùbhlas thallad,  
 Thoir soiridh uam is inns e,  
 Thoir fios a chum na banaraich  
 Gur mis a' bhean a dhìt i.

Is fhir dh'a bheil mo phàisdean,  
 'S tu féin a dh'fhàg a dhìth mi;  
 Ma bhios do làmh an togail dhaibh,  
 Mo bhannadh i bhith dhìth dhut. [mhollachd

Though I am to-night in this abode,  
It is not my love to be therein,—  
'Tis many a place where are my friends,  
And some of them in the fairy hill.

But thou man who rangest rough grounds,  
And who hast banished my comely looks,  
My hope fell altogether from me  
At seeing thee in the fairy hill.

But thou man who rangest yonder,  
Bear a farewell from me and tell it,  
Bear word unto the dairymaid  
That I am she who has condemned her.\*

And thou man whose are my children,  
'Tis thyself who hast left me forlorn;  
If thy hand be raised against them,  
My malison on thee, thou shalt lose it.

\* Or 'whom she has condemned.'

## AN SEALGAIR AGUS A' BHEAN-SHÌDH

Seanchaidh: Catriona Nic Nìll, coitear, Breubhaig, Barraidh.  
18mh de'n Iuchar 1902.

BHA gille òg ann uair agus bha leannan sìdh aige. Bhiodh i 'ga chomh-lachadh air a' bheinn agus anns a' ghleann. Bha a mhuime-mhàthair a' faighinn coire dha, agus thubhairt i ris, 'Mura seachainn thu i, cuiridh i crìoch ort.' Ach bha an gille a' coinneachadh na h-inghne mar a bha e roimhe. 'Nam faighneadh [MS. faigh-] tu dhith am mungan,' ars a mhàthair, 'agus 'd é tha fàgail nan laogh torc-chluasach.' Rinn e sin. 'D é tha fàgail nan laogh torc-chluasach?' ars esan. 'A chionn am màthair a bhith a' seachnadh air a' mhungan,' ars ise. Dh'innis esan seo dh'a mhuime. Bhuain an gille am mungan, agus chuir e air aodach a pheathar e an là 'r na mhàireach. Chomhlaich a' bhean-shìdh e, agus chuir i fàilte chridheil air, agus shuidh i goirid dha air a' chnoc, ach cha b'urra dhi tighinn faisge dha.

'A nighean sin 's a nighean réidh,  
A nighean dh'an tug mi mo spéis,  
Nam bitheadh an diugh mar an dé,  
Cha d'fhuair thu 'm mungan réidh fo d' chois.'

Thog an gille bhuaiche, agus phòs e bean shaoghail. Bha i trom agus seachad air an am an leanabh a thighinn, agus cha robh guth air an leanabh a bhreith. Bha an leanabh bliadhna mhór air a giùlan, ach ma bha, cha robh guth air a bhreith an déidh sin uile. Dh'fhalbh an sealgair a suas an gleann, agus có a chomhlaich aig a' chnoc e ach gum b'i a' bhean bheag a' tighinn mun cuart ceann a' chnoic. 'Nach fad o'n latha sin!' ars ise. 'A Rìgh, is fad o'n latha sin gu dearbh!' ars esan. 'Cionnas tha a' bhean agad,—gun dith gun deireas?' ars ise. 'O tha glé mhath, gun dith gun deireas mar chanadh tu,' ars esan. 'D é fàth do sgeòil \* no do thuras, a shealgair, a' tadhall nam beann ris an teasaich?' 'Nì bheil gabadh agam fhéin, ach chunna mi creutair beag brònach dar bha mi tighinn tarsainn a' bhearraidh, agus gu deimhin chuir i truas orm.' 'D é an creutair a bha sin?' ars ise. 'Bha creutair maoislich a' cur meann chon an t-saoghail agus gun dol aic air.' 'A Rìgh 's a roghainn, is neònach liom fhéin sin, maoisleach a' cur meann chon an t-saoghail agus gun dol

[There seems to be confusion in the first paragraph between a story of a man and a fairy woman and a story of a mortal woman and a fairy. The verse should be addressed by a fairy lover to a mortal woman.]

\* Originally *sheòid*? (*seud, saod*, track, course. Cf. fios do sheud 's do shiubhail, *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*, i. 216; is fhios aige air

## THE HUNTER AND THE FAIRY WOMAN

Narrator: Catherine MacNeil, cottar, Breubhaig, Barra.  
18th July 1902.

THERE WAS a young lad once who had a fairy sweetheart. She would be meeting him on the hill and in the glen. His foster-mother was finding fault with him, and she told him, 'If thou shun her not, she will put an end to thee.' But the lad was trysting with the maiden as he had been before. 'If thou wouldst ask of her about the fairy flax,'\* said his mother, 'and what it is that makes the calves notch-eared.' He did that. 'What makes the calves notch-eared?' he asked. 'Because their mother shuns the fairy flax,' said she. He told this to his foster-mother. The lad plucked the fairy flax, and he put it upon his sister's clothing on the morrow. The fairy woman met him, and gave him hearty greeting, and sat near him on the knoll, but she could not come close to him.

'Thou maiden there, and thou gracious maiden,  
Thou maiden to whom I have given my love,  
Were this day as yesterday,  
Thou hadst not got the smooth fairy flax beneath thy foot.'

The lad left her, and he married a mortal woman. She was pregnant, and past the time when the child should come, and there was no word of the child being born. She had carried the child a long year, but if she had, for all that there was no word of its being born. The hunter went up the glen, and who met him at the knoll but the little woman coming round the end of the knoll. 'Is it not long since that day!' said she. 'O King, it is long indeed since that day!' he said. 'How is thy wife,—without lack or loss?' said she. 'Oh, she is very well, without lack or loss as thou wouldst say,' said he. 'What is the matter of thy tidings, or what thy journey, O hunter, that thou comest to the mountains in the heat?' 'I have not a word myself, but I saw a poor little creature as I was coming across the ridge, and truly I pitied her.' 'What creature was that?' said she. 'It was a doe sending a fawn unto the world, and she not succeeding.' 'O King and O choice one, I wonder at that myself, a doe sending a fawn unto the world, and she not succeeding, though the fairy flax was under

\* ?=*mòthan*, pearlwort.

ceann a shaoid 's a shiubhail, *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition*, ii. 368.)  
Or *sheòil*?

aic air, agus am mungan f'a cois! 'D é am fios nach i bhean agad fhéin a th'ann?' ars ise. 'Ù chan i, chan i idir,' ars esan. 'Ma tà, bheir mise dhut crios àlainn euchdail, agus cuiridh tu m'a meadhon e, agus thig an leanabh a chon an t-saoghail.'

Dh'fhalbh an sealgair dhachaigh 'na dheann, agus thug e leis an crios —crios na mnà-sidhe. Bha seann stoc craoibhe ri taobh na h-aibhne, agus chuir an sealgair an crios mu'n stoc, feuch ciamar a dh'éireadh dha. Spreagh an stoc craoibhe 'na cheithir lethean bho bhràigh gu bhonn.

Chaidh e dhachaigh agus thug e leis an crios agus chuir e an crios am mullach an teine. Bhuain e am mungan, agus chuir e plàsda dheth fo dhà bhonn a' bhoireannaich, agus thànaig an leanabh a chon an t-saoghail gun dragh gun trioblaid dh'a mhàthair.

Dh'fhàs am boireannach trom torrach a rìst agus i faisg air a h-am. Dh'fhalbh an sealgair a chon a' bhaile air tòir bean-ghlùna, agus có chunnaig e ach a' bhean-shìdh cùl creige agus torghan binn 'na beul. Stad an sealgair 'ga h-éisdeachd, agus gum bu h-e an cròn an bha aice:—

'Tha bean nam bas geala  
 Aig baile 'ga càramh;  
 Maireiread ni Ruairidh,  
 Bean shuairc an deagh nàdair;  
 Bean òg a' chùil chlannaich,  
 Dh'am b'aithne bhith màlda,  
 Bean òg a' chùil dualaich,  
 Dh'am bu dual bhith sa Bhràighe.'

Cha d'éisd an sealgair an corr, ach thill e dhachaigh, agus fhuair e a bhean marbh air a chinn.

'Siod an rud eile,  
 Na hì ho ho hù ho  
 Siod an rud eile.  
 Na ho hì na hó a ro nàilinn'

Seanchaidh: Màiri Nic Gille Mhaoil, croitear, Ìochdar,  
 Uibhist a' Chinn a Deas.

BHA fritheir ann am beinn fad air falbh, agus 'd é ach bha e a' suirghe air ban-sìdhich anns a' ghleann. Bhitheadh e 'ga coinneachadh air a dhol agus air a thighinn, agus a' bruidhinn rithe. Ach ma bha, 'd é dha sin?—dh'fhàg an sealgair a' bhan-sìdheach, agus phòs e nighean chlann daoine. Bha a' bhean-shìdh fo leòn agus fo bhròn agus fo mhulad, ach ma

her foot! \* Who knows but it is thine own wife that is there?' 'Oh, it is not she, it is not she at all,' said he. 'Well, I will give thee a fair and potent girdle, and thou shalt put it about her middle, and the child shall come unto the world.'

The hunter went home in haste, and he took with him the girdle—the fairy woman's girdle. There was an old tree-stump by the river's side, and the hunter placed the girdle about the stump, to see how it would fare. The tree-stump shattered in four parts from top to bottom.

He went home and took the girdle with him, and he put the girdle on the top of the fire. He plucked the fairy flax, and he put a plaster of it under the woman's two soles, and the child came unto the world without toil or trouble to its mother.

The woman grew heavy and pregnant again, and she was near her time. The hunter went to the townland seeking a midwife, and whom saw he but the fairy woman behind a rock, and a sweet strain of music in her mouth. The hunter stood still listening to her, and the croon that she had was this.

'The woman of the white palms  
At home is being shrouded;  
Margaret, Roderick's daughter,  
The kindly woman, generous-natured;  
The young wife of ringlet locks,  
Who well knew to be modest,  
The young wife of twining locks,  
Who dwelt in the Brae.'

The hunter listened to no more, but returned home, and found his wife dead before him.

'Yon is the other thing,  
Na hi ho ho hu ho  
Yon is the other thing,  
Na ho hi na ho a ro nailinn'

Narrator: Mary MacMillan, crofter, Ìochdar,  
South Uist.

A RANGER of the forest was living in a mountain far afield, and what but he was wooing a fairy sweetheart in the glen. He would be meeting her on his going and coming, and speaking with her. But if he was, what of that?—the hunter left the fairy woman, and he married a girl of the children of men. The fairy woman was in pain and in grief and in sorrow,

\* Cf. Krappe, *The Science of Folk-lore*, 236:

Wad ye let the bonny may die in your hand  
And the mugwort flowering i' the land?

bha, cha do leig i dad oirre, gon an d'fhàs bean an t-sealgair tinn leis an tinneas as fearr na an t-slàinte, agus gon an tànaig a h-am tuislidh; agus dar a thànaig, chuir i am bàs 'na beul. An uair a thànaig bean an duine gu leabaidh-shiùla, dh'fhalbh esan air tòir ban-ghlùin, agus ma dh'fhalbh, cò chomhlaich e ach gum b'i a' bhean-shìdh am bràigh nan tolmam am bonn a' ghlinne mar a b'abhaist. Bheannaich i dha ann am briathra mìn modhail, agus fhreagair esan di anns na briathra ceudna, agus mur b'iad a b'fhearr, cha b'iad dad bu mhiosa. 'Cìod e do sgeul fhéin, a shealgair?' ars a' bhean-shìdh. 'Nì bheil guth agam ainmìg na annasach,' ars an sealgair, 'ach aon nì a chuir deuchainn orm 's mi a' tighinn a nuas a' bheinn, gobhar fhaicinn a' cur meann chon an t-saoghail, agus gun dol aic air.' 'An tà, is neònach liom fhìn sin, gobhar a' cur meann chon an t-saoghail, agus gun dol aic air, agus am mungan mìn fo a cois.—Ach cionnas \* tha thu féin a' dol an diugh, a shealgair na beinne?—is cinnteach mi nach ann gun adhbhar a dh'fhàg thu do bhean bhog bhloingeach lachdann fhéin.' 'Tha mise dol dha'n bhaile air tòir ban-ghlùin dha m' mhnaoi, agus i ann an glacaibh fuar a' bhàis.' 'An tà, cha ruig thu leas dhol nas fhaide,' ars ise. 'Bheirim-sa dhut crios cubhraidh caon gu chur mu shlios do mhnatha a bheireadh i air ais o bhàs gu beatha ged a robh na naoi bàis 'na beul.' Cha do leig an sealgair dad air, ach shuidh e taobh an tobair a dh'òl deoch. Thug ise cadal air, agus shuidh i r'a thaobh agus sheinn i 'na chluais :

Hì rì rì rì ù o  
 Hao rì o hiù rì rì bho hó  
 'S olc an obair fir turais  
 Hì rì rì rì ù o  
 Bhith fuireach air mhairneal,  
 Hao rì o hiù rì rì bho hó  
 Agus gnìomh fir astair  
 Bhith cadal air charnaibh,  
 'S bean òg a' chùil chlannaich  
 Aig baile 'ga càramh,  
 Mo chomhairle, fhleasgaich,  
 Mo sheachnadh a b'fhearr 'ut,  
 Gu bheil eadar mo ghlacaibh  
 Na lotadh gun arm thu,  
 'S a dh'fhàgadh do léine  
 Blàigh ghlégheal is dhearg dhith!  
 'S mithich dhomhsa dhol dhachaigh  
 Gu faithche na tàirne,  
 Far am bheil na fir ghrinne  
 'S mnathan binne 'gan àrach.

\* leg. *ceana*?

but if she was, she gave no sign, until the hunter's wife grew sick with the sickness that is better than health, and until the time came for her to be delivered; and when it came, she put death in her mouth. When the man's wife came to childbed, he went to seek a midwife, and if he did, who met him but the fairy woman in the breast of the knolls at the glen's foot as of wont. She blessed him in words mild, mannerly, and he returned her blessing in the like words, and if they were not better, they were no whit worse. 'What are thine own tidings, O hunter?' said the fairy woman. 'Not a word have I rare or strange,' said the hunter, 'but one thing that pained me as I came down the mountain, to see a goat putting forth a kid into the world, and she not succeeding.' 'Well, that seems strange to myself, a goat putting forth a kid into the world, and she not succeeding, though the smooth fairy flax was under her foot.—But whither art thou thyself going to-day, hunter of the hill?—I am sure that not without cause hast thou left thine own soft, obese, sallow wife.' 'I am going to the townland to seek a midwife for my wife, and she in the cold clasps of death.' 'Well, thou needst go no further,' said she. 'I will give thee a gauzy gossamer girdle to place around the loins of thy wife that would bring her back from death to life though the nine deaths were in her mouth.' The hunter gave no sign, but sat down by the well to drink a draught. She brought sleep upon him, and she sat by his side and sang in his ear :

Hi ri ri ri u o  
 Hao ri o hui ri ri bho ho  
 'Tis ill work for a traveller  
 Hi ri ri ri u o  
 To stay and to dally,  
 Hao ri o hui ri ri bho ho  
 And ill deed for a journeyer  
 To be sleeping on cairns,  
 While the young wife of ringlet locks  
 Is being shrouded at home.  
 My counsel, gallant youth,  
 To shun me had served thee better,  
 For there lies betwixt my hands  
 That which would wound thee without weapon,  
 And would leave thy shirt,  
 A part gleaming-white, a part of it red!  
 It is time for me to go homeward  
 To the field of review,  
 Where are the comely men  
 And sweet-voiced women tending them.

Ach a Mhurchaidh 'ic Iain,  
 Bu tu cridhe na féile,  
 Bu tu sealgair nan aighean  
 San latha ghil-ghréine!  
 Dol timcheall na leacaich,  
 Gun leagadh tu treud dhiubh,  
 Dol suas ris a' chreachann,  
 'S mise leanadh ad dhéidh-sa!  
 Bha uair 's bha do ghealladh  
 Mar bheatha na gréin dhomh,  
 'S bu mhílse do phòg liom  
 Na òl a' gath-ghréine.

Thug a' bhean-shìdh an crios cubhraidh caon dha'n t-sealgair, agus thog e air gu tilleadh; ach chuimhnich e a' ghobhar agus am mungan, agus thug e am mungan dhachaigh dh'a mhnaoi. Chuir e am mungan mìn beannaichte fòipe air an leabaidh-làir, agus bha i slàn a làthair. An sin chuir e crios na mnà-sìdh air carra cloiche cruinn fa chomhair an dorais, agus spreagh an carra 'na mhìrean as a chéile. 'D é bha, a ghràidhe-in nam fear, ach a' bhean-shìdh air son cur as do bhean an t-sealgair. Tha na mnà-sìdh mar na mnà saoghail, fuaraidh geuraidh guineach chon na té chaidh eadar iad fhéin agus cridhe mhic an duine. Dia eadar sinn agus farmad gach mnà-sìdh agus gach mnà saoghail am feadh a bhitheas sinn anns a' cholann shaoghalta!

But thou Murdo son of John,  
Thou wast the heart of generosity,  
Thou wast the hunter of the hinds  
On the day of bright sun!  
Going about the high hill-slope,  
Thou wouldst bring down a herd of them,  
Ascending the rough summit,  
'Tis I would follow after thee!  
There was a time when thy promise  
Was as the life of the sun to me,  
And when to me thy kiss was sweeter  
Than to drink in the sunbeam.

The fairy woman gave the gauzy gossamer girdle to the hunter, and he set out to return; but he remembered the goat and the fairy flax, and he took the fairy flax home to his wife. He placed the smooth blessed fairy flax beneath her on the floor-bed, and immediately she was whole. He then placed the fairy woman's girdle on a round pillar-stone before the door, and the pillar burst asunder in fragments. What was it, beloved of men, but the fairy woman seeking to destroy the hunter's wife. The fairy women are like the world women, cold and keen and cutting to her who has come between themselves and the heart of the son of man. God be between us and the envy of every fairy woman and every world woman so long as we are in the worldly frame!

## AN LEANNAN SÌDH

THE narrator of this story and singer of the song was a woman of seventy or eighty years, above middle height, mild, dignified, and vivacious when speaking. Her figure and complexion were such as a court lady might envy. She had never been out of her native Uist, and had never heard a word of English except once when the lowland factor, who knew no Gaelic, damned her for not speaking English when she went to pay her rent. 'Never a word of English had she heard but that, and although she did not know what it meant, it made her frame tremble.' 'Chuir an duine dona greann a' bhàis aghaidh rium a chionn nach robh Beurla agam dha. Cha robh, O cha robh Beurla agamsa dha'n duine dhona, cha robh Beurla ann ri mo linn. Ach bha an *rent* agam dha, agus ghabh e sin. Cha robh mi fhìn no am fear a bh'agam sgillinn riamh am fiachan do bhàillidh dùthcha no do dh'uachdaran fearainn—O cha robh sgillinn riamh aig bàillidh dùthcha no uachdaran fearainn orm fhìn no air an fhear a bh'agam, ged a dh'fhàgadh mis am dhilleachdan òg le teaghlach mór mu m' làimh agus mu m' chois. Bhàthadh m'athair agus mo dhà bhràithrean [*sic*] agus fear mo thaighe air an Rubha Mhucanach air an turas do Ghlascho le luchd gràin agus cruaidh, agus dh'fhàgadh mise glé òg le dilleachdain gun chli gun treòir mu m' làimh 's mu m' chois. Bha am bàta trom agus am muir mór, agus chaidh i fodha fo'n casan, agus muinntir Eilean nam Muc a' coimhead orra gun chomas cuideachaidh gun chomas comhnaidh orra. Dh'fhàgadh mise le clann lag, ach bha Dia nan dùl

BHA nighean tuathanaich turas a' buachailleachd a' chruidh mhóir agus a' mheanbhchruidh aig a h-athair ann an Trosairigh am bràigh Coire Chrothadail an Uibhist. Bha an latha blàth bruthairneach, agus 'd é ach a thuit clò cadail agus sac suain air an nighinn. An uair a dhùisg am buachaille bha am buar air chall. Cha robh sgial aig a' bhuachail air a' bhuar, agus cha robh sgial aig a' bhuar air a' bhuachaille. Ach am bial athaich\* agus anamoich thànaig an spréidh dhachaigh air an snòdan bòidheach fhéin, agus thànaig an nighean dachaigh le ceum cruaidh 'nan deoghaidh. Thànaig, O thànaig, a ghràidhein, agus gun fios aice fhéin no aig càcha càit an robh i—O a Mhoire Mhàthair, gun chàil fhios aice fhéin no aig càcha càit an robh i!

Ach trì ràithean an déidh sin rug an nighean mac. Cha robh fios aig an nighinn fhéin no aig càcha có a b'athair dha'n leanabh—cha robh, cha robh càil fhios aig an nighinn fhéin no aig càcha có a b'athair dha'n leanabh. Ach bha sìdhean grinn gorm am bràigh a' Choire, làn shidheach—O trional † mór dha na sìdhich le'n trusganan rìomhach uaine agus le'n suaicheantais buadhach finealt. Bha amhras dhaoine air fear dhiubh seo.

\* MS. ath-oidhche; cf. iii. 154.

† *treonal* in typescript, possibly a misreading of the MS. The form

## THE FAIRY LOVER

tròcaireach dhomh, agus bha muinntir a' bhaile math dhomh agus coibhneil rium. Cha do dh'fhàgadh m'iomair-s air dheireadh là treabh-aidh, là cuir is cliathaidh, no là buana riamh fhathast gun an do dh'fhàs a' chlann a suas. O cha d'fhàgadh, cha d'fhàgadh, là riamh fhathast air dheireadh, taing Dhà-san agus dh'a Mhac Ìosa Crìosd!— 'The wicked man gave me the scowl of death because I had no English for him. I had not, Oh I had not any English for the wicked man, there was no English in my time. But I had the rent for him, and he took that. Never was I or the man I had a penny in debt to factor or to landlord— never were we, though I was left a young orphan with a large family about my hand and about my foot. My father and my two brothers and the man of my house were drowned off the Point of Muck on the voyage to Glasgow with a cargo of grain and cattle, and I was left very young with orphans without pith or power about my hand and about my foot. The boat was heavy and the sea high, and she sank beneath their feet, while the people of the Isle of Muck looked on without power to help or rescue them. I was left with helpless children, but the God of the elements was merciful to me, and the people of the townland were good and kind towards me. Never yet was my rig left neglected on the day of ploughing, on the day of sowing and harrowing, or on the day of reaping, until the children grew up—never yet, Oh never yet was it left neglected, thanks be to Him and to His Son Jesus Christ!'

A FARMER'S daughter was once herding her father's big cattle and small stock in Trosairigh in the upland of Corry Corodale in Uist. The day was warm and sultry, and what but a drowse of sleep and a load of slumber fell upon the girl. When the herd awoke the cattle were a-missing. The herd had no tidings of the cattle, and the cattle had no tidings of the herd. But as it drew towards evening the cattle came home, sauntering at their own sweet leisure, and the girl came home with a hasty step after them. She came, my dear, Oh she came, and neither herself nor others knew where she had been—O Mary Mother, neither she herself nor others knew at all where she had been!

But three quarters after that the girl bore a son. The girl herself knew not, nor did others know, who was father to the child, no, neither the girl herself nor others knew at all who was father to the child. But there was a fair green fairy knoll in the upland of the Corry, full of fairies— Oh a great troop of the fairy folk with their fine green mantles and their gallant handsome costumes. Men suspected one of these.

*trional* is confirmed by Mr Duncan MacDonald, South Uist.

Chomhairlicheadh dha'n nighinn dhol far an robh seann duine bha sa bhaile agus comhairle iarraidh air agus comhairle ghabhail uaidh. Rinn an nighean sin; agus gum bu h-e a' chomhairle thug an duine air an nighinn i dhol agus an leanabh fhàgail an sgàth an tolmain uaine an robh na suainich a' tàmh agus far an do thuit clò agus cinnseal cadail oirre, agus fuireach am falach, agus far-shùil agus far-chluas a dhèanamh feuch 'd é idir a chitheadh no a chluinneadh i.

Rinn an nighean a chuile car mar a dh'iarr an seann duine, agus fàgar an leanabh taobh an tolmain, agus reachar i féin am falach. Bha an leanabh a' rànaich, rud nach bu riar dha, ri linn a mhàthair a dhol g'a fhàgail an sgàth an tolmain an dàil na h-oidhche.

Thànaig a sineach sidheanach beag biodach brònach a mach as an tolman bhòidheach ghorm, le trusgan uaine agus le suaicheantas cuimir m'a chom agus m'a cholann. Thog an sidheach an leanabh 'na bhrollach, agus thòisich e r'a bhreugadh agus r'a bhriodal agus r'a bhòineachadh, a' seinn cuir agus ceòil agus poirt-a-beòil dha, agus a Mhoire Mhàthair! b'e sin gnàs a' cheòil agus nam port-a-beòil a bha aige-san nach cuala cluas riamh roimhe air thalamh nam beò, cho siùbhlach agus leadarra, cho muirneach agus beadarra 's a bha iad!



IOD, a ghaoil, a nì mi riut?

Bhìdh is aodaich, bheir mi dhut?

'S eagal liom gun gabh thu 'n glup

'S gun thu 'n uchd do mhàthar!

Oich is oich mar tha mi fhì!

Bhrist thu coilleagan mo chrìdh! [coichilean

B'fhearr gu soilleir bhith sa chill

Na bhith 'n cinn do rànaich.

B'fhearr liom na na fhuair mi nì,

B'fhearr liom na mo theachd-an-tìr,

B'fhearr liom na do bhainne cìch,

Thu bhith 'n ìr do mhàthar!

Bheir mi dhachaigh thu dha'n t-sìdh,

Far am faigh thu pailteas bìdh,

Mìn is marrum, àis is ìm,

[mìr; càis

'S bainne blìgh nam bàdhan.

The girl was advised to go to an old man who was in the townland and to seek and to take counsel of him. The girl did that: and the counsel which the man furnished to her was that she should go and leave the child hard by the green mound wherein the slumberers rested and where the drowse and overmastery of sleep had fallen upon her, and remain in hiding, and overlook and overhear to discover whatever she might see or hear.

The girl did every whit as the old man bade, and left the child by the mound, and went herself into hiding. The child was wailing, a thing not his wont, when his mother was going to leave him hard by the mound at the approach of the night.

Then a poor tiny little dweller in the fairy bower came forth from the beautiful green mound, with a green mantle and a well-fitting distinctive garb about his form and about his frame. The fairy lifted the child into his bosom, and began to beguile and coax and assuage it, singing airs and strains and mouth-tunes to it, and Mary Mother! his music and mouth-tunes were such as ear had never before heard in the land of the living, so lightsome and melodious, so blithe and seductive were they!

WHAT, my love, shall I do with thee?  
 Or, food and clothing, give to thee?  
 I fear lest thou should take the hiccough  
 And thou not on thy mother's breast!

Alas and alas now for myself!  
 Thou hast broken the cockles of my heart!  
 'Twere better, plainly, to be in the grave  
 Than watch over thy wailing.

I had rather than all my store,  
 I had rather than all my living,  
 I had rather than thy breast-milk  
 That thou wert beside thy mother!

I'll carry thee home to the fairy bower,  
 Where thou shalt have food in plenty,  
 Meal and milk, cream and butter, [morsel; cheese  
 And the milking of the cow-folds.

## A MHÓR, A GHAOIL

THACHAIR leannan sìdhe ri Móir moch madainn agus i mach leis an spréidh, agus tha e coltach gun do chuir Mór bheag bhòidheach agus an sìdheach siogada seang aithne air a chéile, agus gun robh leanabh mic air a bhreith aig Móir air tàillibh an eòlais a bha eatorra. Cha robh fios aig Móir 'd é dhèanadh i ri leanabh an t-sidheanaich, agus chaidh i a dh'iarraidh comhairle air seann duine bha sa bhaile. Air chomhairle an duine seo dh'fhàg i an leanabh far an d'fhuair i e, agus chaidh i fhéin am falach faisg air an àite. Bha an leanabh a' rànaich, agus có thànaig g'a thàladh ach gum b'è an sìdheach as an t-sidhean ghorm am bràigh a' ghlinne, agus theann e r'a bhriagadh agus r'a bhrìodal, r'a bhòineadh agus r'a thàladh, agus seo an tàladh a bha aig an t-sidheach.



LL ó bha hó  
Ill ó bha hau

Dh'éirich mi moch,  
Dh'éirich mi mall,  
Dh'éirich mi moch—  
B'fhearr nach d'éirich!  
Mo chreach léir  
A chuir a mach mi!

Tha laogh mo laoigh,  
Tha laogh mo laoigh,  
Tha laogh mo laoigh  
Ri taobh cnocain,  
Gun teine,  
Gun tuar gun fhasgadh!

Bha 'n ceò sa bheinn,  
Bha 'n ceò sa bheinn,

Cf. *Trans. Gael. Soc. Inuss.*, xv. 154, xix. 41, xxxvii. 191; *An Duanaire*, 95; Frances Tolmie's Collection, no. 7; *Gesto Collection*, App., 20;

## MÓR, MY BELOVED

A FAIRY lover fell in with Mór early one morning when she was out with the cattle, and it would seem that pretty little Mór and the sly slender fay came to know each other, and that a son child was born of Mór as the consequence of the knowledge that was between them. Mór knew not what to do with the fairy's child, and she went to seek counsel of an old man who was in the townland. On this man's advice she left the child where she had got it, and herself went into hiding near the place. The child was wailing, and who came to lull it but the fairy out of the green fairy knoll in the breast of the glen, and he set to beguiling it and coaxing it, to assuaging it and lulling it, and this is the lull-song that the fairy had.

ILL o bha ho  
 Ill o bha hau

I rose betimes,  
 I rose reluctant,  
 I rose betimes—  
     Better that I had not risen!  
 'Twas my utter reaving  
     That sent me forth!

The calf of my calf,  
 The calf of my calf,  
 The calf of my calf  
     Lies by a knoll's side,  
 Without fire,  
     Without comfort or shelter!

The mist was in the hill,  
 The mist was in the hill,

## ÒRAIN SÌDHE

Bha 'n ceò sa bheinn  
 'S air a' chreachann,  
 Dar thachair rium  
 A' ghruagach dhreachar.

'S i 'n ao-gheal donn,  
 'S i 'n ao-gheal donn,  
 'S i 'n ao-gheal donn  
 Rug am mac dhomh,  
 Ged nach ciùin  
 A rinn i altram!

A Mhór, a ghaoil,  
 A Mhór, a ghaoil,  
 A Mhór, a ghaoil,  
 Taobh ri d' mhacan!  
 'S fuar an t-àit  
 An d'fhàg thu 'm macan!

Is fuar am bad,  
 Is fuar am bad,  
 Is fuar am bad  
 'M bial a' ghlacain!  
 Is fuar mo laogh  
 Ri taobh cnocaig!

A Mhór, a ghaoil,  
 A Mhór, a ghaoil,  
 A Mhór, a ghaoil,  
 Taobh ri d' mhacan,  
 'S gheobh thu 'n goidean  
 Bòidheach breac uam!

[bhreac?]

The mist was in the hill  
 And on the scree,  
 When there fell in with me  
 The fair-faced maiden.

'Tis the milk-white brown maid,  
 'Tis the milk-white brown maid,  
 'Tis the milk-white brown maid  
 Who bore the son to me,  
 Though not tenderly  
 Has she fostered it!

O Mór, my beloved,  
 O Mór, my beloved,  
 O Mór, my beloved,  
 Turn to thy little son!  
 Cold is the place  
 Where thou hast left him!

Cold is the spot,  
 Cold is the spot,  
 Cold is the spot  
 On the lip of the hollow!  
 Cold is my calf  
 By the side of a hillock!

O Mór, my beloved,  
 O Mór, my beloved,  
 O Mór, my beloved,  
 Turn to thy little son,  
 And thou shalt get from me  
 The pretty little speckled withe!  
 [(string of) beads ? trout ?

Is fuar an oidhch,  
 Is fuar an oidhch,  
 Is fuar an oidhch  
     A nochd aig macan,  
 'S e gun aodach  
     Ri taobh cnocain!

Gheobhadh tu fìon,  
 Gheobhadh tu fìon,  
 Gheobhadh tu fìon  
     'S gach nì b'ait leat,  
 Gheobh thu 'm breac  
     Aig taobh an loch uam.

Tha laogh mo ghaoil,  
 Tha laogh mo ghaoil,  
 Tha laogh mo ghaoil  
     Ri taobh cnocain,  
 Gun teine,  
     Gu fuar gun fhasgadh!

Bheirinn dut slod,  
 Bheirinn dut slod,  
 Bheirinn dut slod  
     'S gach nì b'ait leat,  
 A Mhór, a ghaoil,  
     Taobh ri d' mhacan!

Mharbhainn dut fiadh,  
 Mharbhainn dut fiadh,  
 Mharbhainn dut fiadh,  
     'S gach nì b'ait leat,  
 Ach nach éirinn  
     Leat sa mhadainn!

Cold is the night,  
Cold is the night,  
Cold is the night  
    To-night for a little boy,  
And he without clothing  
    By a knoll's side!

Thou shouldst get wine,  
Thou shouldst get wine,  
Thou shouldst get wine  
    And all thou wouldst have,  
Thou shalt get from me  
    The trout at the loch-side.

The calf of my love,  
The calf of my love,  
The calf of my love  
    Is by a knoll's side,  
With never a fire,  
    Cold, without shelter!

I would give thee silk,  
I would give thee silk,  
I would give thee silk  
    And all thou wouldst have,  
O Mór, my beloved,  
    Turn to thy little son!

I would kill for thee the deer,  
I would kill for thee the deer,  
I would kill for thee the deer,  
    And all thou wouldst have,  
Save that I would rise not  
    With thee in the morning!

## ÒRAIN SÌDHE

A Mhór, a ghaoil,  
A Mhór, a ghaoil,  
A Mhór, a ghaoil,  
Taobh ri d' mhacan!  
'S fuar an t-àit  
An d'fhàg thu 'm macan!

O Mór, my beloved,  
O Mór, my beloved,  
O Mór, my beloved,  
    Turn to thy little son!  
Cold is the place  
    Where thou hast left him!

THUBHAIRT Seònaid Churaidh, *née* Dhomhnallach, bean Eairdsidh Churaidh, griasaiche, Aird na Mòna, Ìochdar, 8amh de'n Ghiblean 1869:

Bhitheadh nighean tuathanaich ann an Ormacleit a' dol a mach dha'n Bheinn Mhóir gu Coire Mhic Iain le fodar dha'n chrodh. A chuile là rea'adh an nighean a mach bha i faighinn gad bhreac ri taobh an lochain, agus bha i a' toir a' ghoidein bhreac dhachaigh, agus cha robh fios aig neach beò có bha fàgail nam breac no co as a bha iad a' tighinn. Là bha sin choinnich lasgair linnneil an nighean, agus chuir e fàilte chridheil oirre ann am briathran boga bialach, agus fhreagair an nighean an t-ògan ann am briathran min modhail. Bha gad éisg aig an ògan 'na làimh, agus thubhairt e ris an ainnir tighinn agus a cheann fhasgadh\* agus gum faigheadh i an gad éisg. Shuidh an t-ògan air tolm agus shuidh an nighean r'a thaobh. Chuir e a cheann an uchd na h-ighinne agus thuit e 'na shuain chadail. Bha an nighean a' fiachainn ceann an ògain, agus 'd é bha i faighinn ann ach rafagach. Thuig i gur h-e an t-each-uisge bha aice, agus chlisg a cridhe leis an eagal—thuig i nach bu duine ceart no tiorail a bha ann. Thug i an siosar á pòca agus ghearr i streang a còta agus dh'fhàg i a còta fo cheann an duine a bha 'na chadal agus shin i aiste dhachaigh. Laigh an nighean trì bliadhna air an leabaidh leis an eagal a fhuair i. Bha i sin latha samhraidh 'ga grianadh fhéin air a' chnoc cùl taigh a h-athar, a' mire ris a' chloinn bhig agus ri gathan na gréine, agus có a chunnaig i a' tighinn ach an t-each-uisge an riochd duine. Leum an cridhe aiste leis an eagal agus bha i marbh.

Bhathar ag ràdh, an uair a dhùisg an sidheach á shuain, gur h-ann a rinn e an tàladh seo; ach có aig tha fios—có gu dearbh? Bha pàisd aig an nighinn bho'n t-sidheach seo agus is esan a rinn an tàladh seo, agus chuala nighean òg e latha bha i ag iarraidh laogh anns a' bheinn.



HA 'n ceò sa bheinn,  
 Bha 'n ceò sa bheinn,  
 Bha 'n ceò sa bheinn  
       'S air a' chreachann,  
 Bha 'n ceò sa bheinn  
 Is air a' ghleann  
 Dar thachair rium  
       A' ghruagach ghasda.

\* *faisg*, delouse; cf. *Irische Texte*, II<sup>1</sup>, 181: 7 [a] ben ic aiscid a chind, 'und seine Frau dabei, ihm den Kopf abzusuchen.'

SAID Janet Currie, *née* MacDonald, wife of Archie Currie, cobbler, Aird na Mòna, Ìochdar, 8th April 1869:

The daughter of a farmer in Ormaclait used to go out to Benmore to Coire Mhic Iain with fodder for the cattle. Every day the girl went out she found a string of trout beside the lochlet, and she used to bring the little string of trout home, and not a living soul knew who was leaving the trout or where they were coming from. One fine day a handsome young fellow met the girl and he greeted her heartily in soft fair-spoken words, and the girl answered the young man in gentle courteous words. The youth had a string of fish in his hand and he told the maiden to come and cleanse his hair for him and that she would get the string of fish. The youth sat down on a knoll and the girl sat beside him. He put his head in the girl's lap and he fell fast asleep. The girl was fingering the youth's head and what was she finding there but water weeds. She understood that it was the water-horse she had to do with and her heart started with fear—she understood that he was not a right canny man. She took her scissors from her pocket and cut the girdle of her coat and she left the coat under the head of the man who was sleeping and made off home at speed. The girl was bed-ridden for three years with the fright she got. She was then one summer's day sunning herself on the knoll behind her father's house, playing with the little children and the sunbeams, and who should she see coming but the water-horse in the guise of a man. Her heart leapt from her with fear and she was dead.

It was said that it was when the fairy creature woke from his sleep he made this lullaby; but who knows—who indeed? The girl had a child by this fairy creature and it was the latter who made this lullaby, and a young girl heard it one day when she was seeking calves in the hill.

THE mist was on the hill,  
 The mist was on the hill,  
 The mist was on the hill,  
     And on the scree,  
 The mist was on the hill  
 And in the glen  
 When there met me  
     The comely maiden.

'S i 'n ao-gheal donn, [taobh-gheal  
 'S i 'n ao-gheal donn,  
 'S i 'n ao-gheal donn  
     Rug am mac dhomh;  
 'S i 'n ao-gheal donn  
 A rug a' chlann,  
 Ge nach ciùin  
     A rinn i altram.

Ill ó hu ó  
 Ill ó hu ó  
 Ill ó ro hó

A Mhór bheag dhonn,  
 A Mhór bheag dhonn,  
 A Mhór bheag dhonn,  
     Till ri d' mhacan!  
 'S gheobh thu 'n goidean  
     Bòidheach bhreac uam.

Och nan och,  
 Agus och nan och!

Gur fuar an t-sian,  
 Gur fuar an t-sian,  
 Gur fuar an t-sian  
     Ri taobh cnocain!  
 Gun teine,  
     Gun tuar gun fhasgadh!

Och nan och,  
 Agus och nan och!

'Tis the bright, brown-haired one, [white-sided  
 'Tis the bright, brown-haired one,  
 'Tis the bright, brown-haired one,  
     Who bore the son to me;  
 'Tis the bright, brown-haired one  
 Who bore the child,  
 Though not gently  
     Did she nurse it.

Ill o hu o  
 Ill o hu o  
 Ill o ro ho

Little brown-haired Mór,  
 Little brown-haired Mór,  
 Little brown-haired Mór,  
     Come back to thy son!  
 And thou shalt get the beautiful  
     String of trout from me.

Alas and alas,  
 And alas and alas!

Cold is the blast,  
 Cold is the blast,  
 Cold is the blast  
     Beside a hillock!  
 Without fire,  
     Without comfort or shelter!

Alas and alas,  
 And alas and alas!

## ÒRAIN SÌDHE

Do bhial beag mìn  
Ri m' sheann chab liath  
Is mi seinn bruchd \*  
    Ri taobh cnocain!  
Gun teine,  
    Gun tuar gun fhasgadh!

\* ? leg. *brucach*.

Thy small soft mouth  
Against my old grey snout,  
As I sing sadly (?)  
    Beside a hillock!  
Without fire,  
    Without comfort or shelter!

## AN LEANNAN SÌDH

BHA nighean òg ann agus ghabh i gaol air sidheach. Bha i a' cnàmh agus a' dol as, agus thubhairt a màthair r'a piuthair, 'Shlàine, bheir mi dhut ceannach agus faigh a mach ciod e tha cur dragh air Sorcha. Bithidh Sorcha falbh am bial gach anamoich agus a' tighinn dachaigh gun fhios cuin. Feuch thus, a ghràidhein, am faigh thu mach dhomhs e, agus a Leabhra fhéin, bheir mise deagh cheannach dhutsa dh'a chinn.'

'Ciod e tha cur riut, a Shorcha? Tha dragh air th'inntinn, agus innis thusa dhomh fhéin 'd é fàth do dhragh,' arsa Slàine. 'Is luaithe thig e mach air mo ghlùn na air mo bhial,' agus thug i mionnan móra nach innseadh i gu bràtha diùrrais a peathar. Dh'innis Sorcha dh'a piuthair gun robh leannan sìdh aice ann an sìdhean cùl na beinne, agus gum bitheadh e gabhail ceòl sìdh dhi an Gleann Doire nan Dos.

Dh'innis Slàine seo dh'a màthair facal air an fhacal, agus mur bu mhór cha bu bheag. Agus dh'innis a màthair seo d'a bràithrean, agus dh'fhalbh a bràithrean air tòir an t-sidhiche, agus mharbh iad e. Sin dar a sheinn ise an t-òran seo. Ghabh an rioghainn donn gu bròn agus gu briste-cridhe, agus shearg i as mar an lili gheal fo'n reodhadh dhubh.

(Thubhairt seanchaidh eile: Bhitheadh a muime a' cur na h-inghne fhéin a mach comhla ri nighinn na mnàì bha roimpe. Agus thigeadh an cabaire dhachaigh agus dh'innseadh i gum bitheadh sìdheach a' tighinn a chumail cuideachd r'a piuthair, a bhuachailleachd nan caorach, agus a chròthadh nan uan, agus dh'a dìon féin o'n ghearrchu, agus a dhìon a' mheanbhchruidh o'n mhadadh-ruadh. Dh'innis a muime seo dh'a mic, agus dh'fhalbh iad air tòir an t-sidhich, agus mharbh iad e, agus dhòirt iad fhuil gu làr. Ghabh an rioghainn donn dualach gu bròn agus gu briste-cridhe, agus shearg i as mar an lili gheal fo'n reodhadh dhubh.)



LLE bhig, 'ille bhig shùgaich hó!

Rùnaich ó! rùnaich ó!

'Ille bhig, 'ille bhig shùgaich hó!

Chum thu 'n raoir am dhùsgadh mi.

Gheall mo leannan bhith dha m' réir,

Gheall e 'n diugh e 's gheall e 'n dé;

Mura tig thu gu Di-Luain,

Saoghal buan do bheul nam breug!

Cf. *Leabhar na Féinne*, 211; *Trans. Gael. Soc. Invs.*, xv. 156; *An Duanaire*, 93; *MacDonald Collection of Gaelic Poetry*, 331; Rev. Duncan MacCallum's

## THE FAIRY LOVER

THERE was a young girl who had fallen in love with a fairy. She was pining and wasting away, and her mother said to her sister, 'Slàine, I will reward thee, and do thou find out what is troubling Sorcha. Sorcha will be going out at dusk every evening and coming home none knows when. See thou, my dear, canst thou discover it for me, and by the Book itself, I will reward thee well for it.'

'What is worrying thee, Sorcha? There is trouble on thy mind, and do thou tell me what is the cause of thy trouble,' said Slàine. 'Sooner will it come out at my knee than at my mouth,' and she took great oaths that never would she reveal her sister's secret. Sorcha told her sister that she had a fairy lover in a fairy knoll behind the mountain, and that he would be singing fairy music to her in the Glen of the Grove of the Copses.

Slàine told this word for word to her mother, and if she did not make over-much of it, she did not make over-little. And her mother told it to her brothers, and her brothers went in pursuit of the fairy, and they slew him. That was when the girl sang this song. The brown-haired maiden fell to grief and breaking of heart, and she withered away like the white lily under the black frost.

(Another narrator said: Her step-mother would be sending forth her own daughter along with the daughter of the wife who was before her. And the tell-tale would come home and relate that a fairy would be coming to keep company with her sister, to herd the sheep, and to fold the lambs, and to protect herself from the wolf, and to protect the small stock from the red fox. Her step-mother told this to her sons, and they went in pursuit of the fairy, and they slew him, and they spilled his blood upon the ground. The brown-haired ringleted maiden fell to grief and breaking of heart, and she withered away like the white lily under the black frost.)

LITTLE lad, ho! and merry little lad!

Dear lad o! dear lad o!

Little lad, ho! and merry little lad!

Last night didst thou keep me waking.

My sweetheart promised to be at my bidding,

He promised it to-day and he promised it yesterday;

Though thou come not till the Monday of Doom,

Long life be to the mouth of guile!

'S a mhàthair sin, 's a mhàthair eile,—  
 'D é, a ghaoil, a laoigh, 's a leinibh?—  
 'S goirte na sgobadh an t-seangain,  
 Mharbh mo bhràithrean mo cheud leannan.

A phiuthar mhìn 's a phiuthar ghoiridh,  
 'S maireg a leigeadh riut a rùn!  
 'S luaithe leig thu mach mo sgeula  
 Air a bheul na air a ghlùn!

Cha téid mi a Luan nan Luan,  
 Cha téid mi a chrò nan uan,  
 Cha téid, cha téid, na chrò nan laogh,  
 O nach bheil mo shaoghal buan.

A chraobh chaorainn sin san doras,  
 Ort a théid mise dha'n chill;  
 Thig na saoir á Dùn Dealga,  
 Dèanar dhomhsa carbad grinn.

[Dealbh

Tha mo bhràithrean fhéin a' tighinn  
 Air na h-eachaibh loma luath—  
 Sgionan geura dhol 'nan cridhe,  
 'S fuil an cuim 'na lighe bhuath!

An guidhe rinn mi dha mo bhràithrean  
 Leis an ardan bha 'nam chrìdh,

A laighe air na lianaidh riabhach [cnocaibh ciara  
 'S dà thrian fhiadh a' ghlinn ud shìos! [ceithir fiadhaich

And thou mother there, and thou other mother,—  
What, my beloved, my calf, my child?—  
More painful it is than the ant's bite,  
My brothers have slain my first sweetheart.

Thou gentle sister and foster-sister,  
Woe to her who should tell her secret to thee!  
Sooner didst thou let out my tale  
At thy mouth than at thy knee!

I shall not go till the Monday of Mondays,  
I shall not go to the fold of the lambs,  
Nor yet shall I go to the fold of the calves,  
Since not lasting is my life.

Thou rowan tree there by the door,  
On thee shall I go to the graveyard;  
The wrights shall come from Dùn Dealga,  
Let there be made for me a comely bier.

My own brothers are coming  
On the nimble, swift horses—  
May sharp knives pierce their hearts,  
And their bodies' blood flow from them in flood!

The curse that I made to my brothers  
In the passion that was in my heart,  
Let it lie upon the brindled meadows  
And on two thirds of the deer of yonder glen!

## AN LEANNAN SÌDH

BHA nighean tuathanaich an Crò Chinn tSàile, agus bha i tarraing suas ri sidheach an tolmairn ghuirm am bràigh a' ghlinne aig bonn Sgurr Ùrain. Bha a màthair a' cur uibhreachd oirre gun robh dragh inntinn air an nighinn—ged a bha a colann an seo gun robh a cridhe an siod, agus cha robh fios ciod e dhèante rithe. An uair a reachadh an nighean a mach sa mhadainn a shoadadh a' chruidh, cha tigeadh i dhachaigh gu anmoch.

Moch madainneach latha féille thubhairt a h-athair ris an nighinn gum b'fhearr dhi-se dhol dha'n Eifreann an diugh agus gun saodaicheadh e fhéin an crodh. Rinn e sin. An uair a rànaig e an t-ionaltradh, chaidh e falach an sgor creige far am faiceadh e an sidhean. Cha robh an duine fada san sgarta-falaich dar a chunnaig e an sidhean a' fosgladh agus duineachan beag biodach brònach a' fosgladh comhla an dorais agus a' cur làmh air gach ursainn dhe'n doras. Thug an siofaire sùil shìos agus shuas, thall agus a bhos, feuch am faiceadh e an nighean o'n a chunnaig e an crodh, ach chan fhaca sealladh dhith. Thòisich an sidhiche an sin ri seinn na duanaig seo, agus athair na h-ighne 'ga éisdeachd. Agus b'e sin seinn nan siùbhlaichean!



UIM nach tànaig laogh mo luin,\*  
 Laogh mo luin, laogh mo luin,  
 Cuim nach tànaig laogh mo luin  
 A chumail rium na céilidh?

Bha mi 'n raoir an Innse Chrò,  
 An Innse Chrò, an Innse Chrò,  
 Bha mi 'n raoir an Innse Chrò,  
 Ag òl na beòir le beudaig.

Bidh mi nochd an Innse Chruidh,  
 An Innse Chruidh, an Innse Chruidh,  
 Bidh mi nochd an Innse Chruidh,  
 Ag itheadh gruithim Céitein.

\* ? *luinn* = *loinn*.

## THE FAIRY LOVER

THERE was a farmer's daughter in the Croe (Cattle-fold) of Kintail, and she was visiting the fairy of the green knoll in the upper part of the glen at the bottom of Sgurr Ùrain. Her mother was noticing a change in her, that the girl's mind was troubled—that though her body was here her heart was yonder, and none knew what should be done with her. When the girl would go out in the morning to tend the cattle, she would not come home until late.

Early in the morning one feast-day her father told the girl that she had better go to Mass to-day and that he himself would tend the cattle. He did that. When he reached the pasture he went into hiding in a cleft of a rock whence he could see the fairy mound. The man was not long in the cleft of hiding when he saw the fairy mound opening and a poor tiny little mannikin opening the leaf of the door and placing a hand on each door-post. The fairy man cast a glance up and down, here and there, if perchance he might see the girl, since he saw the cattle; but he saw not a sight of her. Then the fairy began to sing this little lilt, while the girl's father listened to him. And that was the singing of the quick notes!

WHY is not come the calf of my delight (?),  
 The calf of my delight (?), the calf of my delight (?),  
 Why is not come the calf of my delight (?)  
 To keep the visit with me?

I was last night in the Meads of the Fold,  
 The Meads of the Fold, the Meads of the Fold,  
 I was last night in the Meads of the Fold,  
 Drinking the beer with the beguiling one.

I'll be this night in the Meads of the Kine,  
 The Meads of the Kine, the Meads of the Kine,  
 I'll be this night in the Meads of the Kine,  
 Eating the May-time crowdie.

Is truagh nach robh mi 'n Innse Chrann,  
 An Innse Chrann, an Innse Chrann,  
 Is truagh nach robh mi 'n Innse Chrann,  
 Is gun bhith ann ach m'eudail!

'S truagh nach robh mi sa ghleann ud thall,  
 Sa ghleann ud thall, sa ghleann ud thall,  
 'S truagh nach robh mi sa ghleann ud thall,  
 'Na ghabh mi geall air beudaig!

[ceann

'A mhic an fhir seo agus an fhir ud eile,' ars athair na h-ighne, 'mur toir mise ort nach tig thu mach as a sin ri do bheò mhaireann shaoghail!' Agus leum e sìos a chon an tolmair. Dé ma leum, cha robh sìdheach no sìdhean ri fhaicinn aig an duine, agus is ann a shaoil e gun tànaig sgleò air a shùilean agus gun robh e fo gheasaibh. Agus a Mhoire Mhic, saoilidh mi fhìn gur h-ann fodha sin a bha e.

Sad that I were not in the Meads of the Trees,  
The Meads of the Trees, the Meads of the Trees,  
Sad that I were not in the Meads of the Trees,  
With none there but my darling!

Sad that I were not in yonder glen,  
In yonder glen, in yonder glen,  
Sad that I were not in yonder glen,  
Where I fell in love with the beguiling one!

'Son of this one and of that other,' said the girl's father, 'if I bring it not upon thee that thou shalt not go thence in thy life's span!' And he leaped down towards the knoll. But if he leaped, he saw neither fairy nor fairy mound, and he fancied that a mist had come over his eyes and that he was under spells. And by Mary and her Son, I fancy myself that that is what he was under.

## AN LEANNAN FALAICH

Té bha ann agus bha leannan falaich aice. Chaidh a bràthair dha'n bheinn sheilg. Dar a thànaig an gille dhachaigh as a' mhonadh thubhairt e r'a phiuthair, agus fhreagair ise :



HUNNA mi fear as dil an dé,  
 Bha dha t'fhìor fheòraich.'  
 'D é an cor a bh'air mo ghràdh, [càs  
 Dar a chuimhnich e ormsa?'  
 [chanaich air a leannan

'Mise 'ga chasgairt gu cruaidh, [chomhrag  
 Mu thuath agus mu dheas,  
 Le m' lann gheal agus le m' thuaigh,  
 Le m' thuath agus le m' dheas.' [gheas MS.

'Ma mharbh thus an t-Osgar gràdhach,  
 Éirich is ionnlaid do làmhan;  
 Gum b'e sin an ionnlaid gheineach \*  
 Dh'an geilich do chorp 's do chnàmhan.

Nara robh barr air do luachair,  
 Nara robh ìm air do bhlàthaich,  
 Na aois mìos do leanabh ad thaigh  
 A thogas sgìos far a mhàthar.'

Thubhairt a sin a màthair :

'Sgoltadh a' bhradain fhìoruig  
 Eadar do dhà chich 's do bhrollach, [bhrù  
 'S an nathair nimh a bhith sìos riut  
 'S gun do . . . . . !'

\* ? cf. *déidheanach*, last.

Cf. *Leabhar na Féinne*, 212; *Trans. Gael. Soc. Invs.*, xv. 157.

## THE SECRET LOVER

THERE was a girl who had a secret lover. Her brother went to the mountain to hunt. When the lad came home from the hill he said to his sister, and she replied :

‘I SAW the dearest one yesterday,  
Who was asking for thee truly.’  
‘How was my love,  
When he remembered me?’

‘I was smiting him sorely,  
To the north and to the south,  
With my bright sword and my axe,  
With my left hand and with my right.’

‘If thou hast slain the dear Oscar,  
Arise and wash thy hands;  
May that be the final (?) washing  
From which thy body and bones will bleach (?).

May there be no tops on thy rushes,  
May there be no butter on thy milk,  
Or a month-old child in thy house  
To take the weariness from his mother.’

Then her mother said :

‘Mayst thou be split like the freshwater salmon  
Between thy two breasts and thy belly,  
And may the poisonous serpent be beside thee  
Without thy . . . . . !’

Thubhairt an nighean an uair sin :

‘An guidhe rinn mise dha m’ bhràthair,  
 Narab ann air a laigheas e ball, [thàradh  
 Ach air na cnocan corrach riabhach  
 ’S air dà thrìan fhiadh a’ ghlinn ud thall.’\*

An là 'r na mhàireach sa mhadainn mhoich bha na cnocan corrach riabhach 'nan sgiaban feadh a' ghlinne agus dà thrìan nam fiadh marbh.

\* Cf. 152 *supra*.

The girl then said :

‘The ill-wish I made for my brother,  
Let it not be on him it rests at all,  
But on the rugged brindled hills  
And on two thirds of the deer of yonder glen.’

Next day in the early morning the rugged brindled hills were in riven fragments through the glen and two-thirds of the deer were dead.

MARBHAIDH M'ATHAIR 'S MO  
MHÀTHAIR MI

THIS song was composed by a girl who went to the 'sliabh,' mountain moor, to look after her father's cattle. While searching for the cattle the girl



ARBHAIDH m'athair 's mo mhàthair mi,  
Marbhaidh mo phiuthar 's mo bhràthair  
Diumba cinnidh is cairde rium, [mi,  
Mur leig thu mi dhachaigh mar thàna  
mi.

Is ann a raoir a chuala mi  
Mo ghaol a bhith am chuartachadh,  
'S o'n d'fhuair thu chom na buaile mi,  
A ghaoil, leig dhachaigh mar fhuair thu mi.

Gur ce a liom \* air each air eachu,  
Gur ce a liom air mart air martu,  
Gur ce a liom air bol air bhraiche,  
Mur téid mi dhachaigh mar thàna mi mach.'

'Ga ce a leat air each air eachu,  
Ga ce a leat air mart air martu,  
Ga ce a leat air bol air bhraiche,  
Cha téid thu dhachaigh mar thàna tu mach.

Ged mharbhadh t'athair 's do mhàthair thu,  
Ged mharbhadh do phiuthar 's do bhràthair thu,  
Ged bhiodh diumba cinnidh is cairdean riut,  
Cha téid thu dhachaigh mar thànaig thu.'

\* =*geamha liom*??

Cf. *Gesto Collection*, App., 25.

MY FATHER AND MOTHER WILL  
KILL ME

met a 'leannan sídh,' fairy lover, who wished to carry the girl to his 'brugh,' dwelling, and to keep her there whether she would or not.

'My father and mother will kill me,  
My sister and brother will kill me,  
Displeasure of kindred and friends will be  
to me,  
If thou lettest me not home as I came.

It was last night that I heard  
That my love was surrounding me,  
And since thou hast got me to the fold,  
Beloved, let me home as thou foundest me.

. . . . on horse, on horses,  
. . . . on cow, on cows,  
. . . . on boll, on malt, [bowl, cup ?  
If I go not home as I came forth.'

'Though . . . . on horse, on horses,  
. . . . on cow, on cows,  
. . . . on boll, on malt,  
Thou shalt not go home as thou camest forth.

Though thy father and mother should kill thee,  
Though thy sister and brother should kill thee,  
Though displeasure of kindred and friends should be to thee,  
Thou shalt not go home as thou camest forth.'

'O a ghaoil, a Dhomhnaillein,  
O a luaidh, a Dhomhnaillein,  
A cheist nan daoine, a Dhomhnaillein,  
A ghaoil, leig dhachaigh gu m'èolas mi !'

## FUIDHEALL BEAG BEAG

Is mise nighean Fir a' Bharraich Uaine,  
Thugadh air falbh mi san leaba-shiùla.

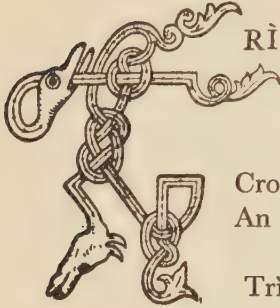
'O my love, my dear Donald,  
O my dear, my dear Donald,  
O darling of men, my dear Donald,  
O my love, let me home to my own!'

## A FRAGMENT

I AM the daughter of the laird of Barrach Uaine,  
I was carried off while in childbed.

## AMHRAN SÌDH

THE fairies caught a girl who was out on the hill herding her mother's cows, and they carried her away to the 'brugh sidh,' fairy



RÌ feòragan, trì smeòragan,  
Smeòrach riabhach air an toiseach.  
Hó a hó hàla gu math!

Crodh mo mhàthar-s air na blàraibh,  
An deòidh a' cheannabhail am fàgail.

Trì feòragan, trì smeòragan,  
Smeòrach riabhach air an toiseach.  
Hó a hó hàla gu math!

Nam bithinn am beul an fhàsaich,  
Dhìolainn sìod dha'n chloinn a dh'fhàg iad.

Trì feòragan, trì smeòragan,  
Smeòrach riabhach air an toiseach.  
Hó a hó hàla gu math!

## FAIRY SONG

bower. But her companions came safely home, and composed this fairy song.

THREE squirrels, three little mavis,  
A brindled mavis at their head.  
Ho a ho hala gu math!

My mother's cattle are on the moors,  
Their leader has forsaken them.

Three squirrels, three little mavis,  
A brindled mavis at their head.  
Ho a ho hala gu math!

If I were near the wild pastures,  
I would avenge that on the children who forsook them.

Three squirrels, three little mavis,  
A brindled mavis at their head.  
Ho a ho hala gu math!

## CAILLEACH BEINNE BRICE

THE wonderful woman who sang this song and many other songs to the writer has been described earlier (i. 4 f.). Mary Macrae, known as Màiri Bhreac, Màiri Bhanchaig, was dairywoman with Alexander Macrae of Hùisinis, Caolas Stiadar, Harris.\* In her ninety-ninth year she was hale, strong and comely, having been ill but once in her life, and that with smallpox. She had been always an active and excellent worker, bright, cheerful, and good-humoured, and these qualities she retained to the end of her days. She sang this song with remarkable effect, as if she were in her nineteenth rather than her ninety-ninth year.

She attended church every Sunday, no matter what the weather might be. If the tide was out she came across 'Tràigh Chliamain,' St Clement's Strand, which shortened the way, though wet; if the tide was in she had to come round the bay, which made the distance much longer. One stormy day of wind and snow the minister, Mr Charles Maclean, expected no one to come out in such weather; but, lest any should, he went down to the church. To his astonishment he found Mary in her usual place, alone in the church. 'A Mhàiri, a Mhàiri, 'd é thug a mach sibh an diugh ri leithid seo do latha, agus sibh leibh féin?' 'Thug, a Mhaighstir Tearlach, a dh'éisdeachd facal Dé 'ga leughadh agus 'ga mhíneachadh dhomh; agus nar bheil mi liom féin idir, a Mhaighstir Tearlach.' 'Nach bheil, a Mhàiri bhochd?' agus thug am ministir sùil thuig agus sùil uaidh mun cuairt na h-eaglais, feuch am faicadh e neach na neach, ach chan fhac e neach idir. 'Nar bheil mi liom féin idir, a Mhaighstir Tearlach, is mi nach bheil. Bha triùir chairdean caomh caomhail liom gach ceum dha'n t-slighe tighinn.' 'An robh a nis? Chan fhaic mi iad, a Mhàiri! Có iad, na càit am bheil iad?' 'Bha triùir chairdean caomh coibhneil liom gach ceum dha'n t-slighe,—an t-Athair agus am Mac agus an Spiorad liom gach ceum dha'n t-slighe,' arsa Màiri. Chuir Màiri Nic Rath agus am freagairt a thug i, gun facal sgoil 'na ceann, agus i faisg air ciad bliadhna dh'aois, gu smaoin am ministir mar nach do chuir dad riamh roimhe na 'na dhéidh.— 'Mary, Mary, what has brought you out on such a day, and all alone?' 'To hear the word of God being read and expounded to me, Mr Charles; and I am not alone at all, Mr Charles.' 'Are you not, poor Mary?' and the minister glanced round the church, if by chance he might see somebody but he saw no one at all. 'I am not alone at all, Mr Charles; far from it. There were three dear and loved friends with me every step of the road coming.' 'Were there now? I do not see them, Mary! Who or where

\* *History of the Clan Macrae*, 139.

are they?’ ‘Yes, there were three dear kind friends with me every step of the way,—the Father and the Son and the Spirit were with me every step of the way,’ said Mary. Mary Macrae and the answer she gave, though she had not a word of schooling in her head and she was close on a hundred years old, made the minister think as nothing before or since.

Alexander Macrae, whose dairywoman Mary Macrae was, had come from Aird an t-Sobhail, Kintail, to live in Harris, and was known as ‘Fear Hùisinis,’ the laird of Hùisinis. His brother was Sir John Macrae, who was on the staff of his cousin, the Marquis of Hastings, Governor-General of India. Sir John, who was an able musician, sent to his brother for this song, and played it before Queen Victoria upon the pipes.

Mary Macrae, dairywoman, said that this song was sung by a woman whose mind was deranged by a sudden fright when she was but newly risen from childbed. She fled to the hills and lived in the ‘frìth,’ forest, with the deer, going with them wherever they went. The people of the townland often saw and followed her, but they could not keep her in sight, far less catch her. At length a ‘brocair,’ fox-hunter, found her asleep and came upon her from behind. ‘Shuain an sealgair a folt fada m’a ghàirdean doisgeil, agus cha b’ail leatha teicheadh. Mo ghaol air féin! nach e bha tapaidh!’ arsa seann Mhàiri bhoichd.—‘The hunter twined her long hair around his left arm, and she had no wish to flee. My love on himself! was he not brave!’ said poor old Mary. The sudden start she got put back her heart in its place, and she became quiet and gentle. The hair of her head reached down to her heels, and her body was covered all over with downy hair, a touching sight to see. The hunter put his ‘breacan-guaille,’ tartan shoulder-plaid, about her, and she came home with him quite quietly. This happened in Lochaber.

## CAILLEACH BEINNE BRICE



AILLEACH Beinne Brice hó,  
 Brice hó, Brice hó,  
 Cailleach Beinne Brice hó,  
 Cailleach mhór an fhuarain aird.

Cha leiginn mo bhuidheann fhiadh,  
 Bhuidheann fhiadh, bhuidheann fhiadh,  
 Cha leiginn mo bhuidheann fhiadh  
 Chriomadh sligean liath na tràigh.

B'annsa leo am biolair fhéin,  
 Am biolair hó, am biolair fhé,  
 B'annsa leo am biolair fhéin  
 Bhiodh air sgéith nan sléibhtean ard.

Cailleach mi ri siubhal bheann,  
 Siubhal bheann, siubhal ghleann,  
 Cailleach mi ri siubhal bheann,  
 Feuch am faic i 'n gleann as fearr.

Dìreadh a suas ris a' chruachan,  
 Ris a' chruachan, ris a' chruachan,  
 Dìreadh a suas ris a' chruachan,  
 Dé cha d'fhuair mi 'n dealgan bàn.  
 [gealbhan, suainean gràidh]

Dé cha d'fhuair mi, chaill mi, fhuair mi,  
 Dé cha d'fhuair mi, chaill mi, fhuair mi,  
 Dé cha d'fhuair mi, chaill mi, fhuair mi,  
 Dé cha d'fhuair mi 'n dealgan bàn.

Cf. *An Gàidheal*, ii. 369; *Gesto Collection*, 17; *An Duanaire*, 121; *Story and Song from Lochness-side*, 231; MacDougall and Calder, *Folk Tales*

## THE CARLIN OF BEINN BHREAC

THE carlin of Beinn Bhreac ho,  
 Bhreac ho, Bhreac ho,  
 The carlin of Beinn Bhreac ho,  
 The tall carlin of the mountain spring.

I would not let my herd of deer,  
 My herd of deer, my herd of deer,  
 I would not let my herd of deer  
 Go nibble the grey shells of the shore.

They had rather their own cress,  
 Their cress ho, their own cress,  
 They had rather their own cress  
 That grew on the spur of the high hills.

I am a carlin ranging bens,  
 Ranging bens, ranging glens,  
 I am a carlin ranging bens,  
 Trying to see the best glen.

Climbing up the mountain top,  
 The mountain top, the mountain top,  
 Climbing up the mountain top,  
 I found not the white pin.

I found not, I lost, I found,  
 I found not, I lost, I found,  
 I found not, I lost, I found,  
 I found not the white pin.

and *Fairy Lore*, 240; *West Highland Tales*, ii. 369.

Cha do chaith mi riamh bròg uachdair,  
 Riamh bròg uachdair, riamh bròg uachdair,  
 Cha do chaith mi riamh bròg uachdair,  
 'S ann a fhuair mi 'n t-osan gearr.

Cha do chaith mi riamh an t-aodach,  
 Riamh an t-aodach, riamh an t-aodach,  
 Cha do chaith mi riamh an t-aodach,  
 O'n \* a shaor mi 'n cùirteir bàn.

Cha do chuir mi a riamh buarach,  
 A riamh buarach, a riamh buarach,  
 Cha do chuir mi a riamh buarach  
 Air bó dhubh na ruadh san tòn.

[na bàn

'S mis a' chailleach atà eutrom,  
 'S mis a' chailleach atà eutrom,  
 'S mis a' chailleach atà eutrom,  
 'S mi liom fhéin air sgéith nan carn.

réidh]

[A' ruith 's a' leum



## A' BHEAN-SHÌDH AGUS AN SEALGAIR

Narrator: John Fraser, of Lochaber, street porter,

BHA Domhall Camshron 'na shealgair ainmeil an Loch Abar, far an robh sealgairean san am sin. Is e Domhall Mór Òg a theirte ris an duine a measg a dhàimhich agus a chairdean. Bha Domhall Mór Òg 'na làn ghaisgeach agus 'na dheagh làmh-fheuma am beinn agus am baile. Bha e là mach a' sealg nam fiadh, agus le bhith sgìth a' siubhal bheann is ghleann is choire shuidh e shuas air bràigh a' ghlinne agus thuit e 'na chadal. Chual e guth caoin ciùin r'a thaobh, agus thubhairt an guth, 'Am bheil thu ad chadal, a Dhomhaill Òig?' 'Chan 'eil a nis,' arsa Domhall Òg agus e leum air a bharr-bonn. Chunna Domhall Òg ann a sin thall m'a choinneamh an aona bhean a b'àlainne cruth agus dealbh air an do laigh sùil mic màthar riamh,—ciabhan donna donna-ruadh a' snàmh a sìos m'a crios àlainn cana-ghil, agus a cìochan geal a' snàmh air a h-uchd mar an fhaoileag bhàn air bharr nan tonn. Labhair am boireannach agus thubhairt i, 'Is dubh dona liom fhéin, a Dhomhaill Òig, thu bhith cho tur trom air tilgeil nan aighean.' 'Cha do loisg mi fhéin air agh riamh far am faighinn damh,' arsa Domhall Òg. 'Is math a chuir sin riut, a Dhomhaill Òig; ach tha do sméirne bhiorach am bun mo shléisne bho Chiadaoin seo chaidh, agus is beag a bha mi an dùil gum bu tu a dhèanadh orm e, a Dhomhaill Òig, agus a liù là thug thu fhéin agus mi fhéin ag itheadh meille agus a' deoghal meala am bràigh na coille, Dhomhaill Òig!' Cha robh fhios aig Domhall Òg 'd é mu'n iadh a' ghrian no mu chiaradh an t-saoghail a theireadh no a shaoileadh e de chainnt na rìoghainn.

Shìolaidh a sin ceò nam beann a nuas dha'n ghleann, agus cha bu léir do Dhomhall Òg fad a' bhogha bha 'na dhorn gun do thog an ceò; agus dar a thog, cha robh sealladh aig Domhall Òg ri fhaicinn air an rìoghainn, —aon sealladh fhéin, agus chan fhac e riamh tuilleadh i.

Có bha seo ach gridheach ann am fàth fìth an riochd boireannaich. Bha i nis shuas am bràigh a' choire—Coire Ghamhna—air ceann a greighe, agus an aon langan briagh òrain 'na beul. Bha dùil aig Domhall Òg gur h-e seo ceòl bu bhriagha chual e riamh bho rugadh e, agus tha mi fhéin a' creidsinn gu dearbh gura h-e.—

CAILLEACH Bheinne Bhric, ho ró,  
 Bhric ho ró, Bhric ho ró,  
 Cailleach Bheinne Bhric, ho ró,  
 Cailleach mhór an fhuarain aird.

Cf. MacDougall and Calder, *Folk Tales and Fairy Lore*, 254-7.

## THE FAIRY WOMAN AND THE HUNTER

Edinburgh. 16th July 1883.

DONALD CAMERON was a famous hunter in Lochaber, where there were hunters at that time. Big young Donald the man was called among his kindred and his friends. He was a right stalwart fellow and a good hand at need in hill and in townland. He was out one day hunting the deer, and being tired with traversing bens and glens and corries, he sat down on the breast of the glen and fell asleep. He heard a soft gentle voice at his side, and the voice said, 'Art thou asleep, young Donald?' 'Not now,' said young Donald, leaping to his toes. Then young Donald beheld there before him the one woman fairest of mien and mould on whom eye of mother's son ever lay—brown russet locks floating down about her beauteous girdle white as the cotton of the moor, and her white breasts floating upon her bosom as the white seagull on the crest of the waves. The woman spoke and said, 'It grieves me sorely, young Donald, that thou art so wholly bent on shooting the hinds.' 'I have never fired at a hind where I could find a stag,' said young Donald. 'Well has that served thee, young Donald; but thy sharp-pointed shaft is in my haunch since Wednesday last, and little did I expect it would be thou who wouldst do it to me, O young Donald, considering how many a day thou and I have spent together, eating dainty and sucking honey in the breast of the wood, O young Donald!' Young Donald knew not in the sun's circuit or the darkling of the world what to say or to think of the maiden's talk.

Then the mist of the mountains sank down upon the glen, and young Donald could not see so far as the length of the bow in his hand until the mist lifted; and when it did, he could see not a glimpse of the maiden,—not so much as a glimpse, and he never saw her more.

Who was here but a young hind in 'fàth fìth' \* in the guise of a woman. Now she was high on the breast of the corry—the Corry of the Stirk—leading her herd, with the unvaried musical belling for a song in her mouth. Young Donald thought this the finest music that he had ever heard since he was born, and I myself believe it surely was.—

THE carlin of Beinn Bhreac, ho ro,  
 Bhreac ho ro, Bhreac ho ro,  
 The carlin of Beinn Bhreac, ho ro,  
 The tall carlin of the mountain spring.

\* Cf. ii. 22 ff. See R.I.A. Dict. sv. 1 *fèth*; *More West Highland Tales*, i. 460.

Cha leiginn mo bhuidheann fhiadh,  
 Bhuidheann fhiadh, bhuidheann fhiadh,  
 Cha leiginn mo bhuidheann fhiadh  
 Dh'iarraidh sligean liath dha'n tràigh.

B'annsa leo a' bhiolair uain,  
 A' bhiolair uain, a' bhiolair uain,  
 B'annsa leo a' bhiolair uain  
 A bhiodh air cluain nam fuaran àidh.

Bhitheadh i a' seinn agus i a' falbh air an ceann; agus tha seachas an Loch Abar gus an là an diugh gur h-ann aice fhéin a bha an làmh air an t-seinn, co dhiùbh a bhitheadh i air taobh leacainn, air bearradh beinne, no am bràigh coire.

I would not let my herd of deer,  
My herd of deer, my herd of deer,  
I would not let my herd of deer  
Go seek grey shells upon the strand.

They had rather the cresses greeti,  
The cresses green, the cresses greeti,  
They had rather the cresses green  
That grew on the mead of the glorious springs.

She would be singing while she went at their head; and there is old tradition in Lochaber to the present day that it is herself who had the hand at singing, whether she were on the side of a hill-slope, on the steep of a mountain, or on a corry's breast.

## TÀLADH NA MNÀ-SÌDH

Beulaiche: Domhall Mac Iain, pìobaire, Éirisgeidh, Uibhist.



Ó! mìn thu,  
Màn thu, màg thu!  
'S toigh liom fhìn thu,  
Màn thu, màg thu!

'S toigh liom agam,  
Màn thu, màg thu!  
Fo'n a' phlaide,  
Màn thu, màg thu!

'S toigh liom agam,  
Màn thu, màg thu!  
Anns a' mhadainn  
Mhìnghil, chràghil.

'S toigh liom agam,  
Màn thu, màg thu!  
Mi dha d' chaidriu,  
Mi dha d' thàlu.

Mi dha d' lìonu  
Leis na bàidhean,  
Mi dha d' lìon o  
Chìoch do mhàthar.

Mìn thu! mìn thu!  
Mìn mo ghràidhean!  
Mìn mar shìod dhut  
Cridh do mhàthar!

## THE FAIRY WOMAN'S LULLABY

Reciter: Donald MacIain, piper, Eriskay, Uist. 24th April 1869. Donald MacIain was a good piper and an agreeable man, and said he was descended from a MacIain who escaped from the massacre of Glen Coe.

Ho! soft art thou,  
Smooth thou, soft thou!  
Well I love thee,  
Smooth thou, soft thou!

Well I love thee,  
Smooth thou, soft thou!  
Under the plaid,  
Smooth thou, soft thou!

Well I love thee,  
Smooth thou, soft thou!  
In the morning  
Soft-white, red-bright.

Well I love thee,  
Smooth thou, soft thou!  
I to companion thee,  
I to lull thee.

I to fill thee  
With the fondnesses,  
I to fill thee  
From the breast of thy mother.

Soft thou! soft thou!  
Soft my little love!  
Soft as silk to thee  
The heart of thy mother!

## TÀLADH NA MNÀ-SÌDH

Beulaiche: Domhall Mac Iain, pìobaire, Éirisgeidh, Uibhist.



Ó do ro mhicein,  
Hó do ro bhoicein,  
Cùl nan clitean  
Ri na dearcan.

Hal hal aoirinn  
Hal hal aoirinn  
Hal hal aoirinn  
Na goibhre anns a' chrò.

Hiù bhidil hiù bhì  
Hiù bhidil hiù bhì  
Hiù bhidil hiù bhì  
Na ciora 'm beinn a' cheò.

[ciura

Gun siubhlainn an t-anmoch  
Le sealgair mo ghaoil,  
Gun siubhlainn an oidhche  
Feadh coill agus fraoich.

## THE FAIRY WOMAN'S LULLABY

Reciter: Donald MacIain, piper, Eriskay, Uist. 24th April 1869.

Ho do ro sonnie,  
Ho do ro kiddie,  
Behind the ridges  
At the berries.

Hal hal aoirinn  
Hal hal aoirinn  
Hal hal aoirinn  
The goats in the fold.

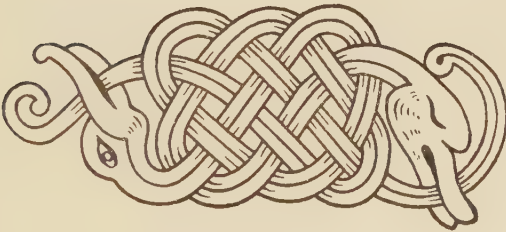
Hiu bhidil hiu bhi  
Hiu bhidil hiu bhi  
Hiu bhidil hiu bhi  
The sheep in the misty ben.

I would range the darkling  
With the hunter of my love,  
I would range the night  
Through wood and through heath.





TÀLADH MHIC LEÒID  
MACLEOD'S LULLABY



## TÀLADH MHIC LEÒID

FIFTEEN songs (or versions) related to this and the following were collected—all lullabies, but not all, it seems, fairy lullabies, nor all specially

(a)

From the Rev. Dr Kenneth MacLeod.

## TÀLADH AN LEINIBH LEÒDAICH



O leanabh mingileiseach maingil-  
 Bualadh nan glac, [eiseach,  
 Nan slat lùraich,  
 Nan ceann-feadhna,  
 Nan each snagach,  
 Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh  
 [beag!

'S tu mo leanabh  
 Ruiteach reamhar  
 Sultmhor flathail,  
 M'ultach iubhair,  
 Mo luachair bhog, mo luachair  
 [bhog!

Gur tu m'aighear,  
 Meodhr is m'uirigheam,  
 Meodhail 's m'aoigh,  
 Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh beag!

Cf. MacDougall and Calder, *Folk Tales and Fairy Lore*, 104-11; Frances Tolmie's Collection (*Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, vol. iv), no. 20; *Waifs*

## MACLEOD'S LULLABY

associated with MacLeod. I give below, first, five versions complete; then extracts from other versions.

(a)

## THE LULLABY OF THE MACLEOD CHILD

My magnificent (?) child,  
 Striking of quivers (?),  
 Of mail-clad youths (?),  
 Of chieftains,  
 Of spirited (?) steeds,  
 My little child, my little child!

Thou art my child  
 Ruddy and plump,  
 Lusty and noble,  
 My armful of yew,  
 My soft bulrush, my soft bulrush!

Thou art my joy,  
 My delight and my care,  
 My gaiety and my cheer,  
 My little child, my little child!

*and Strays of Celtic Tradition*, v. 141; *An Gàidheal* (1872), i. 235; *Celtic Magazine*, xi. 366; T. D. MacDonald, *Puirt mo Sheanmhar*, 5.

'S tu mo leanabh,  
 Bha thu fo mo chrìos an uiridh,  
 Lus an toraidh,  
 Lus an toraidh,  
 Mo bhrù a rug,  
 Mo chìoch a shluig,  
 Mo ghlùn a thog,  
 Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh beag!

'S tu mo leanabh,  
 'S bidh tu 'm bliadhna  
 Gu geal guanach  
 Air mo ghualainn,  
 'S mi gu h-uallach  
 Feadh a' bhaile,  
 Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh beag!

'S truagh nach faicinn féin do bhuaile  
 Gu h-ard ard air uachdar sléibhe,  
 Do sheisrichean as do dhéidhe,  
 'S càiteanaich a' chaol chòt uaine  
 Le d' luchd muinntir a' cur sìl,  
 Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh beag!

'S truagh nach faicinn 's nach cluinninn  
 Do ghuth ard an aodainn beinne,  
 Do sheòl ard an aodainn tuinne,  
 Mo ghille bhith air snàmh san linnidh,  
 Mo ghineal bhith ro' chàch san fhìreach,  
 Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh beag!

'S a Mhic na h-Òighe,  
 Nar faiceam a bhròn!  
 'S a Mhic na h-Òighe,  
 Nar cluinneam a leòn!

Thou art my child,  
 Last year thou wast under my girdle,  
 Plant of fertility,  
 Plant of fertility,  
 My womb did bear thee,  
 My breast suckled thee,  
 My knee reared thee,  
 My little child, my little child !

Thou art my child,  
 And thou wilt be this year  
 Fair and playful  
 On my shoulder,  
 As I go blithely  
 About the homestead,  
 My little child, my little child !

Would that I could see thy cattle-fold  
 High up on the mountain's upper slope,  
 Thy horse-teams after thee,  
 And winnowers with their thin green coats  
 With thy household sowing seed,  
 My little child, my little child !

Would that I could see and hear  
 Thy piercing voice on mountain face,  
 Thy lofty sail breasting the wave,  
 That my lad should be swimming in the pool,  
 That my offspring should excel all in the deer-forest,  
 My little child, my little child !

O Son of the Virgin,  
 May I not see his sorrow !  
 O Son of the Virgin,  
 May I not hear his wounding !

## TÀLADH MHIC LEÒID

'S a Mhic na h-Òighe,  
 Gu liath e air chòir  
 Air fòid an Dùin,  
 Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh beag!

Mo leanabh mingileiseach maingileiseach,  
 Bualadh nan glac,  
 Nan slat lùraich,  
 Nan ceann-feadhna,  
 Nan each snagach,  
 Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh beag!

Chan ann de Chloinn Choinnich thu,  
 Chan ann de Chloinn Chuinn thu,  
 De shìol bu docha leinn thu,  
 De shìol bu docha leinn thu,—  
 Sìol Leòid nan long, nan lann, nan  
 lùireach,  
 'S i Lochlann dùthchas do shinnsir,  
 Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh beag!

(b)

## TÀLADH NA MNÀ-SÌDH

Bha a' bhean-shìdh a' breugadh an leinibh agus i air thì a thàladh  
 thuice fhéin dhachaigh dha'n bhrugh.

DIDE beag diùgha,	[diutha MS
Mo leanabh beag buidhe,	
Dh'fhanadh 'na shuidhe,	
Dh'itheadh na h-uighean,	
Gun smul air a léinidh,	[smal
Nach feumadh a nigheadh,	
Is gum faigheadh e sìod	
'S e bhith seòdach!	[a bhith

O Son of the Virgin,  
 May he duly grow grey  
 On the soil of Dunvegan,  
 My little child, my little child!

My magnificent (?) child,  
 Striking of quivers (?),  
 Of mail-clad youths (?),  
 Of chieftains,  
 Of spirited (?) steeds,  
 My little child, my little child!

Thou art not of Clan Kenneth,  
 Thou art not of Clan Conn,  
 Thou art of a seed we held dearer,  
 Thou art of a seed we held dearer,—  
 The seed of Leod of the ships, the swords and  
 the breastplates,  
 Norway was thine ancestors' patrimony,  
 My little child, my little child!

(b)

### THE FAIRY WOMAN'S LULLABY

The fairy woman was lulling the child, designing to entice him home with herself to the fairy dwelling.

CAREFREE little suckling,  
 My little yellow-haired child  
 Who would remain seated,  
 Who would eat the eggs,  
 No stain on his shirt,  
 Which would not need to be washed,  
 He would get that  
 And many treasures!

Lìon am fìon caol cam,  
 Lìon a' bheòir as a ceann,  
 Lìon a' bhraileis 'na deann,  
 Agus beagan do leann  
 Cha mhisde bhith ann ;  
 Fìon frasach  
 Nan gleann casach ;  
 Màin de'n airgead mhosach  
 Gun bhith maiseach.

Macan a rinn bean òg  
 Ri fleasgach allail.

Mo cheist am falmadair sgiamhach  
 Nach téid còta suas m'a chliathaich  
 Ach còta caiteanach ciaru  
 Agus ciabhag bhog a léinidh.

Mo ruathaire,  
 Mo rathaire,  
 Mo chuaritear,  
 Mo chleasaiche !

[ruthaire  
 [ruagaire  
 [chuartaiche

Mo dhol gu mnaoi gu meachair,  
 Mo choirce tiugh reamhar reachdar,  
 'Ga char, 'ga chur, 'ga chliathadh,  
 'Ga bhuaibh a chuile bliadhna.

Rùn mo chridhe,  
 Sùgh mo chéille,  
 Rusg mo shùl  
 Sa mhochthrath Chéitein !

Fill the wine in a thin slanting stream,  
Then fill the beer,  
Fill the wort speedily,  
And it would not be the worse  
Of a little ale ;  
Copious wine  
From the precipitous glens ;  
A handful of sordid silver  
Most unlovely.

A child conceived by a young woman  
To a youth of renown.

My love is the comely helmsman  
Whose frame is never clad by aught  
Save a jet-black coat with goodly nap  
And a soft wisp of a shirt.

My skirmisher,  
My lucky one,  
My roving one,  
My sportive one !

My courteous one among ladies,  
My thick strong luxuriant oats,  
Turning it, sowing it, harrowing it,  
Reaping it every year.

My heart's darling,  
My sense's delight,  
Lids of my eyes  
On an early May morning !

## TÀLADH MHIC LEÒID

Ciall mo chàil thu,  
 Làn mo chléibhe,  
 Grian mo ghràidhe  
 San là fhéille!

Laogh mo luaidhe,  
 Cuan mo ghaoile!  
 Taobh nam fuarbheann  
 Thùr mi fhìn thu.

[Fhuair

Hó mo lur,  
 Hé mo lur,  
 Hó mo lur,  
 Geug de gheuga 'n t-samhraidh.

Ceist nan gallan  
 Ùrail allail,  
 Fleasgach fallan,  
 Miann nam ban greannmhor.

Dhìreadh tu, thèarnadh tu,  
 Dhìreadh tu, thèarnadh tu,  
 Dhìreadh tu, thèarnadh tu  
 Bheinn am bi 'n t-iongnadh.\*

[an robh

M'aran is m'fheòil thu,  
 Mo chaireall 's mo cheòl thu,  
 Mo bhraillis 's mo bheòir thu,  
 M'èoin agus m'uisgean thu.

Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh beag,  
 Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh beag,  
 Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh beag,  
 Mo leanabh beag a nì bhruidhinn.

\* prob. = *eangnamh*, and so translated.

Thou art the darling of my desire,  
 My satisfying armful,  
 Sun of my love  
 On the feast day!

Calf of my esteem,  
 Ocean of my love!  
 Beside the cold hills  
 I myself found thee.

Ho my treasure,  
 He my treasure,  
 Ho my treasure,  
 A branch of the summer branches.

Darling of youths  
 Fresh and famed,  
 Vigorous sapling,  
 The desire of comely women.

Thou wouldst climb, thou wouldst descend,  
 Thou wouldst climb, thou wouldst descend,  
 Thou wouldst climb, thou wouldst descend,  
 The mountain where feats are performed. [were

Thou art my bread and my meat,  
 My carolling and my music,  
 My ale-wort and my beer,  
 My fowl and my eggs.

My little child, my little child,  
 My little child, my little child,  
 My little child, my little child,  
 My little child who chatters.

Mac na gruagaiche duinne  
 Nach do shuath ri cuach na cuman,  
 Nach do leag a làmh ri fuine,  
 Nach do thog a gàir an cuidhe.

Sìod agus sròl,  
 Sròla buidhe,  
 Sìoda gu bròig,  
 Sròl gu h-uilinn,—  
 Gheobhadh tu sìod 's a bhith seòdach !

Is truagh nach faicinn fhéin do chéile,  
 Eala bhàn, an tùs a' Chéitein,  
 Teachd le h-àl thar cuan na h-Éireann,  
 T'èoin ri teudail anns an iargail. [iarmailt

Mo leanabh beag, mo leanabh beag,  
 Mo leanabh beag a' bruidhinn thu,  
 Mo leanabh beag air feadh nan creag,  
 Gun tugainn fhéin na h-uighean dhut !

Sìol mhac nan tonn thu, [neart  
 Sìol nam bogha crom thu, [trom, cam  
 Sìol nan eacha donn thu,  
 Sìol nan lann 's nan long thu.

Sìol feachd na gaoith thu,  
 Sìol feachd an fhraoich thu,  
 Sìol feachd nan laoch thu,  
 Sìol feachd mo ghaoil thu.

Sìol na fòide cruinn thu, [fuinn  
 Sìol nam Muileach trom thu,  
 Sìol Charmaig agus Chuinn thu,  
 Sìol bu docha leinn thu.

Son of the brown-haired lady  
 Who never touched bowl or milk-pail,  
 Who never lowered her hand to baking,  
 Who never raised her laugh in the cattle-fold.

Silk and satin,  
 Yellow satin,  
 Silk down to the shoes,  
 Satin to the elbows,—  
 Thou wouldst get that and many treasures!

Would that I might see thy spouse,  
 A white swan, in early May,  
 Coming with her brood over the Irish Sea,  
 Thy younglings making music in far places. [sky

My little child, my little child,  
 My little child who chatters,  
 My little child among the rocks,  
 I myself would give thee eggs!

Thou art the seed of the sons of the waves, [strength  
 Thou art the seed of the bent bows, [heavy  
 Thou art the seed of the bay horses,  
 Thou art the seed of the swords and ships.

Thou art the seed of the host of the tempest,  
 Thou art the seed of the host of fury [heather],  
 Thou art the seed of the host of warriors,  
 Thou art the seed of the host of my love.

Thou art the seed of the compact domain,  
 Thou art the seed of the weighty Mull men,  
 Thou art the seed of Cormac and Conn,  
 Thou art a seed we held dearer,

## TÀLADH MHIC LEÒID

Bhog bhile bhog bhionn thu,  
 Bhog bhile bhog dhonn thu,  
 Bhog bhile bhog fionn thu,  
 Bhog bhile bhog 's liom thu !

(c)

Mo bhile bhog bhionn thu,  
 Mo bhile bhog dhonn thu,  
 Mo bhile bhog fionn thu,  
 Mo bhile bhog 's liom thu !

Ulaidh nam ban Leòd thu,  
     Ceòl nam ban Muileach thu, [leòm  
 Culaidh nam ban Niall thu,  
     Ciall nam ban Muireach thu. [Cruithneach

Hó mo leanabh,  
 Hé mo leanabh,  
     Hó gogag orrai,  
 Hó mo leanabh !

M'eudail a bhà,  
     M'eudail a bhì,  
 Laogh nam ban bàth, [bàn  
     Gràdh nam ban bìth ! [sìdh

Grian ri m'uchd thu,  
 M'abhainn bhreac thu,  
 Mo gheòidh gheal thu, [ghlas  
 M'fhaoileag mhar thu !

Tender scion, soft and comely,  
 Tender scion, soft and brown-haired,  
 Tender scion, soft and fair,  
 Tender soft scion, thou art mine!

(c)

THOU art my tender comely scion,  
 Thou art my tender brown-haired scion,  
 Thou art my tender fair scion,  
 My tender scion, thou art mine!

Thou art the treasure of the MacLeod women,  
 Thou art the music of the Mull women, [pride  
 Thou art the support of the MacNeil women,  
 Thou art the darling of the Macvurich women. [Pictish

Ho my child,  
 He my child,  
 Ho gogag orrai,  
 Ho my child!

My darling who was,  
 My darling who is,  
 Calf of giddy women, [fair  
 Love of wanton women! [fairy

Thou art sun to my bosom,  
 Thou art my trout stream,  
 Thou art my white geese, [grey  
 Thou art my ocean gull!

Mo choirce tiugh reamhar riabhach  
 Bhith dh'a chur a chuile bliadhna,  
 Mo sheisrichean reachdar lìonar,  
 M'aighean òg a' dol am fiadhain.\*

[Mo mhnathan

Le'n còtaichean caiteanach uaine,  
 Le'n léintean gile fuaighim,  
 Làn phleat o dhorn gu uilinn,  
 An lì mar shneachd air leac nam fuarbheann.

[a' Chuilinn

Hó mo leanabh,  
 Hé mo leanabh,  
 Hó mo leanabh,  
 Hé mo leanabh!

Cuir a nall an curaidh, [cearaidh, cearach,  
 Cuir a nall an curaidh!— ceallaidh  
 Cha robh duin aig baile  
 Ach gille maol carrach,

Seann bhean is i 'ga garadh,  
 Seann fhear is e 'na chadal,  
 Làn an duirn de luran leinibh,  
 'S a' bhean òg a' fuaigheal anairt.

Mo bhile bhog bhionn thu,  
 Sìol Cholla, sìol Chuinn thu,  
 Mo bhile bhog bhionn thu,  
 Sìol a' chinnidh chruinn thu!

Hó mo leanabh,  
 Hé mo leanabh,  
 Hó mo leanabh,  
 Hé mo leanabh!

\* ? *fiadhair*, lea land.

My thick sturdy tawny oats  
Being planted every year,  
My powerful numerous horse-teams,  
My young heifers going wild.

With their green coats of goodly nap,  
With their white sewn shirts  
Full of pleats from fist to elbow,  
Their sheen like snow on the cold bens' slope.

[Coolin

Ho my child,  
He my child,  
Ho my child,  
He my child!

Pass across the offspring,  
Pass across the offspring!—  
There was no one at home  
But a bald scurvy fellow,

An old carlin toasting herself,  
An old carle sunk in sleep,  
A darling of a child no bigger than a fist,  
And the young woman stitching linen.

Thou art my tender comely scion,  
Thou art the seed of Colla, the seed of Conn,  
Thou art my tender comely scion,  
Thou art the seed of the compact clan!

Ho my child,  
He my child,  
Ho my child,  
He my child!

## TÀLADH MHIC LEÒID

Mo bhile bhog,  
 Mo chreamh an creig,  
 Mo bhile bhog,  
 Mo lìon am preas! [am bog  
 Mo bhile bhog,  
 Mur bhi an lias a bh'air a bhois,  
 Gun togamaid leinn thu!

(d)

## TÀLADH NA MNÀ-SÌDH

Bhog bhog bhire [fire, bhile  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Cha tu an laogh  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Seana bhà caoile!  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Cha tu an t-uan  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Rug a' chaora!  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Cha tu isean

My tender scion,  
 My garlic in rocks,  
 My tender scion,  
 My linen in press! \*  
 My tender scion,  
 Were it not for the mole on thy palm,  
 We would lift thee away with us!

(d)

## THE FAIRY WOMAN'S LULLABY

Bhog bhog bhire [fire, bhile  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Thou art not the calf  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Of an old lean cow!  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Thou art not the lamb  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Which the sheep brought forth!  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Thou art not the chick

\* A plant name, perhaps (*lion*=flax; cf. *lion na h-aibhne*, *lion na mnà-sidhe*; *preas*=thicket).

Bhog bhog bhire

Bhog bhog bhire

Bhog bhog bhire

Deireadh linne!

Bhog bhog bhire

Bhog bhog bhire

Bhog bhog bhire

Cha tu cuilean

Bhog bhog bhire

Bhog bhog bhire

Bhog bhog bhire

Gorm na maoiseig! \*

Bhog bhog bhire

Bhog bhog bhire

Bhog bhog bhire

Ge nach tu,

Bhog bhog bhire

Bhog bhog bhire

Bhog bhog bhire

Is tu mo laogh-sa!

Bhog bhog bhire

Bhog bhog bhire

Bhog bhog bhire

Mo bhrù a rug,

Bhog bhire bhog

Bhog bhire bhog

Bhog bhire bhog

Mo chìoch a shlug,

Bhog bhire bhog

Bhog bhire bhog

Bhog bhire bhog

Mo ghlùn a thog;

Bhog bhire bhog

Bhog bhire bhog

\* ? leg. *maoileig*. See iv. 16.

Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Last hatched in the brood !  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Thou art not the blue cub  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Of the round-headed seal !  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Though thou art not,  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Thou art my calf !  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 Bhog bhog bhire  
 My womb bore thee,  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 My breast suckled thee,  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 My knee nursed thee ;  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 Bhog bhire bhog

## TÀLADH MHIC LEÒID

Bhog bhire bhog  
 Fionn thu,  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 Is liom thu!

(e)

## TÀLADH MHIC LEÒID

Is e mo leanu mileineach muailleineach,  
 Seachd mileineach, seachd muailleineach,  
 Guala nan lann agus nan lùireach,  
 Nach d'fhàs nangach.

Is e mo leanu ruiteach,  
 Reamhar ruiteach meodhail,\*  
 Mo leanu cuthagach nam bruach,  
 B'e mo luaidh a bhith dha t'fhaotainn,

Bho na thug mi m'uile leat,  
 Is m'aille leat is m'uail leat,  
 Mo chrodh-laoigh air chluana,  
 'S mo chaoirich gheal air bhruacha.

Hug ògag oirre  
 Mnathan òg a' bhaile  
 Hug ògag oirre  
 Falbh leat fo choill,

[Hu gù gu goiream

\* ? *maothail*.

Bhog bhire bhog  
 Thou art fair,  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 Bhog bhire bhog  
 Thou art mine!

(e)

## MACLEOD'S LULLABY

HE is my sweet delightful child (?),  
 Seven times sweet and delightful,  
 He is the shoulder of swords and hauberks  
 Who grew not feeble (?).

He is my ruddy child,  
 Chubby ruddy cheerful, [tender?  
 My cuckoo fledgeling of the braes,  
 It were my delight to gain thee,

Since I have given my all,  
 My beauty and my pride, with thee,  
 My milch kine on meadows  
 And my white sheep on uplands.

Hug ogag oirre  
 The young women of the township  
 Hug ogag oirre  
 Taking thee to the greenwood,

Hug ògag oirre  
 Le'n cùla clannach,  
     Hug ògag oirre  
     Falbh leat am foill,  
     Hug ògag oirre  
 Feadh mill is monaidh  
     Hug ògag oirre  
     Falbh leat a raoir,  
     Hug ògag oirre  
 Le'n cìocha corrach,  
     Hug ògag oirre  
     Falbh leat san oidhch,  
     Hug ògag oirre  
 'S iad loma-làn bainne,  
     Hug ògag oirre  
     Gun solas gun soills.

Fire faire, nì mi umad,  
 Cìre do chinn nì mi umad,  
 Breacain ghrinn nì mi umad,  
 Tartain mhìne nì mi umad.

Cha tu laogh beag, nì mi umad, etc.

Fire fire, nì mi umad,  
 Léinteag lìn ghil nì mi umad,  
 Léinteag shìod ghil nì mi umad,  
 Léinteag mhìn ghil nì mi umad,  
     Bhìle bhog, 's liom thu!

A bhìle bhog, mo bhrù a rug, etc.

Hug ogag oirre  
 With their curling locks,  
 Hug ogag oirre  
 Carrying thee off by stealth,  
 Hug ogag oirre  
 Through moor and fell  
 Hug ogag oirre  
 Carrying thee off last night,  
 Hug ogag oirre  
 With their swelling breasts,  
 Hug ogag oirre  
 Carrying thee off in the night,  
 Hug ogag oirre  
 And they overflowing with milk,  
 Hug ogag oirre  
 Without light or glimmer.

Fire faire, I shall do about thee,  
 Combs for your head I shall do about thee,  
 Elegant plaids I shall do about thee,  
 Fine tartans I shall do about thee.

Thou art not the calf, etc.

Fire fire, I shall do about thee,  
 A little shirt of white linen I shall do about thee,  
 A little shirt of white silk I shall do about thee,  
 A fine white little shirt I shall do about thee,  
 Thou tender scion, thou art mine!

Thou tender scion, my womb gave thee birth, etc.



(f)

mhic Mhurchaidh,' Bàgh Hartabhaig, South Uist, who was a poet, had a great store of traditional literature, and died about forty years earlier.

THOU art not of the Clan Kenneth,  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Thou art not of the Clan Donald,  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Thou art not of the Clan Arthur,  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Thou art not of the Clan Campbell,  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Thou art not of the Clan Alpine, [Chattan  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Thou art not of the Clan Mackay,  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Thou art not of the Clan Fraser,  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 But of a clan dearer to us :  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Clan Leod of the galleys,  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Clan Leod of the hauberks,  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Norway was thy native country,  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Ho bhirinn ho bho  
 Thou art mine !

(g)

Slol Leòid nan longa,  
 Bhile mhogain bhionn thu! [Slol a' mhogain  
 Slol Leòid nan cranna,  
 Bhile mhogain bhionn thu!  
 Slol Leòid nan lanna,  
 Bhile mhogain bhionn thu!  
 Slol Leòid nan lùireach, [lùchart, tùra  
 Bhile mhogain bhionn thu!  
 Lochlann do dhùthaich,  
 Bhile mhogain bhionn thu!

(h)

M'inim agus m'anam thu,  
 Chan ann a Chlann Chuinn thu, etc.

(i)

From Skye.

Hó mo leanabh  
 Bòidheach reamhar, [ceanail  
 M'ultach siubhail,  
 M'ultach siubhail!  
 Cha tu 'n t-isean  
 Bhire bhire  
 Deireadh lnne,  
 Bhire bhire etc.

(j)

Mac na gruagaiche duinne  
 Nach do thog a làmh ri cuidhil, [leg. cuigeil?  
 Nach do lùb a cas ri muidhe,  
 Nach do chrom a glùn an cuidhe,  
 Nach do leag a bas ri fuine,  
 Nach do thog a guth ri guidhe,  
 Ach sìod agus sròl,  
 Sròl agus uigheam,  
 Sìoda gu dorn,  
 Sròla gu uilinn.

(g)

The seed of Leod of the galleys,  
 Thou art the scion of the comely . . .  
 The seed of Leod of the masts,  
 Thou art the scion of the comely . . .  
 The seed of Leod of the swords,  
 Thou art the scion of the comely . . .  
 The seed of Leod of the hauberks, [palaces, towers  
 Thou art the scion of the comely . . .  
 Norway was thy native country,  
 Thou art the scion of the comely . . .

(h)

Thou art my dear and my darling,  
 Thou art not of the Clan Conn, etc.

(i)

Ho my child  
 Comely and plump, [lovable  
 My wayfarer's bundle,  
 My wayfarer's bundle!  
 Thou art not the last  
 Bhire bhire  
 Chick of the brood,  
 Bhire bhire etc.

(j)

Son of the brown-haired damsel  
 Who did not raise hand to spinning-wheel, [distaff  
 Who did not bend her foot to a churn,  
 Who did not incline her knee in a cattle-fold,  
 Who did not lower her palm to baking,  
 Who did not raise her voice in imprecation,  
 But silk and satin,  
 Satin and gear,  
 Silk to the wrist,  
 Satin to the elbow.

(k)

Mo chruit chiùil thu,  
 Mo thiompan àlainn,  
 M'fharcha bhinn thu, [fhairce  
 Mo spréidh air àirigh,  
 Mo chaora geala,  
 Mo ghobhair mheige,  
 Mo bhó bhainne,  
 Mo ghreigh bheannach,  
 Mo chruit chiùil thu,  
 Mo thiompan gàireach,  
 Mo chlàrsach bhinn thu,  
 Mo chion tàlaidh. [chinn

\* \* \* \* \*

Cuir a nall an currachd, [curaidh  
 Cuir a nall an corrachd,—  
 Cha robh duin aig baile  
 Ach gille maol carrach,  
 Seann duine 's e 'ga lathadh,  
 Seann bhean is i 'ga garadh,  
 Seann chù is e air faileadh,  
 Seann chat 's a chùl 'ga dhaghadh,  
 Làn an duirn de lùigein leinibh,  
 Làn an duirn de chuirnein meala,  
 Làn an duirn de shùgradh ceanail,  
 Làn an duirn a rinn mo mhealladh,  
 Làn an duirn, mo rùn, mo leanabh!

(l)

Laogh nam ban bànn thu,  
 Gaol nam ban-sìdh thu,  
 Maon nam ban basagheal  
 Bha tamall anns an t-sidhean.

(k)

Thou art my harp of melody,  
 My lovely lute,  
 Thou art my sweet lyre,  
 My cattle on sheiling,  
 My white sheep,  
 My bleating goats,  
 My milking cow,  
 My horned flock,  
 Thou art my harp of melody,  
 My smiling lute,  
 Thou art my sweet harp,  
 My winsome love.

\* \* \* \*

Pass across the . . .  
 Pass across the . . .  
 There was no one at home  
 But a bald scurvy fellow,  
 An old carle benumbed with cold,  
 An old carlin toasting herself,  
 An old dog which had shed its hair,  
 An old cat whose back was being singed,  
 A fistful of a darling child,  
 A fistful of a heap of honey,  
 A fistful of tender mirth,  
 A fistful that has enticed me,  
 A fistful, my love, my child!

(l)

Calf of the fair-haired women,  
 Love of the fairy women,  
 Treasure of the white-palmed women,  
 Who was for a space in the fairy mansion.

o\*

(m)

O 'ille bhog 's liom thu! [Ho hile (bhile) bhog  
 O 'ille bhog, mo bhrù a rug, etc.

\* \* \* \* \*

Is e mo leanu mireanach,  
 Seachd meal thu, seachd m'uaill thu, etc.

(n)

From Ann Maclellan, cottar,

M'inim 's mo rùn,  
 Ire bhog thu,  
 Òigear a' chùil,  
 Ire bhog thu,  
 Dhìreadh tu stùc,  
 Ire bhog thu,  
 Le d' bhogha 's le d' chù,  
 Ire bhog thu,  
 Le d' ghill air do chùl,  
 Ire bhog thu,  
 Deas làmh mo rùn,  
 Ire bhog thu,  
 Mo bhrù a rug, etc.

(m)

O tender boy, thou art mine!  
 O tender boy, my womb gave birth to thee, etc.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

He is my playful child,  
 Seven times honey, seven times my pride, etc.

(n)

Mòinteach an Ìochdair, South Uist. 1865.

My dear and my love,  
 Thou art a tender . . .  
 Youth with fine head of hair,  
 Thou art a tender . . .  
 Thou wouldst climb the peak,  
 Thou art a tender . . .  
 With thy bow and thy hound,  
 Thou art a tender . . .  
 With thy gillie behind thee,  
 Thou art a tender . . .  
 Right hand of my love,  
 Thou art a tender . . .  
 My womb gave thee birth, etc.

## TÀLADH MHIC LEÒID

THUBHAIRT an seanchaidh, Seumas Chailein (Seumas Caimbeul), croitear, Ceann Tangabhal, Barraidh, an 26mh de'n t-Sultainn 1872: Fhuair Mac Leòid Dhùn Bheagain mac o'n mhnaoi-shìdh; agus a chionn nach gabhadh e leatha fhéin, chuir i dhachaigh thuig an leanabh. Ach ged a chuir i uaip e, bha i ag ionndrainn an leinibh, agus chaidh i dh'a choimhead. Bha an leanabh aig banaltram Mhic Leòid, agus rug a' bhean-shìdh air an leanabh, agus bha i 'ga thàladh agus 'ga thatan agus 'ga thutanaich agus 'ga altram agus 'ga ialadh a null agus a nall, agus i air thì a thiolpadh uaipe agus a sguabhadh leatha dha'n t-sidhean.

THUBHAIRT seanchaidh eile, Domhall Mac Cuithein, coitear, Fearann an Leagha, anns an Eilean Sgitheanach, 1860: Thogadh oighre òg Mhic Leòid an Dùin suas as a' chreadhail agus a mach as a' chaisteal. Cha robh fios eadar ùir agus adhar na fo thalamh nam beò cò thog na ciamar a thogadh na càit an tugadh an leanabh. Cha robh fios na forfhas fo ghréin ghil nan tràth. Ach bha amharas air a' bhean-shìdh, chionn bhithheadh i daonnan a' togail leanabanan gun bhaisteadh agus màthraichean gun luthail dar a gheobhadh i fàth na cothrom. Cha robh neach am beinn na am baile, an srath na am monadh, air tom taighe na air clàr caisteil, nach robh a mach air tòir an leinibhin bhig bhòidhich, oighre òg Mhic Leòid Dhùn Bheagain. Shireadh shìos agus shuas, shireadh thall agus a bhos, dé cha chualas guth agus chan fhacas lias air an leanabhan a chailleadh.

Ann a bhith dol seachad tolman bòidheach gorm fraoich am bonn coire gorm nan aighean chuala nighean òg Mhic Criomain, piobair móralach Mhic Leòid, seinn anns an tom, agus a cluas òg cho geur gu ceòl ri cluas òg smeòrach nan geug,—chual a' chaileag crònan ceòil anns an tolman ghorm fhraoich. Ghrad chuir a' chaileag an t-snàthad mhór bha 'na brollach an déidh bhith cnòdadh osan a h-athar a sàs san talamh. Chuir an nighean thapaidh—agus mo bhriathar féin, is e sin té bha innte!—a cluas ris an t-snàthainn mhór, feuch 'd é chluinneadh i, agus chual i innich gu leòr ceòl anns a' bhrugh, brugh nan sidheach seang, mar gum bitheadh màthair a' seinn tàlaidh cadail do leanabh beag.

Chuireadh luchd-faire-tuill gach là agus oidhche air cnocan cruinn nan sidheach, mar a bhite cur luchd-faire-tuill air garaidh faolann daoch na feòil. Oidhche Shamhna seach gach oidhche dh'fhosgail brugh nan sidheach seang, agus ghrad thaom a mach sgaoth sgeòdaich gun seagh muin air mhuin, mar chlann sgoil a' sgaoileadh. Ghrad ghabh an luchd-faire-tuill a steach dha'n tom, agus fhuaradh ann an sin oighre òg Mhic Leòid Dhùn Bheagain, subhach sòghach cliarach ceòlach binn. Bha e 'na shuidhe air glùn boireannaich saoghail a thog na sidhich leotha as

## MACLEOD'S LULLABY

THE reciter, James son of Colin (James Campbell), crofter, Ceann Tangbhal, Barra, said, 26th September 1872: MacLeod of Dunvegan got a child by the fairy woman; and because he would not receive herself, she sent the child home to him. But though she put him away, she was missing the child and she went to see him. The child was with MacLeod's foster-nurse, and the fairy woman seized hold of the child, and she was hushing and caressing and fondling and nursing and rocking him back and fore, intending to snatch him from her and to sweep him away with her to the fairy mound.

ANOTHER reciter, Donald MacQuien, cottar, Ferinlea, Skye, said, 1860: The young heir of MacLeod of Dunvegan was lifted up from his cradle and out of the castle. There was no knowing between earth and sky or in the land of the living who had lifted the child or how he had been lifted or where he had been taken. There was no knowledge or information under the white sun of the seasons. But suspicion lay on the fairy woman, for she was always lifting infants who had not been baptised and women who had not been purified, when she got a chance or opportunity. There was no one on hill or at homestead, in strath or on moor, on house hillock or castle lawn, who was not out in search of the beautiful little child, the young heir of MacLeod of Dunvegan. Search was made high and low, hither and yon, but nothing was heard or seen of the child who had been lost.

In going past a beautiful green heathery knoll at the base of the green corry of the hinds, the young daughter of MacCrimmon, MacLeod's haughty piper, heard singing in the knoll, for her young ear was as acute for music as the young ear of the mavis of the branches,—the young girl heard a crooning music in the green heathery knoll. Immediately the girl thrust the needle, which was in her breast after darning her father's hose, into the ground. The smart girl—and by my word that is what she was!—placed her ear to the long thread to see what she would hear, and she heard clearly enough music in the fairy mansion—the mansion of the slim fairies—as if a mother were singing a lullaby to a little child.

Every day and night people were set to watch the entry to the fairies' round hillock, just as people used to be sent to watch the entry to the lair of the wicked carnivorous wolf. On Hallowe'en, in contrast to all other nights, the mound of the slim fairies opened, and there quickly poured forth pell-mell a disorderly giddy swarm like schoolchildren just dismissed. The watchers forthwith entered the mound and there the young heir of MacLeod of Dunvegan was found, joyous jolly, mirthful merry, sweet-voiced. He was sitting on the knee of a mortal woman whom the fairies

an leabaidh-làir an tràth bha na mnathan-faire le pràmh 'nan ceann agus le suain 'nan sùil. Thogadh oighre òg Mhic Leòid an Dùin air fras-mhullach ghuaile nan laoch, agus a bhanaltram leis, agus thugadh dachaigh an leanabh fo'n bhrataich bhàin a' snàmh anns a' ghaoith, a' phìob dhosrach a' mosgladh beul-fuinn mac-talla nan creag, le basraich ard nam fear agus le lasgraich ghàir nam ban.

## TÀLADH NA MNÀ-SÌDH



OCAN beag odhar thu, [laosbocan, gocan,  
Gill-Easba, Leasba  
[thu

Beiridh bó nuallain,  
Nuallan bà Muilich thu,  
M'anns agus m'ionn,  
M'anam agus m'fhonn!  
Chan ann a Shìol Chuinn thu,  
Sìol bu docha leinn thu—  
Sìol Leòid nan longa,  
Sìol nan gallan troma,  
Sìol nan lùireach,  
Lochlann bu dùthchas dut!

Faire fire  
Cha tu laogh na  
Faire fire  
Seana bhà crìne,  
Faire fire  
Cha tu am minndein  
Faire fire  
Rug a' mhìseach,  
Faire fire  
Cha tu an t-uan  
Faire fire  
A rug a' chaora,  
Faire fire

had 'lifted' from her pallet when the attendant women were heavy of head and sleepy of eye. MacLeod's young heir was lifted on the warriors' shoulders, attended by his nurse, and the child was brought home under the white banner fluttering in the breeze, the plumed pipes waking the melody of the rocks' echo to the loud shouts of the men and the clamorous laughter of the women.

## THE FAIRY WOMAN'S LULLABY

My little dun buck thou,

Offspring of the lowing cow,  
 For whom the Mull cow lows,  
 My darling and my fair one,  
 My soul and my delight!  
 Thou art not of the race of Clan Donald,  
 But of a race dearer to us—  
 The race of Leod of the galleys,  
 The race of the weighty saplings,  
 The race of the breastplates,  
 Norway was thy patrimony!

Faire fire  
 Thou art not the calf of  
 Faire fire  
 The old shrivelled cow,  
 Faire fire  
 Thou art not the little kid  
 Faire fire  
 Whom the she-goat brought forth,  
 Faire fire  
 Thou art not the lamb  
 Faire fire  
 Whom the sheep brought forth,  
 Faire fire

Cha tu searrach  
 Faire fire  
 Seana làir caoile,  
 Faire fire  
 Ge nach tu,  
 Faire fire  
 Is tu mo laogh-sa !

Fairim firim obh òbh !  
 Nar cluinneam do leòn,  
 Nar faiceam do dheòir,  
 Gun toll air a bhròig,  
 Gum bioraich do shròn,  
 Gun liath thu air chòir  
 Cho glas ris na neòil,  
 Gun ciar air a lò  
 Am bord an Dùin !

Fairinn fìrinn nam bann ! \*  
 Ghabh a' bhuinneag ort am, [mo  
 Fairinn fìrinn nam bann !  
 Dar bha 'n sneachd air a' chrann,  
 Fairinn fìrinn nam bann !  
 Dar bha 'n ceò air a' ghleann,  
 Fairinn fìrinn nam bann !  
 Dar bha 'n tuil air an allt,  
 Fairinn fìrinn nam bann !  
 Dar bha 'n gobhrag gun mheann, [sic  
 Fairinn fìrinn nam bann !  
 Dar bha chuthag gun chlann,  
 Fairinn fìrinn nam bann !  
 Dar bha 'n rudhag air chall,  
 Fairinn fìrinn nam bann !  
 Dar bha 'n Cuilionn gun cheann,

\* May be simply *Fairinn fìrinn, nam b'ann*: 'Fairinn fìrinn, if it were.'

Thou art not the foal  
 Faire fire  
 Of a lean old mare,  
 Faire fire  
 Though thou art not,  
 Faire fire  
 Thou art my calf!

Fairim firm obh obh!  
 May I not hear of thy wounding,  
 May I not see thy tears,  
 Until thy shoes are holed,  
 Until thy nose grows sharp,  
 Until thou duly becomest grey  
 As hoar as the clouds,  
 Until thy day becomes dark  
 Within the precincts of Dunvegan!

Be the plighted truth with us!  
 The fairy maid seized her chance,  
 Be the plighted truth with us!  
 When the snow was on the tree,  
 Be the plighted truth with us!  
 When the mist was in the glen,  
 Be the plighted truth with us!  
 When the brook was in spate,  
 Be the plighted truth with us!  
 When the goat was without kid,  
 Be the plighted truth with us!  
 When the cuckoo was without young,  
 Be the plighted truth with us!  
 When the hedgehog could not be found,  
 Be the plighted truth with us!  
 When the summit of the Coolin could not be seen,

Fairinn fìrinn nam bann!  
 Dar bha do mhuime dall,  
 Fairinn fìrinn nam bann!

Hug ò gu h-aireach,  
 Mnathan òg a' bhaile,  
 Hug ò gu h-aireach,  
 Gu tràchach galach,  
 A' caoi an leinibh,  
 A' falbh na coille,  
 'S an cìocha geala  
 A' call a' bhainne.

M'ulaidh agus m'aoibhneas,  
 'S e do ghoid a rinn mi  
 Air a' mheadhon oidhche,  
 Gun solas gun soillse,  
 Gun choinneal gun choinnleir.  
 Tha thu agam féin o'n uraidh,  
 'S gur tu m'ulaidh,  
 'S bidh tu 'm bliadhna  
 Gu h-ùr uallach  
 Air mo ghualainn feadh a' bhaile!

Is tu mo leanabh  
 Milseach mailseach, [miliseach mailiseach  
 Glag fo lùireach,  
 'S tu ceann-feadhna  
 Nan each snagach.  
 'S tu mo leanabh  
 Ruiteach reamhar,  
 Mo sholt is m'iodha, [m'iubhair  
 Mo luachair bhog  
 Am bi m'aighean.

Be the plighted truth with us!  
When thy foster-mother was blind,  
Be the plighted truth with us!

Hug o regretful,  
The young women of the village,  
Hug o regretful,  
Dejected and tearful,  
Lamenting the child,  
Traversing the wood  
And their white breasts  
Overflowing with milk.

My treasure and my delight,  
By theft I won thee  
In the dead of night,  
Without light or glimmer,  
Without candle or candlestick.  
Thou hast been with me since last year,  
And thou art my treasure,  
And thou wilt be this year  
Fresh and lively  
On my shoulder through the village!

Thou art my child  
Sweet enticing,  
With rattling breastplate,  
Thou art the chieftain  
Of spirited horses.  
Thou art my child  
Ruddy and stout,  
My fatness and plenty,  
My soft rushes  
Wherein my cows are wont to be.

Is truagh nach faicinn fhéin do bhuaile  
Gu h-ard ard air uachdar sléibhe,  
Còta caol coileireach uaine  
Mu d' dhà ghualainn, agus léine.

Is truagh nach faicinn fhéin do sheisreach,  
'S fir 'na deoghaidh a' cur sìl;  
'S e bu cheòl air feadh do thalla  
Beòir bhith 'ga gabhail is fìon.

Would that I might see thy cattle-fold  
High up on the mountain slope,  
A fine green collared coat  
About thy shoulders, and a shirt.

Would that I might see thy team of horses  
And men following it sowing seed ;  
There was always a merry hum throughout thy hall  
With the quaffing of beer and wine.

## A' BHEAN-SHÌDH

Beulaiche: Anna Chaimbeul, croitear, Stadhlairgearraidh, Uibhist a Deas (Anna Nic Aonghuis, bean Aonghuis Chaimbeul), 29mh de'n Fhaoilleach 1875. Agus bho Anna Nic Gill-Fhiallain, coitear, Mòinteach an Ìochdair, Uibhist a Deas, 1865.

THUBHAIRT an seanchaidh: Rugadh leanabh,—their cuid an Dùn Bhuirgh, cuid an Dùn Bheagain, cuid an Dùn Tuilm; chan fhios domhsa có aca na có dhiùbh,—ach rugadh leanabh, mar a chuala mis agus mar a thubh-airteadh rium. Cha luaithe rugadh an naoidhean na thànaig a' bhean-shìdh chon am bròinein beag bochd a thogail air falbh leatha dha'n tom. Thànaig i bog balbh, mìn modhail, gun fios gun fàth gun faireachadh, chon an leanaban beag brònach a thogail leatha air fras-mhullach a guaille dhachaigh dha'n bhrugh am bonn a' choire am bràigh a' ghlinne. Sheas a' bheudag bheag bhòidheach air clàr comhnard an taighe, a' coimhead an leinibh bhig bhrònaich an clàr lom an aodainn. Sheas, agus thubhairt i rithe fhéin, 'Aon mhògaran bòidheach an t-saoghail! Aon àilleagan gràdhach na cruinne! Aon suainean lurach an domhain!'—ars ise rithe fhéin na trì turais an déidh a chéile, mar nach bitheadh i idir sgìth dh'a mholadh.

Bha an leanaban anabarrach bòidheach gun teagamh, agus sheas a' bheudag bheag bhrònach a' coimhead air gun char gun charachadh gun chomas gluasaid, mar am bigein bochd an sùil na nathrach-nimhe,—sheas, a luaidh, air clàr comhnard an taighe, gun chur gun charachadh, a' coimhead an leanabain bhig bhrònaich anns a' chreadhaill. Shin i mach an sin a dà làmhaig bhig bhòidhich fo dhà achlais mhìn mhogaich an t-suainein anns a' chreadhaill chon a thogail leatha dha'n tom. Shin, a luaidh; dé cha deacha leatha. Cha do chuir i glid na gluasad fo'n chadalan mhìn mhogach anns a' chreadhaill, na gaoth eadar ùir is adhar dheth. 'Hó hó! 'd é tha seo?' ars ise, mar nach cordadh an gnothach rithe. Ach mar gun tuigeadh cailig (?) ise 'd é bha cearr, chuir i smutag as a sròineig bhig bhòidhich mar gun cuireadh an earbag bheag bhòidheach ann an comhnadh na coill. Cha do chord an gnothach rithe, agus cha do chord na ri té dhe seòrsa riamh. 'D é, a ghràidhein nan daoine, ach a bha lias air bonn-dubh an naoidhein!

'D é an rud atà ann an lias, Anna?' arsa mise. 'Tà, ghràidhein, le cead duibhse, seun, sian, ball-seirc, ball-dobhrain air cneas aon. Neach air bith air am bheil sin, cha toir sidheach na saoghlach a mach e r'a bheò mhaireann.'

Bha a' bhadhbhag bheag bhòidheach air a cur mun cuart, agus gaol a cridhe aice air an luran àlainn anns a' chreadhaill a thogail dhachaigh

## THE FAIRY WOMAN

Reciter: Anne Campbell, crofter, Stiligaray, South Uist (Anne Macinnes, wife of Angus Campbell), 29th January 1875. Also from Ann Maclellan, cottar, Mòinteach an Ìochdair, South Uist, 1865.

THE reciter said: A child was born—some say in Dunborve, some in Dunvegan, some in Duntulm; I do not know which,—but a child was born, as I heard and as I was told. No sooner was the child born than the fairy woman came to lift the poor little creature away with her to the fairy mound. She came softly and silently, gently and politely, unheralded unseen and unnoticed, to lift the poor little infant away with her on the top of her shoulder home to the fairy mansion at the foot of the corrie in the brae of the glen. The beautiful mischievous little woman stood on the level floor, looking at the tiny little child straight in the face. Thus she stood and said to herself, ‘The prettiest little child in the world! The most lovable darling on earth! The most engaging little sleepy one in the world!’—said she thrice, one after the other, as if she were not at all tired of praising him.

The child was very pretty indeed and the mischievous little woman stood looking at him who could not turn or stir or move, like the poor little bird under the glance of the serpent,—she stood there, my dear, on the level floor of the house, without stirring or moving, looking at the tiny little child in the cradle. She then stretched out her tiny beautiful hands under the soft chubby arms of the infant in the cradle to lift him away with her to the fairy mound. She did, my dear; but she did not succeed. She could not stir or move the soft chubby sleeping one in the cradle, she could not raise so much as to let air pass between him and the ground. ‘Ho ho! what is this?’ said she, as if the matter did not please her. But as if she understood what was wrong she sniffed the air with her little shapely nose like a beautiful little roe in the fastness of the wood. The matter did not please her, nor did it ever please any of her kind. What, dearest of men, but there was a *lias* on the sole of the infant’s foot!

‘What sort of thing is a *lias*, Anne?’ said I. ‘With your leave, my dear, it is a charm, a beauty-spot, a mole on a person’s skin. Anyone who has that, neither fairy nor mortal will ever win him as long as he lives.’

The beautiful little fairy was troubled, for it was her heart’s desire to lift the fine pretty child in the cradle away home with her to the fairy

leatha dha'n tom. Dé cha deachaidh leatha, agus is math nach deachaidh. Ach ge nach d'éirich leatha agus ge nach deachaidh aic air a thogail, thigeadh a' bheudag bheag bhòidheach dhachaigh gach tarrainn agus gach dalacha (darachadh) tràth a choimhead a' chadalain chaoimh an comhnadh na creadhaill. Thigeadh, agus sheinneadh òrain agus crònain tàlaidh agus cagair ann an cluaiseig bhig mhìn a' mhògarain bhòidhich leanabain. Thigeadh a' bheudag bheag bhòidheach agus sheasadh ann a siod, a' cur nam both dhith le ròlaistean ceòil bu bhinne nòs na smeòrach nan geug. Cha chuala cluas, mar a dubhairteadh rium, ceòl bu bhinne na ceòl brònaig bòidhich nan tom. Cha chuala cluas,—cha chuala riamh san domhan shaoghal.

Anne Campbell is a bright beautiful woman and a sweet singer, alert and intelligent, full of old-world songs and ballads and of old-world tales and traditions, as were her father and mother. Thubhairt i fhéin, 'Chuala mi an tàladh agus am beulachas seo dar a bha mi 'nam loireig bhig bhrònaich air glùn mo mhàthar,—sith Chriosda ghràdhaich dh'a h-anam gaoil!'—She herself said, 'I heard this lullaby and this tradition when I was a poor little toddling child on the knee of my mother,—the peace of

IS tu mo leanabh ainmeil,  
 Hì rì hìll lium [Hì rì il hì lium na  
 As deise théid fo armachd,  
 Chall ó ro hì hó

Thig biodag ort, thig targaid,  
 Hì rì hìll lium  
 Sgiath bhreac nam balla dearga.  
 Chall ó ro hì hó

Mo leanabh cubhraidh curralach, [cùirtealach  
 Hì rì hìll lium  
 Dh'a bheil an dùthchas uirsgealach,  
 [Dh'an dùth bhith 'n cùirt nan curaidhean  
 Chall ó ro hì hó

mound. But she did not succeed and it is well that she did not. But though she did not succeed and did not manage to lift him, the beautiful mischievous little woman would come to the house at every season every other day to gaze at the fair little sleeping one in the shelter of the cradle. She would come and sing songs and lullabies in the tiny soft ear of the beautiful little child. The beautiful mischievous little woman would come and stand there declaiming musical rigmaroles of sweeter modes than the mavis of the branches. Ear never heard, as I have been told, sweeter music than the music of the beautiful little creature from the fairy mound. Ear never heard, never in the world.

loving Christ be to her beloved soul!' Her mother's songs and stories, like those of all Highland mothers, were about hosts and fairies, birds and beasts, seals and fishes, and about what all these said to one another before the sins of man rendered them speechless. As Anne Campbell told these stories and sang these songs, it was easy to understand the fascination they exercised over the minds of old and young.

THOU art my famous child,  
 Hi ri hill lium  
 Most dexterous under arms,  
 Chall o ro hi ho

Well do dirk and targe become thee,  
 Hi ri hill lium  
 And speckled shield with red bosses.  
 Chall o ro hi ho

My fragrant starry child, [courtly  
 Hi ri hill lium  
 Heir to a famous heritage,  
 [Whose due it is to be in the heroes' court  
 Chall o ro hi ho

Dìridh tu na h-uchdanan, [munaidhean  
 Hì rì hìll lium  
 Bheir thu sgothaich thugainne.  
 Chall ó ro hì hó

Siol feachd nan laoch thu,  
 Hìll hì hìll lium  
 Siol feachd nam fraoch thu,  
 Chall ó ro hì hó

Siol feachd na gaoith thu,  
 Hìll hì hìll lium  
 Siol feachd mo ghaoil thu.  
 Chall ó ro hì hó

Siol Cholla, siol Chuinn thu,  
 Hìll hì hìll lium  
 Siol nan troide trom \* thu, [troda  
 Chall ó ro hì hó

Siol Charmaig, siol Chuill thu, [Ghuill  
 Hìll hì hìll lium  
 Siol bu docha leinn thu.  
 Chall ó ro hì hó

Mo bhrù a rug,  
 Hì lì rì lium  
 Mo ghlùn a thog,  
 Chall hó ro hì hó

Mo chìoch a shlug,  
 Hì lì hìll lium  
 Mo bhile bhog. [bhial  
 Chall ho hó ro hì hó

\* leg. na troide trùim.

Thou wilt climb the slopes,  
 Hi ri hill lium  
 Thou wilt bring us booty (?).  
 Chall o ro hi ho

Thou art the seed of the warrior host,  
 Hill hi hill lium  
 Thou art the seed of the furious host,  
 Chall o ro hi ho

Thou art the seed of the tempestuous host,  
 Hill hi hill lium  
 Thou art the seed of my beloved host.  
 Chall o ro hi ho

Thou art the seed of Colla, the seed of Conn,  
 Hill hi hill lium  
 The seed of weighty strife art thou,  
 Chall o ro hi ho

Thou art the seed of Cormac, the seed of Coll, [Goll  
 Hill hi hill lium  
 A seed we held dearer.  
 Chall o ro hi ho

My womb gave thee birth,  
 Hi li ri lium  
 My knee reared thee,  
 Chall ho ro hi ho

My breast suckled thee,  
 Hi li hill lium  
 My tender scion.  
 Chall ho ho ro hi ho

Suainean beag suim thu,  
 Suainean beag fuinn thu,  
 Suainean beag luim thu! [cruinn  
 Mur bhi an lias a bh'air a chois, [sian, tuar  
 Gun togamaid leinn thu!

Rùn mo chridhe,  
 Sùgh mo chéille!  
 Cùl nam fuarbheann  
 Fhuair mi fhéin thu! [Bhuain thu deur dhomh

Carefree little sleeper,  
Tranquil little sleeper,  
Helpless little sleeper, [Chubby  
    Were it not for the mole on thy foot  
We would lift thee away with us!

My heart's darling,  
    My sense's delight!  
It was behind the cold hills  
    That I found thee! [Thou madest my tears flow





SÌDHICHEAN  
FAIRIES



## COMHRADH EADAR BEAN-SHÌDH AGUS BEAN SHAOGHALTA

THESE dialogues between the fairy woman and the world woman are on the recognised lines of intercourse between fairies and mortals. No advantage in smartness of language is to be permitted to the fairy; if it be, she is able to exercise her will on the mortal with whom she contends—'Give her an inch, and she will take an ell.' One is reminded of Lochiel and the witch who tried to exhaust him in walking with her 'Ceum ann,

THÀNAIG ban-sìdheach far an robh ban-saoghlach ag altram leinibh bhig. Sheas i gu dudarra donn dàna fa chomhair an leinibh, a' sgurrachadh agus a' maideachadh air ann an clàr lom an aodainn. Mu dheireadh thubhairt i:

'Is briagh do leanabh, a bhean,' ars a' bhean-shìdh.

'Is briagh gach saoghlach sona,' ars a' bhanaltra.

'Is uaine do leanabh, a bhean,' ars a' bhean-shìdh.

'Is uain am fiar ach fàsaidh e,' ars a' bhanaltra.

'Is geal cneasach do leanabh, a bhean,' ars a' bhean-shìdh.

'Is geal cneasach sneachd nam beann,' ars a' bhanaltra.

'Is bòidheach buidhe cùl do leinibh, a bhean,' ars a' bhean-shìdh.

'Is bòidheach buidhe an dìthean machrach,' ars a' bhanaltra.

'Is geur guineach do theanga, a bhean,' ars a' bhean-shìdh.

'Cha do chuireadh ri clach-liamhraidh riamh i,' ars a' bhanaltra.

Dar a chunnaig a' bhan-shìdheach nach leigeadh a' bhan-shaoghlach eang leatha thall no bhos, shìos no shuas, thug i cùl a cinn rithe agus dh'fhalbh i air a' chas-cheum, agus cha tànaig i fhéin no duine dh'a daoine riamh tuilleadh air an fhonn. O cha tànaig, a ghràidhein, riamh tuilleadh air an astar, a dubh no a geal riamh riamh tuilleadh.

Is e creutairean beaga bòidheach dàna dàicheil le trusgain uaine a tha anns na sìdhich. Ma gheobh iad eang gabhaidh iad inneol (?; inneach?) agus chan 'eil cur riutha. Tha creutairean beaga brònach tric gu leòr dàna dàicheil duineil. Saoil mas e an dreathan-donn fhéin e, nach tig e gu donn dàna agus nach seas e air làr na h-uinneig gon an toir mise dha biadh. Dar a gheobh e am biadh nì e bheic dhomh agus falbhaidh e, agus chan fhaic mi a dhubh no gheal tuilleadh gon an tig an t-acras air a rithist, no gon tig droch aimsir agus cruadhas agus gainne bidhidh, agus gon toir e aonan no dhà dh'a mhuirichinn bhig lionar thugam air tòir bidhidh. Am bheil an creutair beag brònach ach bho thràth gu tràth, bho'n làimh gus a' bhial, bho latha gu latha, mar tha mi fhìn? Is adhbhar smaointeachaidh obair a' chruthachaidh agus mathas Dhé nan dùl dh'a chreutairean, beag agus mór, agus mise! mise! O mis air a h-aon!

## DIALOGUE BETWEEN A FAIRY WOMAN AND A MORTAL WOMAN

Eóghain!' 'Step on, Ewen!' (ii. 142 f. ; J. Gregorson Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight*, 198-201). The contest of wit between Michael Scott and the witch-nag that carried him on his journey to Rome is another case in point; his errand was successful because his wit in reply silenced the witch.\* The least advantage allowed to the witch is fatal.

A FAIRY woman came to where a mortal woman was nursing a little child. She stood stubbornly, stiffly, starkly, before the child, peering and staring at it straight in the face. At last she said :

'Comely is thy child, woman,' quoth the fairy woman.

'Comely is every lucky worldling,' said the nurse.

'Green is thy child, woman,' said the fairy woman.

'Green is the grass, but it grows,' said the nurse.

'White of skin is thy child, woman,' said the fairy woman.

'White of skin is the snow of the peaks,' said the nurse.

'Pretty and golden are thy child's locks, woman,' said the fairy woman.

'Pretty and golden is the daisy of the plain,' said the nurse.

'Sharp and cutting is thy tongue, woman,' said the fairy woman.

'It was never set to a grindstone,' said the nurse.

When the fairy woman saw that the mortal woman would not yield her an inch here nor there, down nor up, she turned the back of her head to her and departed by the way she had come, and never did herself nor any of her people come again upon that ground. Oh she came not, beloved, ever again that way, the black nor the white of her ever ever again.

The fairies are little lovely daring dignified creatures, with green raiment. If they get an inch they will take an ell, and there is no gainsaying them. Poor little creatures are often daring and dignified and manful. Think of the wren himself, how brash and bold he comes and sits on the window-sill until I give him food! When he gets the food he makes his bob to me and is off, and I see neither the black nor the white of him until he grows hungry again, or until bad weather and hard times and scarcity of food come, and he brings one or two of his numerous little family to me in search of food. The poor little creature lives but from hour to hour, from hand to mouth, from day to day, as I do myself. It is matter for thought, the work of creation and the goodness of the great God of the elements to His creatures, great and small; and I! I! I am one of them!

\* J. Gregorson Campbell, *Superstitions of the Scottish Highlands*, 85, 296; *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition*, i. 46-53.

## A' BHEAN-SHÌDH AGUS AN LEANABH

THÀNAIG a' bhean-shìdh a staigh dha'n taigh, agus rug i air an leanabh anns a' chreadhail mar gum bu leatha fhéin e, agus thòisich i ri thàladh agus ri altram agus ri gabhail ciùil dha.



E dì thu! de dì thu!

Mo leanabh beag bìth thu!

De duibhe! de duibhe!

Mo leanabh beag buidhe!

Gura lurach do chomhradh!

Mo leanabh beag buidhe,

'S tu dh'èireadh ad shuidhe

'N am itheadh nan uighean,

'N am gabhail na gruithim—

Gura mise bhiodh deònach!

Gun nighinn do léine

Cho gil ri gath-gréine,

Ri sneachdan an t-sléibhe,

'S nam faighinn dha m' réir thu,

'S mi fhéin a bhiodh deònach!

O 's mi fhuair an ulaidh

Dar fhuair mi an uraidh

'N am trusaidh nan ubhal

Gun robh thu fo chulaidh,—

'S tu m'ultachan bòidheach!'

[uiligean

Chuir a' bhean-shìdh an leanabh anns an doras, agus bha i thì a thoir leatha, agus thubhairt i ri màthair an leinibh, 'Nach dearg do leanabh, a bhean?' 'Is ann o theine mór a thànaig e.' 'Nach glas do leanabh, a bhean?' 'Is glas am fiar is fàsaidh e.' 'Nach trom do leanabh, a bhean?' 'Is trom gach saoghlach torrach.' 'Nach crainnteach do leanabh, a bhean?' 'Tha e mar a chruthaich Dia nan gràs dha, agus bi thusa falbh, a bheadagag gun mhodh, cha tog thu mo leanabh-sa am bliadhna!' 'Bha feum agads air a sin, a bheanag, gun robh na trì freagraidh agad dhomhsa, neo chan fhios san t-saoghal chrainntidh chruaidh 'd é dh'èireadh dhut fhéin agus dha do leanabh,' ars a' bhean-shìdh, agus i falbh dhachaigh dha'n tom.

## THE FAIRY WOMAN AND THE CHILD

THE fairy woman came into the house, and she seized the child in the cradle as though he were her own, and she began to lull him and nurse him and sing a melody to him.

'DE di thou! de di thou!  
 My quiet little child thou!  
 De duibhe! de duibhe!  
 My gold-haired little child thou!  
 How pretty thy prattle!

My gold-haired little child,  
 'Tis thou wouldst sit straight  
 When eating the eggs,  
 When taking the crowdie—  
 'Tis I would be eager!

Thy shirt I would wash  
 As white as a sunbeam,  
 As the snows of the mountain,  
 And could I get thee for my own,  
 'Tis I would be eager!

Oh 'tis I found the treasure  
 When I found last year,  
 When the apples were gathering,  
 That thou wast fine and plump,—  
 My fair lap-burden thou!

The fairy woman set the child in the door, and she was fain to carry him off, and she said to the child's mother, 'Is not thy child red, woman?' 'He has come from a big fire.' 'Is not thy child green, woman?' 'The grass is green, and it grows.' 'Is not thy child heavy, woman?' 'Every fruitful worldling is heavy.' 'Is not thy child pinched, woman?' 'He is as the God of grace created for him, and be thou going, thou brazen hussy without manners, thou shalt not lift my child this year.' 'Thou hadst need of that, little woman, that thou hadst the three answers for me, or there is no knowing in the hard shrivelling world what would befall thyself and thy child,' said the fairy woman, as she went home to the knoll.

## AN CÙ SÌDH

Seanchaidh: Fionnghal Nic Rath, Camas Luinge, Cinn tSàile.

BHA té a' fuireach anns a' ghleann fhuaraidh fhàsaich seo shuas, agus bhitheadh i a' snìomh dha'n bhean-shìdh. Dar a bheireadh a' bhean dhachaigh an snìomh dha'n bhean-shìdh anns an t-sìdhean, theireadh a' bhean-shìdh, 'Is mór agus is math seo, ach chan 'eil mo chuid uil ann.' Bha am boireannach air a tàmailteachadh, agus cha b'urr i a thuigsinn 'd é a bha a' bhean-shìdh a' ciallachadh—bha i toir gach plucan agus gach caimein a bha i toir as a' chlàimh dhachaigh a chum na mnà-sìdh, agus cha b'urr i thuigsinn 'd é bha dh'a dhith. Char am boireannach far an robh seann duine bha sa bhaile, agus dh'innis i dha a doilgheas. 'Am bheil thu a' sgrìobadh an rioba chuigeil?' ars an duine. Char am boireannach bochd dhachaigh, agus sgrìob i an rioba chuigeil, agus thug i siod dhachaigh a chon na mnà-sìdh. 'Masa dona dh'éireas dhu'sa, guma measa dh'éireas a bhial t'ionnsachaidh!' ars a' bhean-shìdh. Cha tug a' bhean-shìdh sgath obair riamh tuilleadh dha'n bhoireannach. Bhitheadh i 'ga dìoladh glé mhath.

Bhitheadh a' bhean-shìdh a' tighinn air tòir coingheall coire, agus bhitheadh i 'ga fhaighinn cuideachd. Dar a bheireadh am boireannach seachad an coire theireadh i:

'Dlighe coire cnàmh  
'S a thoir slàn gu teach; [taigh  
Dlighe gobha gual  
Gu iarann fuar a bhruich.'

Thigeadh an coire dhachaigh agus rud ann. Là bha sin agus cha tànaig an coire dhachaigh, agus char a' bhean air a thòir. Rug i air a' choire agus thog i leatha e le sraonadh (le aing), agus gun smid a thighinn as a bial. Sin thubhairt a' bhean-shìdh agus i a' coimhead as a deoghaidh:—

'A bhean bhalbh sin 's a bhean bhalbh,  
A thànaig oirnn á tìr nan sgarbh,  
Ghlac i an coire le droch cruth—  
Tuasgail an dul is leig an Garg!' [an Dubh, an Dearg

Rinneadh sin, agus leum an cù an deoghaidh a' bhoireannaich, agus rug e oirre air cùl na coise. Dh'iabh i, agus bha i marbh.

Cf. J. F. Campbell, *West Highland Tales* (2nd ed.), ii. 54-5; J. Gregorson Campbell, *Superstitions of the Scottish Highlands*, 58; *Celtic Review*, v. 155 ff.; *Béaloideas*, xv. 244.

## THE FAIRY DOG

Narrator: Flora MacRae, Camas Luinge, Kintail. 18th August 1903.

THERE was a woman dwelling in this cold desolate glen up yonder who would be spinning for the fairy woman. When the woman took the spinning home to the fairy in the fairy hill, the fairy would say, 'This is much and good, but not all my share is here.' The woman was affronted, and she could not understand what the fairy meant—every wisp and shred that she was getting from the wool she was taking home to the fairy, and she could not understand what was lacking. The woman went to an old man who was in the townland and told him her trouble. 'Art thou scraping the distaff tuft?' said the man. The poor woman went home, and she scraped the distaff tuft, and she took that home to the fairy. 'If ill befall thee, may worse befall the mouth that taught thee!' said the fairy. The fairy never again gave the woman a scrap of work. She used to pay her very well.

The fairy woman used to come seeking the loan of a pot, and she used to get it too. When the woman would hand over the pot she would say:

'A pot deserves a bone  
And to be brought home whole;  
A smith deserves coal  
To heat cold iron.'

The pot would come home with something in it. One day there was when the pot did not come home, and the woman went to seek it. She seized the pot and swept it away (in much displeasure), not a syllable coming from her mouth. Then said the fairy, as she gazed after her:

'Thou dumb woman there and thou dumb woman,  
Who art come to us from the land of the cormorants,  
She seized the pot with her evil claw \*—  
Loose the noose and let slip the Fierce!' [Black, Red

That was done, and the dog leaped after the woman and seized her by the back of the leg. She screamed, and was dead.

\* *cruth* is explained in Father Allan MacDonald's Vocabulary as 'fingertips'; i.e. *crobh*, *crubh*, claw, hand? Cf. *Trans. Gael. Soc. Invs.*, xviii. 176, where the quatrain is said to be a charm for strangury.

Thànaig bean gu taigh ann an Bhàlaidh, agus thubhairt bean-an-taighe rithe, 'Co ast a thànaig thu, bhean?'

'Thàna mi á Bùchain,  
Thàna mi á Bàchain,  
Thàna mi á Gabasdal,  
A Loch an Eòin Bhig,  
A Loch an Eòin Mhóir,  
'S as an Roinn Mhór  
An Bhàlaidh.'

[Bhàlacuidh

'Thàna mi a shireadh na preis gu feòil a bhruich,' ars ise gu stàtail. Cha robh fios aig bean-an-taighe 'd é theireadh i rithe, agus chaidh i far an robh seann duine bha sa bhaile, agus dh'innis i mar a bha, agus gun robh i tighinn a chuile latha air tòir a' choire agus 'ga thoir leatha. 'Abair thusa seo ris a' bhean bheag, dar a thig i rithist:

Dlighe coire cnàmh,  
'S a thoir slàn gu taigh;  
Dlighe gobha gual  
Gu iarann fuar a bhruich.'

Dhì-chuimhnich am boireannach seo aon oidhche, agus cha tànaig an coire dhachaigh riamh tuillidh as an t-sidhean. Dh'fhalbh a' bhan-sidheach agus an coire 'na làimh agus am fonn as a beul, agus is e an rann a bha aice:

'Am bun a' chruidh cha chaithris mi,  
Am bun a' chruidh cha bhì mi;  
Am bun a' chruidh cha chaithris mi,  
Is m'aighear anns an t-sidhean.

Ged a sguir mi 'n bhuachailleachd,  
Tha bruillean beag air m'inntinn,  
Gum falbh mo leannan suairce bhuam,  
'S mo leanban uaine 's t-sidhean.' \*

\* Cf. 120 *supra*.

A woman came to a house in Vallay, and the goodwife said to her,  
 ‘Whence art thou come, woman?’

‘I am come from Bùchain,  
 I am come from Bächain,  
 I am come from Gabasdal,  
 From the Loch of the Little Bird,  
 From the Loch of the Big Bird,  
 And from the Big Division  
 In Vallay.’

‘I am come to ask for the cauldron to boil meat,’ said she with a dignified air. The goodwife knew not what to say to her, and she went to an old man who was in the townland, and she told him how it was, and how she was coming every day for the pot and taking it away with her. ‘Say thou this to the little woman when she comes again :

A pot deserves a bone,  
 And to be brought home whole ;  
 A smith deserves coal  
 To heat cold iron.’

The woman forgot this one night, and the pot never again came home from the fairy hill. The fairy woman went off with the pot in her hand and the lilt from her mouth, and this is the verse that she had :

‘Over the cattle I will not watch,  
 Over the cattle I will not be ;  
 Over the cattle I will not watch,  
 For my joy is in the fairy hill.

Though I have given up the herding,  
 My mind is somewhat troubled,  
 That my gentle lover will leave me,  
 And my pale child in the fairy hill.’

## CÙ SLUAGHAICH



OIRE 's misde mar tha! [measa  
 Moire 's misde mar tha!  
 Moire 's misde mar tha,  
 'S nach tig thu gu bràth am chòir!

Cù deidearra donn, [dudarra  
 Cù seidearra sionn, [sodarra  
 Cù foidearra fionn, [fudarra  
 Siubhal bheann, siubhal bheann!

Cù breac ruadh, [reachd  
 Cù seachd suain, [dearc  
 Cù torc chluas, [corc  
 Cù mac Truaigh,  
 Siubhal bheann, siubhal bheann!

The 'cù sidh,' fairy dog, followed horses from Loch Gearraidh nan Capall to Baile Mhàrtainn, thinking that he had the 'each-uisge,' water-

## HOST HOUND

“ O ALAS for me now !  
 O alas for me now !  
 O alas for me now,  
 Since thou shalt come to me never !

Brown frolicking hound,  
 Fairy fawning hound,  
 White frisking hound,  
 Ranging bens, ranging bens !

Hound dappled, red,  
 Hound of seven slumbers,  
 Hound of notched ears,  
 Hound son of ‘Truagh,’  
 Ranging bens, ranging bens !

[‘Sad’

horse. ‘Bha iad a’ toir nan uraball as na h-eich.’—The fairy dogs pulled the tails out of the horses.

## A' BHEAN-SHÌDH

BHA té ann am Muile agus bha sùil aice ris na fir dhachaigh dh'am biadh, ach cha robh na bonnach bruich agus cha robh am biadh deis. Bha i 'na drip agus 'na draip, 'na ruith thall agus 'na deann a bhos, agus gun fhios aice fo chruaidh fhortan 'd é theireadh no dhèanadh i ach gum bitheadh i air a riarachadh. Bha an gràn gun ghradanadh, a' mhin gun mheileadh, agus na bonnach gun fhuine agus am bidhe gun bhruch. 'O a Rìgh shaoghail agus fheartaich, a bhìdh 's aodaich nan daoine, nach robh agam a nis té dha'n fheadhainn bheaga gus mo làmh a leasachadh agus mo chas a ghreasachadh!' ars am boireannach. Chuir i dhith a cleòca blighin agus brathan, agus char i mach as an taigh, agus thug i sùil thuaice agus uaipe feuch có chitheadh no chomharradh i.

Thànaig té dha'n fheadhainn bheaga dhachaigh, agus chàirich i oirre fhéin còt agus cleòc agus comhdach na té chaidh a mach. Rug i air sguab, agus ghradain i an gràn, agus dh'fhasgain i e. Shuidh i air bhrà agus sgaoil i a dà chois uimpe, agus thug i sùil thar a gualainn a siod agus sùil thar a gualainn a seo, agus leòm gu leòr oirre fhéin. Thòisich a' bhleith, agus thòisich a' bhruidhinn agus an ceòl.



EIL a' bhrà, a chailleachag,

Beil a' bhrà, a chailleachag,

Beil a' bhrà, a chailleachag,

'S gheobh thu fhéin am bonnachan.

Còta mu Tholl-a-Ghunna,\*

Cleòca mu Tholl-a-Ghunna,

Comhdach mu Tholl-a-Ghunna,—

Mo dhunaidh air an duaicheig! [na  
duaichean

'S ioma fear tha thall am Muile,

'S ioma fear a th'ann nach duine,

'S ioma fear a th'ann gun uigheam

Leis an duilich duaicheag.

\* Cf. J. Gregorson Campbell, *Superstitions of the Scottish Highlands*, 189.

## THE FAIRY WOMAN

THERE was a woman in Mull, and she was expecting the men home for their food, but the bannocks were not baked and the food was not ready. She was hurried and flurried, running thither and scurrying hither, and she not knowing under hard fortune what she should say or do, but determined that her purpose should be served. The grain was not yet parched, the meal not ground, and the bannocks not baked and the food not cooked. 'O King of the world and of power, O food and clothing of men, if I had now a woman of the little folk to better my hand and to hasten my foot!' said the woman. She put off the cloak she wore at milking and querning, and she ran out of the house, and she cast a glance to and fro to see whom she might see or take note of.

There came home a woman of the little folk, and put on herself the coat and cloak and clothing of her who went out. She seized a sheaf, and she parched the grain, and winnowed it. She sat at the quern and she spread her two legs about it, and she cast a glance over her shoulder to that side and a glance over her shoulder to this, and plenty was the conceit of her. The grinding began, and began the talk and the music.

GRIND the quern, little wife,  
 Grind the quern, little wife,  
 Grind the quern, little wife,  
 And thyself shalt get the little bannock.

Coat upon Toll-a-Ghunna,  
 Cloak upon Toll-a-Ghunna,  
 Clothing upon Toll-a-Ghunna,—  
 Mischief take the ugly one!            [ugly women]

There's many a man across in Mull,  
 Many a man who is no man,  
 There's many a man that's lacking gear  
 Who is sorry for an ugly one.

Còta mu Tholl-a-Ghunna,  
 Cleòca mu Tholl-a-Ghunna,  
 Comhdach mu Tholl-a-Ghunna,—  
 Mo dhunaidh air an duaicheig!

Mo mhollachd air an ùlar chàthain,  
 Mo mhollachd air an ursna chàthain,  
 Seachd mollachd air Toll-a-Ghunna  
 Ma bheir i tuilleadh brathan!

Còta mu Tholl-a-Ghunna,  
 Cleòca mu Tholl-a-Ghunna,  
 Comhdach mu Tholl-a-Ghunna,—  
 Mo dhunaidh air an duaicheig!

Coat upon Toll-a-Ghunna,  
Cloak upon Toll-a-Ghunna,  
Clothing upon Toll-a-Ghunna,—  
    Mischief take the ugly one!

My curse upon the winnowing-floor,  
My curse upon the winnowing-post,  
Seven curses upon Toll-a-Ghunna  
    If she make more grinding!

Coat upon Toll-a-Ghunna,  
Cloak upon Toll-a-Ghunna,  
Clothing upon Toll-a-Ghunna,—  
    Mischief take the ugly one!

## ÒRA DÌONA



RÌOSD eadar mi 's na sìdh,  
Mo mhighean air gach muinntir  
dhiubh!

An diugh an Aon air muir 's air tìr—  
M'earbs, a Rìgh, nach cluinn iad mi.

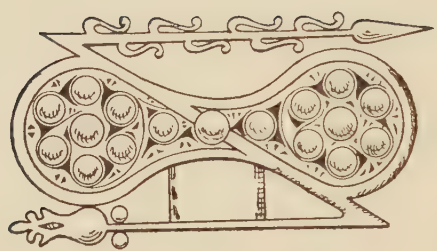
Cf. Henderson, *Survivals in Belief among the Celts*, 18; J. Gregorson Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Scottish Highlands*, 299.

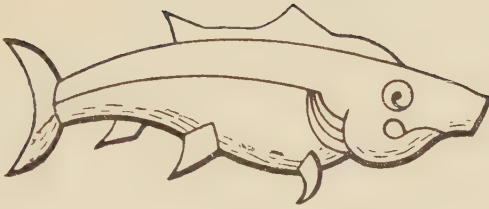
## PRAYER FOR PROTECTION

CHRIST be between me and the fairies,  
My frown upon each tribe of  
them!

This day is Friday on sea and on land—

My trust, O King, that they shall not hear me.





BODACH  
FAIRY CHANGELING



## BODACH

BHA boireannach am bràigh Beinne Bhadhla agus rug i leanabh mór briagh. Ach bha a' bhan-ghlùin 'na cabhaig, agus dhì-chuimhnich i an coisreadh a chur air an leanabh, agus bha na mnathan-caithris cadalach agus dhearmaid iad na logais a losgadh agus na cuirnean a chur. Agus is e thànaig as a sin gun tànaig na sidhich a nuas, agus gun do thog iad leotha an leanabh air fras-mhullach an guailibh, agus a mach toll a' bhigire ghabh iad, a' fàgail bodach an àit an leinibh.

Cha robh an leanabh a dh'fhàgadh a' fàs aon chuid ri latha no dà chuid ri oidhche, ach neo 'r thaing mar robh e ag itheadh agus ag òl agus a' cur a dhìth gun stad gun fhois gun chlos gun tàmh. Is e bha ag itheadh agus ag òl, a' caitheadh agus a' cur a dhìth! ach ma bha, 'd é dha sin?—cha robh fàs no cinneas air, cha robh aon ghearradh fhéin. Cha robh fios aig a' bhoireannach bhochd 'd é theireadh no 'd é dhèanadh i—cha robh càil 'n t-saoghal. A chuile té riamh a thigeadh dhachaigh, agus mur bu mhór cha bu bheag, theireadh i ris a' bhoireannach bhochd, 'Nach beag do leanaban, a bhean!' 'Nach glas do leanaban, a bhean!' 'Nach gorm do leanaban, a bhean!' 'Nach odhar do leanaban, a bhean!' 'Nach e am bròn do leanaban, a bhean!'—aon duan duaichnidh na dunach aig a chuile té riamh, mar ghuth nam faoileag aig an sgarraig. Bha a' bhean bhochd air a sàrachadh leo, gun lusachadh gun lasachadh, agus i gun fhios aice 'd é theireadh no dhèanadh i. Ach smaointich i aice fhéin gun d'reaghadh i far an robh seann duine bha anns a' bhaile, agus gun cuireadh i comhairle ris agus gum faigheadh i comhairle bhuaidh.

Rinn i sin, agus dh'innis i dha'n duine mu dheighinn an leinibh, a chuile dùird, a chuile car, mar a bha e ag itheadh agus ag òl gun stad gun chlos gun fhois gun tàmh, agus 'na dhéidh sin agus 'na dhéidh gun fhàs gun chinneas air a cheann no air a chasan, air a chom no air a cholann; dar reaghadh i dha'n tobar bhitheadh a' mhiosair bhainne air a h-òl, dar a reaghadh i dha'n chuidhe bhitheadh a' bhreacag air a h-itheadh, dar a reaghadh i dha'n t-sliabh bhitheadh an ciosan ime dhìth, agus gun chreutair beò air lom an làir ach an leanabh anns a' chreadhaill.

Dh'éisd an seann duine còir gu mìn modhail ri briathran beòil a' bhoireannaich, agus thubhairt e rithe, 'Is e bodach tha agad, a bhean bhochd. Rinn a' bhan-ghlùin dìochuimhn agus na mnathan-faire dearmad, agus thànaig na sidhich, agus thog iad leotha do leanabh, agus dh'fhàg iad bodach 'na àite. Reach thusa dhachaigh, a bhrònag bhochd, agus na leig dad ort. Theirig dha'n tràigh agus thoir dhachaigh tonn mhath mhaoraich dhe gach seòrsa, agus an déidh am maorach a shlaopadh, sgaoil na sligean air clàr lom an làir mun cuart clach an teinntein. Fàg

## FAIRY CHANGELING

THERE was a woman in the upland of Benbecula who bore a fine big child. But the midwife was in a hurry, and she forgot to put the consecration on the child, and the watching-women were sleepy, and neglected to burn the old leather shoes and to place the little drops (in baptism upon the child's forehead). And the outcome of that was that the fairies came down and lifted the child with them high on their shoulders, and out they went by way of the hen-hole, leaving an ancient changeling in the child's place.

The child that was left was thriving neither by day nor yet by night, for all that he was eating and drinking and putting away without stop or stay, without rest or pause. It is he who was eating and drinking, swallowing up and putting away, but if he was, what of that?—there was neither thriving nor growth on him, not an atom. The poor woman knew not what to say or do—she knew not in the world. Every last woman who would come to the house, and if they were not many they were not few, would say to the poor woman, 'Is not thy child small, goodwife!' 'Is not thy child wan, goodwife!' 'Is not thy child green, goodwife!' 'Is not thy child fallow, goodwife!' 'Is not thy child the sorrow, goodwife!'—the same dismal drone of disaster from every last one of them, like the scream of the seagulls at the skate. The poor woman was vexed to distraction with them, without relief or remission, and she not knowing what she should say or do. But she thought to herself that she would go to an old man who was in the townland, and lay her problem before him, and get counsel from him.

She did that, and she told the man about the child, every word, every turn, how he was eating and drinking without stop or stay, without rest or pause, and for all that and despite it had neither thriving nor growth on his head nor his legs, on his form nor his frame—how that when she would go to the well the milk-pitcher would be drained, when she would go to the cattle-fold the cake would be eaten, when she would go to the moor the butter-basket would be made away with, and not a living creature on the bare flat of the floor save the child in the cradle.

The kindly old man listened mildly, mannerly, to the woman's words, and he said to her, 'It is an ancient changeling thou hast, poor woman. The midwife has been forgetful and the watching-women neglectful, and the fairies have come and lifted thy child away with them, and have left an ancient changeling in his place. Go thou home, poor unhappy little woman, and do not betray thyself in any way. Go to the strand and bring home a good supply of shellfish of every sort, and after parboiling the shellfish, scatter the shells on the bare flat of the floor around the

am bodach sa chreadhaill, agus tàrr a mach mar gum bitheadh tu a' dol dha'n tobar air tòir ballan bùrn. Na rach fad air falbh, agus cum sùil agus cluas cùl na comhla, feuch 'd é chì no chluinneas tu. An deoghaidh sin théid thu dha'n tràigh mhaoraich, agus cuiridh tu am bodach 'na shìneadh am bial na tuinne, agus cuiridh tu crònan cadail 'na chluais g'a chur a chadal. Ris a' chiad tonn lionaidh a bhuaileas e bheir am bodach ràn, ach gabh calla ris, agus na leig dad ort gum fac thu nì no gun cual thu gabadh. Dar a ruigeas tu dhachaigh, bithidh do mhoganach bog bòidheach fhéin air do chinn anns a' chreadhaill.'

Chaidh am boireannach dhachaigh, agus rinn i mar a dh'iarr an seann duine, agus cha d'fhàg i dad air dìochuimhne. Chaidh a' behan dha'n tràigh agus thug i dhachaigh làn chléibh mhóir do mhaor dhe gach seòrsa. Shlaop a' bhean am maorach, agus sgaoil agus sgap i na sligean air làr lom an ùlair mun cuart an teinntein mar a dh'iarr an seann duine. 'Tha mis,' ars am boireannach, 'a' dol dha'n tobar, agus feuch, a luaidh, an dèan thus an cadal caomh gun an till mi.' 'Nì, a mham,' ars am bodach, agus e a' dùnadh a dhà shùileag bheag bhrònach anns a' chadal chaomh. Chaidh ise a mach agus cuman 'na dorn, agus dhùin i comhla an dorais 'na deoghaidh. Chuir i sùil agus cluas ri toll na cnaige, feuch 'd é chitheadh no chluinneadh i.

Co loma luath agus a thug ise a cùla ris a' chomhla san dol a mach, thug am bodach cruinnleum as a' chreadhaill, agus càit an do stad e ach a measg nan sligean air an làr. 'Óbh! óbh! óbh! mo chasan air an gearradh agus air am milleadh aig na sligean!' ars am bodach, agus e a' bruidhinn ris fhéin. 'Óbh! óbh! tha mi beò bho rugadh mi agus chan fhaca mi a leithid seo a shligean roimhe riamh sa chruthachadh—chan fhaca, chan fhaca mi fhìn, a Mhoire mhèinn nan gràs! Sligean thall agus sligean a bhos, sligean shìos agus sligean shuas, anns gach àit agus ionad an cuir mi mo chas!' Thug am bodach sùil thuige agus thuaidh, shìos agus shuas, thall agus a bhos, air na sligean. Thòisich e ri rann a dhèanamh air na sligean.

hearth-stone. Leave the changeling in the cradle, and go out as if thou wert going to the well for a stoup of water. Go not far away, and keep an eye and an ear behind the door to see what thou shalt see or hear. After that, thou shalt go to the shellfish strand, and place the changeling stretched out at the margin of the wave, and put a slumber-croon in his ear to send him to sleep. When the first wave of the rising tide strikes him the changeling will wail, but take nothing to do with him and do not betray thyself at all, that thou hast seen aught or heard a cheep. When thou reachest home thou shalt find thine own soft pretty youngster there in the cradle.'

The woman went home, and she did as the old man bade, and she left nothing forgotten. She went to the strand and brought home the fill of a big creel of shellfish of every sort. She parboiled the shellfish and spread and scattered the shells on the bare flat of the floor around the hearth as the old man bade. Then, 'I am going to the well,' said the woman, 'and see thou, my dear, if thou canst have a pleasant sleep until I come back.' 'I will, mamma,' said the changeling, and he closing his two poor little eyes in the pleasant sleep. She went out with a pitcher in her hand, and she closed the door behind her. She put eye and ear to the peg-hole in the door to see what she should see or hear.

Instantly, as soon as she turned her back to the door on going out, the changeling took a standing leap out of the cradle, and where did he land but among the shells on the floor. 'Ov! ov! ov! my feet cut and injured with the shells!' said the changeling, speaking to himself. 'Ov! ov! I have been living since I was born and never before in the creation have I seen such shells—never never have I seen them, O merciful Mary of grace! Shells here and shells yonder, shells up and shells down, everywhere I put my foot!' The changeling gazed to and fro, up and down, here and yonder, at the shells. He began to make a rime about them.

## CRÒNAN NAN SLIGEAN



RÛBAG, strùbag, eisir,  
Mùsgag, bruiteag, bàirneag,  
Fiasgag, miasag, creachag—  
Och mo chreach, mo shàiltean!

Giomag, gibneag, partag,  
Cartag 's deargag-tràghad,  
Faighdeag, maighdeag, copag—  
Och mo lot, mo shàiltean!

Faochag, ciabag, giùrag  
A chiùrr mi chon mo chnàmhan,  
Is coinein-mara ciucach—  
A liutha bior am shàiltean!

Siolag seang is mursgag, [mursgag  
Breallag, busdubh, bàirneag—' [busdag

Ach cha d'fhuair e idir cothrom crìche a chur air crònan nan sligean dar a chual e turtar a' bhoireannaich a' tighinn dachaigh le cuman uisge. Siod am bodach 'na chruaidh chruinnleum dha'n chreadhaill, agus dhùin e a shùileaga beaga brònach ann an clò cadail.

'Am fac thus, a ghràidhein, có dh'ith an t-im no có chnuas am bonnach no có dh'òl am bainne an diugh?' 'Chan fhaca mis, a mham—bha mi am shuain chadail anns a' chreadhaill gun do dhùisg thu fhéin a' tighinn a staigh mi leis a' bhùrn.' 'Bha, a lurain, is tu bha anns a' chadal—anns a' chadal shuain!'

'Tha mullach reobhairt ann an diugh, agus thig thusa liomsa dha'n tràigh mhaoraich fiach am faigh mise slaopan dha na cearcan, agus gheobh thus uighean eireagan uamsa,' ars am boireannach ris a' bhodach-shìdh. 'Thig, a mham,' ars am bodach gu toileach deònach.

## THE CROON OF THE SHELLS

'BROWN crab, cockle, oyster,  
 Mussel, "bruiteag," limpet,  
 Bearded mussel, "miasag," scallop—  
 Alas my reaving, my heels!

Lobster, squid (?), green crab,  
 Red crab, sea-shore flea,  
 Cowrie (?), "maighdeag," little limpet—  
 Alas my wounding, my heels!

Whelk, whorl, barnacle  
 Have pained me to my bones,  
 And the crafty (?) sea urchin—  
 So many a prickle in my heels!

Slender sand-eel and razor-fish,  
 Hose-fish, black-snout, limpet—'

But he had got no opportunity to put a finish to the croon of the shells when he heard the noise of the woman's footsteps as she came home with a pitcher of water. That sent the changeling in a vigorous standing leap back to the cradle, and he closed his poor little eyes in a drowse of sleep.

'Didst thou see, my darling, who ate the butter or who devoured the bannock or who drank the milk to-day?' 'I saw nothing, mamma—I was fast asleep in the cradle until thyself didst wake me coming in with the water.' 'Thou wast, my treasure, it is thou who wast asleep—sound asleep!'

'The height of the spring tide is to-day, and thou shalt come with me to the strand of shellfish to see if I can get a boiling for the hens, and thou shalt get pullets' eggs from me,' said the woman to the fairy changeling. 'Yes, I will come, mamma,' said the changeling, pleased and willing.

Chuir am boireannach am bodach-sìdh anns a' chliabh bheag, agus chuir i an iris thar a cinn. Thog i e air fras-mhullach a guaillibh agus dh'fhalbh i dha'n tràigh mhaoraich le ceum eutrom uallach, agus am bodach-sìdh anns a' chliabh bheag air a muin. Chuir i an laprachan a sìos socair sèimh am bial na tuinne ri caol nan tonn, agus thubhairt i ris, 'Caidil thus, a lurain, caidil, a luaidh nan daoine, anns a' phlaide mhìn bhlàth an cois na tuinne, agus seinnim-sa an crònan lurach dhu'sa agus togam-sa dhut am fonn fhad 's a bhitheas mi ris a' mhaorach.' 'Caidilidh, a mham,' ars an laprachan, agus dhùin e shùileaga beaga biodach anns a' chadal chaomh chiùin agus thog e strann throm chadail.

The woman placed the fairy changeling in the small creel and put the sling over her head. She lifted him high on her shoulders and departed for the strand of shellfish with a step light and jaunty, and the fairy changeling in the small creel on her back. She laid the pigmy sprite quietly and gently down at the margin of the wave by the shallow ripples, and said to him, 'Sleep thou, my pretty treasure, sleep, beloved of men, in the smooth soft plaid beside the wave, and I will sing thee the pretty croon and raise the melody for thee while I am working at the shellfish.' 'I will sleep, mamma,' said the pigmy sprite, and he closed his little tiny eyes in a pleasant placid slumber and gave forth a heavy sleepy snore.

## AN CRÒNAN MAORAICH



AIDIL thusa taobh na tuinne,  
 Caidil thusa, ghaoilein,  
 Caidil thusa taobh na tuinne,  
 Gun an sguir mi 'n mhaorach.

Bheirinn bainne ghobhar dhut,  
 Is bheirinn bainne chaorach,  
 Is bheirinn bainne chapall dhut  
 'S thu bhith dha m' ghean, a  
 ghaoilein! [ghein, ghin

Bheirinn beòir is brailis dhut,  
 Is eòrna geal nan raonan,  
 Is bheirinn fìon na cailis dhut  
 'S thu bhith dha m' ghean, a ghaoilein!

Bheirinn sgoich is sguithim dhut, [sgru- ?  
 Is uighean buidhe adh'rcag,  
 Is bheirinn curral foghair dhut  
 'S thu bhith dha m' ghean, a ghaoilein!

Bheirinn maoisean \* milis dhut,  
 Braonan, blonag 's blaoghan,  
 Is bheirinn brisgeal earraich dhut  
 'S thu bhith dha m' ghean, a ghaoilein!

Bheirinn àis is uilim dhut,  
 Càise 's gruithim 's caochan,  
 Is bheirinn an càl ceannann dhut  
 'S thu bhith dha m' ghean, a ghaoilein!

Bheirinn lite garbhain dhut,  
 Is mil is bainne braonach, [fraochaich  
 Is bheirinn làgan innich dhut  
 'S thu bhith dha m' ghean, a ghaoilein!'

\* ? leg. *maoislinn*, a sweet and palatable preparation of unripe grain.

## THE CROON OF THE SHELLFISH GATHERING

'SLEEP thou by the wave's side,  
 Sleep thou, my love,  
 Sleep thou by the wave's side,  
 Till I cease from the shellfish  
 gathering.

Goats' milk I'd give thee,  
 And sheep's milk I'd give thee,  
 And milk of mares I'd give thee,  
 My love, wert thou mine own!

Beer and wort I'd give thee,  
 And the white barley of the plains,  
 And wine of the chalice I'd give thee,  
 My love, wert thou mine own!

The plucks and "sguithim" I'd give thee,  
 And the lapwings' yellow eggs,  
 And the autumn carrot I'd give thee,  
 My love, wert thou mine own!

Sweet maize (?) I'd give thee,  
 Earthnut, lard and whiting (?),  
 And the spring tansy I'd give thee,  
 My love, wert thou mine own!

Milk and feast-fare I'd give thee,  
 Cheese and crowdie and mild whisky (?),  
 And kail dressed with butter I'd give thee,  
 My love, wert thou mine own!

Rough-meal porridge I'd give thee,  
 And honey and foaming milk,  
 And goodly sowens I'd give thee,  
 My love, wert thou mine own!

Gur h-e bu cheal-dùsgaidh dha'n t-seòltaiche a' chiad tonn lionaidh a thill bualadh fodha agus fos a chionn am bial na tuinne. Leig am bodach ràn a' bhàis aird a chinn, agus thug e luimleum 'na sheasamh-bonn air clàr lom na tràigh. Cha do leig am boireannach dad oirre gum faca no gun cual i e, na urad agus gun do thog i a ceann, ach a' cumail air adhart a' chrònain chadail agus a' togail a' mhaoir. Ach am prioba nan sùl bha na sgrìollaich aig a' bhodach mar a' chrann-fhaoileag aig siol sgadain. Thog na sifirean leotha am bodach air bharrabas dha'n t-sidhean.

Shìn am boireannach aiste dhachaigh, a' chas bu deireannaiche a' chas bu toiseannaiche a' dol anns a' cheum. Fhuair a' bhochdag bhrònach a leanabh beag bòidheach fhéin air a cinn anns a' chreadhaill. Fhuaradh pears-eaglais, agus bhaisteadh an leanabh, agus cha tànaig sìodh na sifire na laprachan riamh tuillidh a chur dragh air.

BHITHEADH na sìdhich a' togail cloinne gun bhaisteadh agus a' toir air falbh mnathan gun ghlanadh agus a' fàgail bhodach agus chailleach 'nan àite.

Bha boireannach ann am Borrnis Uarach aig an robh leanabh gun fhàs gun fhuil. Bhitheadh an leanabh anns a' chreadhaill aig a' bhoireannach dar a bhitheadh i fhéin ag obair feadh an taighe. Dar a reaghadh i mach bhitheadh am bainne air òl agus an taigh frille-fraille agus troimh a chéile. Ged a bheireadh i an saoghal bhidhe agus dhibhe dha, cha robh e cur nial air a ghnùis na saill air a chom—cha robh e fàs gearradh a dh'aon rud a bha i toir dha agus a' dèanamh ris, agus cha robh fios aice 'd é dhèanadh na 'd é theireadh i ris a' chùis. Is e ma tà a rinn i, chaidh i far an robh seann duine a bha anns a' bhaile, agus dh'innis i dha mar a bha chùis, agus dh'ìarr i comhairle air.

'Is e bodach a tha agad anns a' chreadhaill, a ghalghad,' ars an duine. 'A Mhoire 's a Mhic, saoil an e?' ars am boireannach. 'O a bhidh is aodaich, 'd é nì mise ris a nis?' ars ise. 'Thoir dhachaigh,' as an seann duine, 'meall shligean as an tràigh mhaoraich, agus sgaoil iad thall agus a bhos feadh an ùlair. Reach fhéin ann an sgairte-falaich far nach faicear thu, feuch 'd é chì thu na chluinn thu.'

Chaidh am boireannach a mach mar gum bitheadh i a' falbh air tòir cliabh mòine. Dhìrich i suas barra-bhalla an taighe, agus sheall i sìos am farlas feuch 'd é an t-àdh a chitheadh i. Dh'éirich a sin a' chruthaill bhodaich mhóir as a' chreadhaill, agus ghabh e a null, agus dh'fhosgail e a' chiste, agus dh'òl e am bainne. 'Ùbh! ùbh! ùbh!' os esan, 'tha mo chasan air an gearradh agus mo shealladh air a chur dha m' dhìth. Tha mi corr agus ciad bliadhna a' tàmh san tolman, agus chan fhaca mi riamh a leithid seo a thogail!' 'Togail!' os a' bhean, 'togail do dhunaidh ost!' os an té bha shuas.

The first thing the trickster knew on awaking was the first wave of the rising tide driving in below and above him at the margin of the wave. The changeling uttered the wail of death at the pitch of his voice, and he made a lightning leap to his feet upon the bare flat of the strand. The woman did not betray at all that she had seen or heard him, nor so much as raised her head, but kept on singing her slumber-croon and lifting the shellfish. But in the twinkling of an eye the changeling's screechings were like the seagull at herring fry. The fairies lifted the changeling on the tops of their palms away with them to the fairy hill.

The woman sped swiftly home, and the foot that was hindmost was the foot that was foremost as she traversed the path. The poor pitiable woman found her own fair little child there before her in the cradle. A cleric was found, and the child was baptised, and neither fairy nor elf nor pigmy sprite ever came again to trouble him.

THE fairies would be lifting children unbaptised and carrying off women unclesed and leaving old men and old women in their place.

There was a woman in Upper Bornish who had a child unthriving and bloodless. The woman would have the child in the cradle while she herself was working about the house. When she would go out, she would find the milk drunk and the house higgledy-piggledy and in disorder. Though she would give him the world of food and of drink, it was not putting bloom on his face nor fat on his frame—he was not growing an atom for all that she was giving him and doing for him, and she knew not what to do or to say about the business. So this is what she did, she went to an old man who was in the townland, and she told him how things were, and she sought advice of him.

'It is a changeling thou hast in the cradle, my poor woman,' said the man. 'O Mary and O Son, thinkest thou it is?' said the woman. 'O food and clothing, what shall I do about him now?' said she. 'Take home,' said the old man, 'a good pile of shells from the strand of shellfish, and scatter them hither and thither over the floor. Go thyself into a hiding-place where thou shalt not be observed, and see what thou shalt see or hear.'

The woman went out as though she were going for a creel of peats. She climbed up on the top of the wall of the house, and she gazed down the smoke-hole to see what in fortune she should see. The big shambling changeling then arose from the cradle, and he went across and opened the chest and drank the milk. 'Uv! uv! uv!' said he, 'my feet are cut and my sight destroyed. Over a hundred years have I been living in the knoll, and never have I seen such a lifting\* as this!' 'Lifting!' said the woman, 'lifting of thy mischief be upon thee!' said she who was above.

\* i.e. rearing, treatment of a child?

Thill a' chruthaill mhór bhodaich dha'n chreadhaill cho clis agus a bheireadh a chasan e, agus dhùin e a shùilean, a' toir a chreidsinn air an t-saoghal gun robh e 'na shuain chadail. Thànaig am boireannach dhachaigh mar gum bitheadh i air tighinn le cliabh mòine. 'An d' rinn thu norra cadail bho dh'fhàg mis thu, a ghràidhein?' ars a' bhean. 'Rinn, a mham, chaidil mi fad na h-ùine bho dh'fhalbh thu.' 'Am faca na an d'fhairich thu duine feadh an taighe an diugh?' 'Chan fhaca agus cha chuala mise drannadh an diugh,' ars an leanabh. 'An tà, ghaoil, théid thusa liomasa dha'n tràigh shrùban a màireach comhla riumsa,' os ise. 'Théid,' os esan, 'agus gheobh mi faighdeag.' 'Gheobh, agus bàirneag bhog mhiath. Dunaidh, dunaidh air an duine a mharbhadh a mhultan crìon sgàrdach, agus thus, a bhàirneag bhog mhiath, 'ga do sgairleadh làn saille ris a' chreig!'

Moch madainn a màireach thruistealaich am boireannach oirre fhéin gu falbh dha'n tràigh shìolag. Chuir i an leanabh anns a' chliabh bheag air a muin agus an cròcan 'na làimh r'a taobh, agus dh'fhalbh i, agus a mach a ghabh i a sìos an tràigh. Bha e faisg air muir-tràghaidh, agus chuir i dhith an cliabh beag am bial na tuinne agus thòisich i ri tàladh an leinibh. Agus gum b'e seo an tàladh a sheinn i dha:

'Caidil thusa taobh na tuinne,  
Caidil thusa, ghaoilein,  
Caidil thusa taobh na tuinne,  
Gun an sguir mi 'n mhaorach.

Taobh na tuinne, taobh na tuinne,  
Taobh na tuinne daonnan,  
Taobh na tuinne 's fuaim a' bhuinte  
'N cuas mo chuilein ghaolaich.

Ged a reaghainn fhìn dha'n tobar,  
Cha bu deoch dha m' ghaoilean;  
Bhleognainn dha mo bhaidean ghobhar  
'S dh'eadradhainn mo chaoirich.'

The big shambling changeling went back to the cradle as smartly as his feet would take him, and he shut his eyes, making the world believe that he was fast asleep. The woman came home as though she were come with a creel of peats. 'Hast thou had a wink of sleep since I left thee, my dear?' said the woman. 'Yes, mamma, I have slept all the time since thou wentest.' 'Hast thou seen or noticed anyone about the house to-day?' 'I have seen not and heard not a whisper to-day,' said the child. 'Well, my love, thou shalt go along with me to-morrow to the strand of cockles,' said she. 'Yes,' he said, 'and I shall get a cowrie (?).' 'Thou shalt, and a soft fat limpet. Mischief, mischief on the man who would kill his craggy skittering wether while thou, thou soft fat limpet, art bursting full of fatness on the rock!'

Early next morning the woman girt herself up to go to the strand of sand-eels. She put the child in the little creel on her back, and she took the crook in her hand by her side, and she departed, and out she went down the strand. It was nearly low water, and she put off the little creel and set it on the margin of the wave, and she began to lull the child. And this was the lullaby that she sang to him:

    'Sleep thou by the wave's side,  
         Sleep thou, my darling,  
 Sleep thou by the wave's side  
         Till I cease from the shellfish gathering.

By the wave's side, by the wave's side,  
     By the wave's side ever,  
 By the wave's side, with the billow's sound  
     In the ear of my little pup beloved.

Though I myself should go to the well,  
     That were no drink for my darling;  
 I would milk for him my herd of goats,  
     And I would gather my sheep to the milking.'

## AM BODACH

FHUARADH a' chruthaill mhór bhodaich 'na chruilig chruinn chrotaich ann an creadhaill an leinibh. Thogadh aiste e agus thilgeadh a mach taobh a muigh doras an taighe, agus dhùindeadh a' chomhla. 'Nach cearr a nis nach robh m'ord agus m'uinnean agam!' ars am bodach beag dar a fhuair e bonn a dhà chois bhig fodha air an talamh tan [tar?].\* Thugadh sùil anns a' chreadhaill agus fhuaradh fo cheann a' bhodaich bhig dà chlachaig bhig bhìodaich bhrònaich. Thogadh siod agus thilgeadh m'a chasan iad, agus dh'iarradh air falbh agus a chasan a thoir as, neo gun éireadh na bu mhiosa dha. 'Óbh! óbh!' ars esan, 'mo chasan air an dochann aig na daoine dona!'—dar a thilgeadh na clachagan beaga brònach m'a chasagan beaga loma luimineach gun bhròg gun osan, gun chuaran gun mhogan. Ach thog e am fonn 'na bheul, agus thug e suas am bruthach agus a null a' bheinn gu Coire nan Siodh. Ghabh e gu suilbhearra seòlta suas am mullach, agus a dhuan 'na bheul agus a shéisd 'na shruth, agus m' fhallainn fhéin, a Mhoire nan gràs! is ann aige fhéin a bha an làmh air ceòl!



HUG mi 'n raoir an taigh na brailis,  
 Thug mi 'n raoir gu cridheil grinn,  
 [corrail, cuireil  
 Thug mi 'n raoir an taigh nan tughach,  
 'S bidh mi nochd san tulman shìdh.

Thug iad fìon domh, thug iad bainne,  
 Thug iad marrum agus mìs,  
 Thug iad dhomh na cìre meala,  
 'S thug iad dhomh am bainne cìch.'  
 [cìob

\* ? tur

## THE FAIRY CHANGELING

THE big shambling changeling was found crouching, round and hunched, in the child's cradle. He was lifted thence and thrown outside the door of the house, and the door was shut. 'Now is it not a pity that I have not my hammer and my anvil!' said the little old fairy man when he got the soles of his two little feet beneath him on the solid ground. They looked into the cradle, and under the little old fellow's head they found two poor tiny little pebbles. These they took up and cast about his feet, and he was bidden to make off and take his feet thence or worse would befall him. 'Ov! ov!' said he, 'my feet hurt by the bad people!'—when the poor little pebbles were thrown about his little bare naked feet without shoe or stocking, without buskin or hose. But he raised the melody in his mouth and made up the hillside and across the mountain to the Corry of the Fairies. Merrily, cleverly, he scaled the summit, his lilt in his mouth and his tune flowing free, and by my mantle indeed, O Mary of grace! it is himself that had the hand for music!

'I SPENT last night in the house of ale,  
I spent last night hearty and blithe,

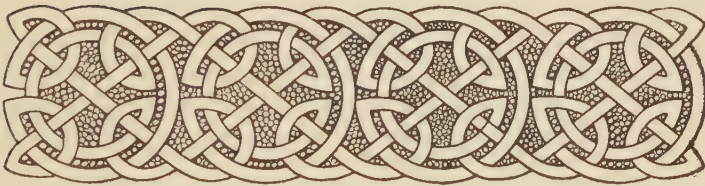
I spent last night in the house of thatch,  
This night I'll be in the fairy knoll.

They gave me wine, they gave me milk,  
They gave me cream and dainty,  
They gave me the combs of honey,  
And they gave me the breast-milk.'





A' BHEAN-NIGHE  
THE WASHING-WOMAN



## AN LUIDEAG

THE 'Luideag,' little shaggy or hairy female one, or 'Luideag bheag a' chliabhain,' the little shaggy sprite of the basket, is one of several names, varying in different districts, for the 'bean-nighidh,' washing-woman, who washed the 'léine' or 'léineag,' shirt, of a man destined to die in battle. In Barra she was also called 'glaistig,' 'glaisteag,' 'glaislig.' While washing

## LUIDEAG NA H-AIBHNE

BHA bantrach ann am Barraidh agus bha i fuireach faisg air an Léig. Dh'fhàgadh aice aona mhac, agus cha d'fhàgadh an corr. Is e Ruairidh a b'ainm dha'n ghille, agus bha e 'na ghille gasda modhail suairce làmhach gnìomhach eireachdail, agus miadhail measail aig a chuile duine.

Bha bantrach eil ann an Tangasdal agus bha dà mhac aice. Is e Ruairidh a b'ainm dha'n dithis mhac, agus bha iad 'nan gillean gasda agus fo dheogh chliù. Is e 'dà Ruairidh' a theirte ri gillean na bantraich ann an Tangasdal. Bha iad fhéin agus Ruairidh, mac bantrach na Léige, daonnan companta comhlanach le chéile.

Bha sgoth mhór a' dol á Barraidh gu ruig Glascho le eòrna agus seagal, le muilthfheoil agus mairtffeoil, le ìm agus càise, tachar na bliadhna. Falbhar dà Ruairidh Thangasdail agus Ruairidh na Léige a Ghlascho air an sgothaidh leis an tachar aca fhéin. Rànaig an sgoth Bharrach Cluaidh, agus chreic a chuile fear a chuid mar a b'fhearr a b'urra agus a b'aithne dha, agus chaidh leotha gu math.

Bha bantrach na Léige mach moch madainn ann an gorm chamhanaich an latha, a' sealltainn an deoghaidh na spréidhe, agus chual i miolaran beag blodach brònach mar gum bitheadh aig cuilean beag blodach brònach coin a' caoi a mhàthair, agus plubail mar gum bitheadh am pollaran 'ga ligheadh fhéin san lòn; ach cha robh i léirsinn sian. Thug i suil thuice agus uaithe, shìos agus shuas, thall agus a bhos, agus faicear dealbh beag brònach boireannaich shìos ann am bial-àth na h-Aibhne Bhàin. Cò bha seo ach gum b'e Luideag na h-Aibhne 'na seasamh air

Cf. ii. 227; J. Gregorson Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Scottish Highlands*, 208; *Superstitions of the Scottish Highlands*, 42; 'A Washer at the Ford,' *Aberystwyth Studies*, iv. 105 ff.

## THE 'LUIDEAG'

the shroud she wailed piteously the death-song. When spoken to she never replied, and could only be approached by stealth. Her appearance always portended death or disaster (*sgiorradh*).

Lochan nam Breac Dubh,\* the lakelet of the black trout, between Sleat and Broadford in Skye, is among the places where she had been seen and heard.

## 'LUIDEAG' OF THE RIVER

THERE was a widow in Barra and she was living near Léig. She was left with one son and no more. The lad's name was Roderick, and he was a kind, polite, affable, capable, hard-working lad, liked and respected by everybody.

There was another widow in Tangasdal and she had two sons. Roderick was the name of the two sons, and they were fine lads and of good repute. The sons of the widow in Tangasdal were called the 'two Rodericks.' They and Roderick, the son of the widow in Léig, were constant companions.

There was a large skiff going from Barra to Glasgow with barley and rye, mutton and beef, butter and cheese, the produce of the year. The two Rodericks and Roderick of Léig went to Glasgow on the skiff with their own produce. The Barra skiff reached Clyde and each one sold his own goods as he best knew how, and they did well.

The widow of Léig was out early one morning in the grey dawning of the day attending to the cattle, and she heard a tiny wee whimpering as of a poor tiny wee pup crying for its mother, and a splashing as of the dunlin washing itself in the pool; but she could not see anything. She looked to her and from her, up and down, hither and yon, and she spied a tiny wee figure of a woman down at the ford of Abhainn Bhàn (White River). Who was this but Luideag of the River standing on a grey stone

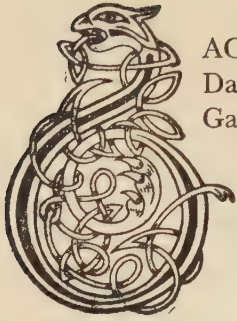
\* *Lochan Dubh na Bric* on the map; *Lochan nan dubh bhreac* (Gregorson Campbell).

cloich ghlais an oir an uisge, a' nigheadh léine agus a' seinn tuirim. Bha an truaghan cho dripeil a' luistreadh (luidrich) na léine agus a' tuirim na bha [ri] dhol a dhìth agus nach robh for no far aig a' chreutair air nì no air nithean mun cuart di. Thànaig a' bhantrach gu bog balbh air a cùl agus rug i air an Luideig 'na glaic.

(Bha colas aois air an Luideig, ach ma bha, có dhèanadh a mach a h-aois no idir a h-aimsir? Bha a gnùis air dubhadh agus a bian air cartadh mar dhrise na Calainn, agus i cho sean ri ceò nam beann.)

at the edge of the water, washing a shirt and singing a lament. The poor creature was so busy lustring the shirt and lamenting all those who were to perish that she was quite oblivious of anything around her. The widow came softly and silently behind her and seized the Luideag in her arms.

(The Luideag had the appearance of age, but if so, who could make out her age or her period? Her visage had become swarthy and her skin tanned like brambles at New Year, and she was as old as the mountain mist.)



AOBACH ort, a chailleach bheag!  
 Daobach ort, a chailleach bheag!  
 Gaobach ort, a chailleach bheag! [Gaosach?  
 'D é thug an taobh-s thu?'

'A nigheadh léine dà Ruairidh  
 Is léine Ruairidh do mhic;  
 Is lìonar faic anns na cuantan,  
 Ge nach tuam gach tuam fo lic.' [uaigh

'N i 'n léin a chuir mi,  
 'S an léin a bhuain mi?  
 An léin a chlodh mi, [chlobh MS.  
 'S an léin a bhuail mi?  
 An léin a bhog mi,  
 'S an léin a chruaidh mi?  
 An léin a sheicil mi,  
 'S an léin a ch'èr mi  
 Gu mìn cuanna?  
 An léin a shniamh mi,  
 'S an léin a dh'fhigh mi?  
 An léin a bhuac mi,  
 'S an léin a nigh mi?  
 An léin a ghrias mi,  
 'S an léin a dh'fhuaigh mi?  
 An léin a ghil mi  
 Air fiar a' chluainein?  
 Ochan! ochan!  
 Mo chor 's mo chuaradh!  
 'N léin a choistrig mi  
 Le m' dheura gualach  
 A dh'Aona Mhac Dé  
 Dha m'aon uanan!

‘CONFOUND thee, little carlin!  
 . . . thee, little carlin!  
 . . . thee, little carlin!  
 What has brought thee here?’

‘To wash the shirt of the two Rodericks  
 And the shirt of Roderick thy son;  
 There is many a lair in the seas,  
 Though every cave beneath sea-ledge is not a tomb.’

‘Is that the linen (shirt) I planted,  
 And the linen I plucked?  
 The linen I shrank,  
 And the linen I beetled?  
 The linen I softened,  
 And the linen I hardened?  
 The linen I heckled,  
 And the linen I combed,  
 Soft and elegant?  
 The linen I spun,  
 And the linen I wove?  
 The linen I steeped,  
 And the linen I washed?  
 The linen I decked,  
 And the linen I sewed?  
 The linen I bleached  
 On the grass of the green?  
 Ochone! ochone!  
 My plight and my torment!  
 The linen I consecrated  
 With my scalding tears  
 To the One Son of God  
 For my only lambkin!

O bheanag  
 Nan trì iongnadh,  
 Is iongnadh liom fhéin  
 'D é chuir dh'an chuart thu!'

'Bha feum agads air a sin,  
 A mhoidireag bhochd!  
 Bàthar dà Ruairidh,  
 Ach tàrraidh t'uanan-sa tìr.'

Dar a bha na daoine tilleadh dachaigh á Cluaidh thuit ceò oira agus bhàrc neòil nan speur, cathadh-mara agus cathadh-làir agus bàrcadh shian, agus rinneadh connalach dhe'n sgothaidh Bharraich air a' Charn Cholach. Mhilleadh a chuile duine a bha am broinn na sgothaidh ach Ruairidh mac bantrach na Léige. Thug esan a bheatha leis gu tìr; ach cha robh an corr ann.

Bha nighean tuathanaich ann an Rubha Mhàil an Cola agus bha i mach moch madainn an deoghaidh na stoirme, air tòir caorach a h-athar. Chuir e oillt is uamhas air an nighinn a bhith faicinn bruanlaich eathair feadh nan creag agus ann an tiùrr an làin, agus colaman dhaoine. Chunn-aig i aona ghille òg a measg sgora nan creag agus a làmhan agus a chasan agus a cheann a' sileadh fala, ach mar gum bitheadh an deò talmhaidh ann fhathast. Chuir an nighean a bial ri bial a' ghille agus a làmh r'a chridhe fiach an robh plog no diog no deò analach ann, agus bha. Thug an nighean dhachaigh an gille air a muin, agus chàirich i e gu socair sèimh air an leabaidh. 'Seo,' ars an nighean r'a h-athair, 'mo mhurrag mhaidne-sa, agus fiach a nis am bi sibh gu math dha.' Agus bha na daoine sin, gu math dha'n ghille, agus ma bha càcha, bha nighean an taighe seachd sonraichte math dha. 'Far am bheil mo chràdh tha mo làmh, far am bheil mo ghràdh tha mo thathaich,' theireadh an nighean dar a bhitheadh i air chall agus nach fhaighte i. Cha robh stad a' dol oirre, ach cur ceirein r'a chreuchdan agus sògh ri goile a' ghille.

Dh'fhàs an gille gu math—is e dh'fhàs gu math—ri linn dha bhith air a thilgeadh air Rubha Mhàil an Cola agus nighean an tuathanaich 'ga fhaotainn gun diog gun deò 'na chom, 'na mhurraig mhara measg nan creag.

Bha an gille nis deònach tighinn dachaigh a Bharraidh a choimhead a mhàthar, fiach 'd é bu chor dhi, agus cha robh fios aig air talamh an t-saoghail 'd é dhèanadh e ris an nighinn a dh'altraim a bheò bho 'n bhàs, no ciamar a bheireadh e leis i, no ciamar idir a dh'fhàgadh e as a dheoghaidh i.

O wifie  
 Of the three marvels,  
 I wonder  
 What has sent thee to the eddying stream!'

'Thou hadst need of that,  
 Poor little woman!  
 The two Rodericks will be drowned,  
 But thy lambkin will make the shore.'

When the men were returning home from Clyde a mist came over them and the clouds of the heavens burst, with spindrift and ground-drift and a driving hurricane, and the Barra skiff was reduced to matchwood on the Cairn of Coll. Every man inside the skiff was lost except Roderick the son of the widow of Léig. He reached the shore still alive, but little more.

There was a farmer's daughter in Rubha Mhàil in Còll and she was out early on the morning after the storm in search of her father's sheep. It filled the girl with dread and terror to see the fragments of the vessel among the rocks and the tidal wrack, and a mingled mass \* of men. She saw one young lad in the clefts of the rocks, his hands, his feet and his head dripping blood, but seeming still to have the vital spark in him. The girl placed her mouth to the lad's mouth and her hand to his heart to see if there was any throb or life or breath in him, and there was. The girl carried the lad home on her back, and she placed him softly and quietly on the bed. 'Here,' said the girl to her father, 'is my morning jetsam, and see now that you treat him well.' And the people did treat the lad well, and if the rest did so the daughter of the house treated him especially well. 'Where my pain is, there is my helping hand, where my love is, there is my resort,' the girl would say when she was missing and could not be found. She never stopped applying plasters to his wounds and providing delicacies for the lad's palate.

The lad grew well—that he did—after having been thrown on Rubha Mhàil in Coll and having been found by the farmer's daughter without life or breath in his body, sea-borne jetsam among the rocks.

The lad now wished to come home to Barra to see his mother, to see how she was, and he did not know on earth what he would do with the girl who had nursed him to life from death, or how he would take her with him, or how he could possibly leave her behind him.

\* *leg. colannan*, bodies?

'Far am bi thusa bithidh mise, agus far am bi do dhachaigh-sa bithidh mo dhachaigh-sa, agus far am bi do dhaoine-sa bithidh mo dhaoine-sa,' ars an nighean, agus dealt nan diar a' ruith le gruaidh. 'O chan fhaod sin a bhith,' ars an gille, 's nach 'eil aig mo mhàthair ach tuirle bheag bhrònach thaighe—bothan beag bochd gun tuar a muigh 's gun taitneas a staigh. Théid mi dhachaigh a Bharraidh bhrònach agus togaidh mi feobhas bothain agus dar a bhios e suas agam thig mi air m'ais agus togaidh mi an lìon.' 'Is math gum foghnadh dhomhsa taobh taighe na té a dh'fhuaigh do léine agus a ghréis t'anart,' ars an nighean. 'O chan urra sin a bhith,' ars an gille, 'chan 'eil annam ach gille bochd, mac bantraich, agus gun a mhaoin aig mo mhàthair ach dà bhó mhaol bhàn agus càraid each agus dà chaiginn do chaora beannach.'—Cha robh a null no a nall ach gum falbhadh nighean an tuathanaich le mac na bantraich do Bharraidh, agus dh'fhalbh i leis.

'Creideadh fir dligheas mnatha  
Ma bhios i glic, 's mur bi chan annas;  
Is ann tha 'n creideadh mar a thùrar [chumar  
Agus rùn Dé mar a dhèanar.'

Rinneadh pòsadh agus banais do Ruairidh, mac bantraich na Léige am Barraidh, agus do nighean tuathanach Rubha Mhàil an Cola. Chuir athair a' bhoireannaich làn sgoth mhóir do chrodh agus do chaoirich agus do mhaoin dhe gach seòrsa dhachaigh do Bharraidh le nighinn. Thog an dìthis teaghlach eireachdail, agus tha an sliochd beò am Barraidh fhathast.

‘Where thou art, there shall I be, and where thy home is, there shall my home be, and where thy people are, there shall my people be,’ said the girl, the dew of tears coursing on her cheek. ‘O that cannot be,’ said the lad, ‘seeing my mother has but a small tumble-down house—a poor little hut, of poor appearance outside and of scant comfort inside. I shall go home to little Barra and I shall build a better hut and when it is finished I shall come back and lift the net.’ ‘Well would suffice me a side of the house of her who sewed thy shirt and embroidered thy linen,’ said the girl. ‘O that cannot be,’ said the lad, ‘I am only a poor lad, the son of a widow, and all the wealth my mother has is two white hummel cows and a pair of horses and two brace of horned sheep.’—There were no two ways about it but that the farmer’s daughter would go with the widow’s son to Barra, and she went with him.

‘To trust a man is a woman’s duty  
 If she is wise, and if not ’tis no novelty;  
 The trust consists in maintaining it  
 And the purpose of God in fulfilling it.’

A wedding and wedding-feast was made for Roderick, the son of the widow of Léig in Barra, and for the daughter of the farmer of Rubha Mhàil in Coll. The woman’s father sent a large skiff full of cattle and sheep and goods of every kind home to Barra with his daughter. The couple reared a fine family and their descendants are living in Barra to this day.

## EÓGHAN A' CHINN BHIG EWEN OF THE LITTLE HEAD

'NIGHEAG,' the washing-nymph, is called 'Nigheag nan Allt,' the washing-nymph of the streams, 'a' Bhean-nighidh,' the wash-woman (ii. 227 ff.), 'Léinteag,' she of the shirts, 'Lòinteag,' she of the lake, 'Cóinteag,' she of the wailing, and by other names. At a stream or at a lake she washed the shirt and wailed the dirge of those doomed to die, seeming always to be absorbed in her task, and always causing anxiety and sorrow to those who heard and saw her.

Eóghan a' Chinn Bhig, Ewen of the Little Head, saw the Nigheag washing. He watched her intently for a time, then crept stealthily nearer and nearer till he came up close behind her. Her breasts troubled her as she stooped to wash, and now and then she would throw them over her shoulder, as African and Indian women do when travelling. Eóghan a' Chinn Bhig set the nipple of Nigheag to his mouth and sucked her breast \*; and having done this he said :

'Thu féin 's mi féin 'nar fianaisean  
Gur mi do chiad dalta, Nigheag.'

'Thou thyself and myself are witnesses  
That I am thy first fosterling, Nigheag.'

'Air làimh t'athar 's do sheanar, Eóghain,  
Is mithich dhut, a mhicein, gura mi.'

'By the hand of thy father and thy grandfather, Eóghan,  
It is timely for thee, little son, that I am.'

Eóghan then asked Nigheag whose shroud she was washing and whose dirge she was wailing. And she answered him :

\* Cf. *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition*, ii. 238-40: Thànaig mi air cùlaibh na cailliche agus rug mi air ceann na ciche le m' bheul, agus thubhairt mi rithe, 'Fhianais ort fhéin, a bhean, gur mise dalta do chùche deise.' *Id.* iii. 50, 269; J. G. McKay, *More West Highland Tales*, i. 501; *Guth na Bliadhna*, ix. 195. Cf. also M. A. O'Brien on the expression 'sugere mammellas,' *Études Celtiques*, iii. 372.

Cf. J. Gregorson Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Scottish Highlands*, 111-19; *An Teachdaire Gaelach*, August 1830; Nicolson, *Gaelic Proverbs*, 410. The early Irish war-goddess, *Morrigan*, is sometimes described as the washer at the ford.

‘Tha mi nigheadh léinteag nam fear geala  
 A théid a mach ’s nach tig a steach gu bràth,  
 Crònán tuirim nam fear ullamh [fuileach  
 A théid a mach ’s a thuiteas anns a’ chàs. [bhlar

Tha mi sluistreadh caimis nam fear geala  
 A théid a mach air thùs a’ mhoch-thràth  
 Air na h-eachaibh crùdhach glasa  
 ’S nach till a steach ’na thràth.’

‘I am washing the shrouds of the fair men  
 Who are going out but in shall never come,  
 The death-dirge of the ready-handed men [warlike  
 Who shall go out and fall in the peril. [field

I am lustring the linen of the fair men  
 Who shall go out in the morning early  
 Upon the well-shod grey steeds  
 And shall not come back in season due.’

‘Am faigh mi a’ bhuidhe-làrach, a Lòinteag?’ ars Eóghan a’ Chinn Bhig. ‘Gheobh, a dhaltain, ma gheobh thu bho do mhnaoi im gun iarraidh le do bhiadh moch madainneach a’ falbh chon a’ chumaisg.’ ‘Agus an tig mi féin beò as a’ chath, a mhuimeag?’ ‘Thig, ma bheannaicheas do bhean dha do dheise chlò.’ Dh’fhalbh Nigheag sa phlubail a null air an loch, ach mun d’fhalbh i, dh’fhàg i mar fhàgail aig Eòghan a’ Chinn Bhig gum bitheadh a thaibhse a’ ruith romh chuideachd romh bhàs nan daoine agus a’ dèanadh stroighlich agus ùbraid os cionn Locha Buidhe a chuile turas a bhàsaicheadh Mac Gill-Eathain. Agus gum bu h-e a b’adhbhar dha sin e bhith ’na bheadagan, a chionn a mhì-mhodhalachd agus gun do chuir e a làmh a chòir a brollaich, nì a tha toirmisgte dhèanadh—fireannach a chur a làmh air cìoch boireannaich.

‘Shall I win victory on the field, Lòinteag?’ said Eóghan of the Little Head. ‘Thou shalt, fosterling, if thou get from thy wife without asking butter with thy breakfast in the early morning, going to the battle.’ ‘And shall I myself come living from the fight, little foster-mother?’ ‘Thou shalt, if thy wife bless thy suit of cloth.’ Nigheag went away plumping (plopping) across the lake, but before she went she left a ban upon Eóghan of the Little Head, that his ghost should be running before his people before the death of the men and making hubbub and confusion above Loch Buie whenever a Maclaìne chief should die. And the reason of that was his being impudent, because of his unmannerliness in putting his hand to her breast, a thing that is forbidden—that a man should put his hand upon the pap of a woman.

Ever since then Eóghan a’ Chinn Bhig is seen and heard prancing and marching above Loch Buie before the death of a Maclaìne of Loch Buie.

Eóghan did not get butter without asking, his wife being notoriously stingy; and at this disappointment he stormed furiously. Hi s' muime-altraim,' fostering nurse, was the first to enter the room when he got into his 'triubhais mharcachd,' riding breeches. As was customary on such an occasion, the woman said :

'Meal is caith an clò,  
A rùin mo chridhe, Eóghain.'

'Enjoy and wear the cloth,  
Thou love of my heart, Eóghan.'

But to his 'muime,' in return for her affectionate good wishes, Eóghan said :

'Nara meal thusa do shlàinte,  
A chailleach ghrànd an diabhail!'

'Mayest thou not enjoy thy health,  
Thou ugly old woman of the devil!'

The 'muime,' however, was not surprised, being more than accustomed to these family traits.

Eóghan was killed in the battle that ensued. 'Chuireadh sgalpan a' chinn dheth anns a' chomhrag.'—'The scalp of his head was struck off in the combat.' According to some, this was how he acquired his nickname; according to others, his head was by nature unusually small.

Innumerable doings and sayings are attributed to Eóghan. When his mother's body was being carried to the place of burial he called out to those who were carrying it, 'Na togaibh cho ard mo mhàthair, eagal i a bhith ag iarraidh a' chleachdaidh.'—'Do not raise my mother so high, lest she should be seeking the habit.' Seventy years ago boys and girls within a radius of seventy miles from Mull dreaded to hear of Eóghan a' Chinn Bhig and of his headless riding and heedless doings—a source of much pleasurable excitement of which the boys and girls of the present day, it is to be feared, are deprived. When sounds of unexplained origin are heard, that is 'Eóghan a' Chinn Bhig a' dèanadh móran othail agus iomairt,' 'Eóghan of the Little Head making much ado and uproar.'



FRITH  
AUGURY



## FRÌTH

A BRIEF account of the 'frìth,' augury,\* has been given already (ii. 158 f.). 'Frìth' is a term of deep and wide meaning, signifying the sight of the unseen, the divination which enables the 'frìtheir,' augur, to see into the unseen. It consists in looking forth towards the sea or towards the land to observe signs of good or ill to man or beast, in health or in sickness, at home or abroad, when the fate or state of the object of the quest is not known by natural means. It was made with much care and prayer and meditation, by men specially endowed and inspired. The gift of 'frìth-eireachd' was inherited; sometimes it appeared in one member of a family but not in others, and sometimes it disappeared from a family to reappear later, like the 'taibhse.' It survived in the Western Isles until within modern times, but is not now practised, though there are those who are said to have inherited the gift but do not use it for fear of the ridicule of their neighbours and the anathema of the ministers. The clergy were much averse to the practice, and stamped it out along with the rest of the

## FRÌTH MHOIRE



IA romham, Dia dheogham,  
Dia tharam, Dia fodham,  
Mis air do shlighe, Dhia,  
Thusa, Dhia, air mo luirg.



Mac Rìgh nan dùl  
Bhith air mo chùl,  
A shùlachadh dhomhsa na bheil uam,  
Le ghràdh mu m' choinneamh,  
Le ghràs nach doillich,  
Le bhàs a chumail am shealladh gach uair.

\* Translated 'augury' in vol. ii. 'Divination' is perhaps better, but 'frìth' is concerned with matters which, though physically unseen, are contemporary.

See Henderson, *Survivals in Belief among the Celts*, 223; William Mackenzie in *Trans. Gael. Soc. Invs.*, xviii. 103-8 (from information largely supplied by Father Allan MacDonald).

## AUGURY

picturesque lore of the people. The descendants of those who practised it are still called 'Clann an Fhrithair,' the children of the seer.

The people's accounts of the manner of divination agree in substance but vary in detail. The 'frìth' is made on the first Monday of the quarter, 'a' chiad Di-Luain de'n ràithe.' It is made in the morning, before sunrise, with fasting, with prayer, with meditation, and in the name of the Virgin Mary—'ag uirnich ri Moire Màthair Chrìosd air sealbhachd na frìthe,' 'praying to Mary the Mother of Christ for the prosperity of the "frìth."' Some say that the 'frithair' has head and feet bare. He says, intones, or sings the 'Fàilte Mhoire,' 'Hail Mary,' and then the proper hymn of the 'frìth,' 'Fàilte na Frìthe' or 'Frìth Mhoire.' Some say that while doing so he walks sunwise around his fire, which is in the middle of the floor of the house, and that he walks thrice around it, once in name of the Father, once in name of the Son, once in name of the Holy Spirit.

## AUGURY OF MARY

God before me, God behind me,  
 God over me, God below me,  
 I on Thy path, O God,  
 Thou, O God, in my steps.\*

The Son of the King of life  
 Be my stay behind me,  
 To give me eyes to see all my quest,  
 With His love before me,  
 With His grace which dims not,  
 Holding His death in my vision ever.

\* Cf. iii. 318 f. For the last line of the second verse an alternative is Nach téid gu siorraidh (gu bràth) an duar (doille, duibhre),' 'Which shall never be darkened.'

He then goes with closed or blindfolded eyes to 'fàd-buinn (fàd-bacain, maide-buinn) an taighe,' the doorstep of the house, and places a hand on each jamb. He appeals again to the unseen all-seeing God to grant him his request. He opens his eyes, and looking steadfastly before him, without moving his eyes or his eyelids to right or to left, upwards or down, he carefully notes all he beholds. According to some, he crosses the threshold and goes sunwise around his house, keeping his gaze always before him as described, and saying or chanting the hymn. From the nature and position of the objects within his sight, he draws his conclusions.

To make the 'frìth' across stream, lake, or sea is difficult, and across a wide or deep sea most difficult. The 'siol sìdh,' race of fays, has more power under water than above water, under the foundations of the sea than under the foundations of the land; and the 'siol sìdh' interferes with the current of man's thoughts and thwarts man's mind and wishes. The sea is more sacred and mysterious than the land, and contains inhibiting spirits not known ashore; therefore, an informant said, the 'frìth' cannot so well be made across the sea 'a thaobh agus gu bheil seòl (seòrsa) sìdhe fo'n mhuir, agus am frìth duilich a leughadh,' 'because there is a sort of fairies under the sea, and the "frìth" is hard to read.'\*

The signs are many and varied, and only some examples of them can be given. They are called 'rathadach' and 'rosadach,' lucky and unlucky, fortunate and mischievous. The sight of a man, especially a brown man, is in itself good; a man coming or looking towards the seer is an excellent sign. A man standing, or a beast rising, indicates that the person who is the object of the quest is casting off the sickness from which he has been suffering. A man going away from the seer is unfortunate. A man lying down indicates sickness or the continuance of sickness in the object of the quest. A beast lying down indicates death. A woman, in particular a fair, brown, or black woman, is fortunate, and a woman standing is very good.† A woman passing or coming is not bad. At the sight of a woman coming, the seer should cross himself. A woman going is unfortunate. A light-red woman is bad, and a deep-red woman very bad. 'Bu chòir do dhuine e fhéin a choisrigheadh nam faiceadh e boireannach le falt ruadh an am dha bhith dèanamh na frithe. Tha falt ruadh rosadach. Is ann ruadh a bha Iùdas a bhrath Ìosa Mac Moire.'—'A man should sanctify himself (cross himself) were he to see a woman with red hair while making the "frìth." Red hair is mischievous. Red was the colour of Judas who betrayed Jesus the Son of Mary,' said a woman reciter. A cock

\* The reason why a 'frìth' is difficult to make looking over the sea is because the sea is constantly in motion with tides and currents (i.e. *sedl-sithe*?), so that objects on it are constantly changing their position. (J. L. Campbell, based on Father Allan MacDonald's Collections, to which this section owes much.)

† The opposite according to Mackenzie.

coming or looking towards the seer is excellent. A bird approaching indicates news.

Among other signs that are 'rathadach,' lucky, are the following:— a bird, a bird on the wing, especially the dove or pigeon, the 'lacha Lochlannach' or widgeon, the 'lacha Mhoire,' duck of Mary or mallard, the 'fosgag Mhoire,' Mary's lark or skylark, the 'Gille Brighde' or oyster-catcher, the first stonechat on grass; a dog; a horse; a foal, calf, or lamb if fronting the seer; a sheep, especially good for beginning a journey. The duck is a specially good sign concerning sailors; if it is seen, they are safe from drowning. The duck is a blessed bird, for it covered our Lord, when the hen exposed Him, under the straw on the knoll when the man was threshing his corn. The 'glaisean,' sparrow, is not lucky but blessed. It is a sign of the death of a child. Three or four of these always come before the death of a child, and return each day until the death, not reappearing after it.

Fowls without a cock, the first stonechat on rock or road, the crow, the grey crow, the hooded crow, the rook, especially if approaching—all these are 'rosadach,' harmful. Still worse is the raven, especially if approaching: it is a sign of death. The lapwing or green plover is a bad sign for Protestants, having betrayed the Covenanters among the hills. The meadow pipit signifies the death of a child; three of these singing near a door are singing the requiem of a child within. The grey or ringed plover singing near a house in the dusk is singing the death-song of a person within. The hen is a very ill sign, for the hen exposed the Lord to His enemies in the heap of corn. The pig, when its back is towards the seer, is an ill sign for all but Campbells; when facing him it is indifferent. The cat is bad, being a sign of witchcraft; but it is not bad for the Clann Chatain (Mackintoshes and Macphersons). The goat is bad, especially for one beginning a journey—he should defer it.

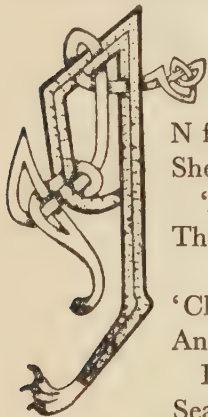
Each fionn fearann,	
Each glas fairge,	
Each ruadh reilig,	
Each donn doilgheas.	[peathann carbad

A white horse (indicates) land,	
A grey horse ocean,	
A bay horse burial-place,	
A brown horse sorrow.	[dappled horse a bier

'Each buidhe,' a dun horse, indicates Clann Choinnich (MacKenzies).

THE writer has a small pebble of red quartz which was used in making the 'frìth' and in other forms of occult science. It is called 'Clach Bheag nan Tursanan,' the little stone of the quests [?]. It belonged to the Macleans of Coll, by whom it was much prized and religiously kept. It came down to them from remote antiquity. A member of the Coll family gave it to Mary MacInnes, cottar, Taigh a' Gheàrraidh, North Uist, in gratitude for service she had rendered, and she gave it to me. It was used in the 'frìth' for discovering the body of Donald Maclean of Coll when he was drowned in the Sound of Ulva.

Donald Maclean was engaged to be married to one of the two daughters of Sir Allan Maclean of Innis Choinnich. He was on his way to Innis Choinnich, and with him in the boat were several friends, including an



## FRÌTH

N fhrìth rinn Moire mhìn dh'a Mac, [am frìth  
Sheall an Rìoghainn shìos 'romh glac;  
'Am fac thu lias air Rìgh nan dùl?' [leus, ròs  
Thuirt an Rìoghainn ùr gum fac.

'Chì mi Crìosda, ciabh nan cleachd,  
Ann an Teampall Rìgh nam feachd,  
Deasbad ri na doctairean gnù,  
Sealan mun do dhùin an ceart.'

## FRÌTH

AN fhrìth a rinn Brìghid dh'a Dalt,  
Rinn i pìob an ìre glac:  
'Chì mi Dalta taobh an tobair,  
A' teagasg pobaill gu beachd.

Chuir mi an fhrìth chon an tobair,  
'S gum b'e sin an obair cheart,  
Rìgh nan rìgh a' teagasg pobaill, [todhar \*  
Chì mi Crìosda shìos gu beachd.'

\* todhar: Cf. *Songs of John MacCodrum*, line 206.

English gentleman and Maclean of ——. The latter quarrelled with Donald Maclean about the lady to whom he was engaged. The boat, much overladen, was upset and sank under them. Only one man escaped; he climbed to the top of the mast, which was above water. Maclaine of Loch Buie demanded that he should come down and give place to his betters. 'Bha thu fada gu leòr os mo chionn anns an t-saoghal seo,—bithidh sinn cothrom anns an t-saoghal thall.'—'You have been long enough over me in this world,—we shall be even in the next,' was the answer. The death of Donald Maclean of Coll caused regret throughout the country, for he was known through Dr. Johnson and Boswell. He greatly endeared himself to all who knew him and very specially so to his own people of Coll.

## AUGURY

THE augury mild Mary made for her Son,  
 The Queen-maiden gazed downward through her palm;  
 'Sawest thou glimpse of the King of life?'  
 The fair Queen-maiden said that she saw.

'I see Christ, of curling locks,  
 In the Temple of the King of hosts,  
 Disputing with the frowning doctors,  
 A while before the court closed.'

## AUGURY

THE augury Brigit made for her Foster-son,  
 She made a pipe within her palms:  
 'I see the Foster-son by the well's side,  
 Teaching the people assuredly.

I set the augury towards the well,  
 And truly that was righteous work,  
 The King of Kings teaching the people, [preparing  
 Yonder see I Christ assuredly.'

## FRÌTH

THE 'frith,' augury, was known among the people by various names, such as 'frìth Mhoire,' augury of Mary; 'frìth an teampaill,' augury of the temple; 'frìth Bhrìghde,' augury of Brigit; 'frìth an tobair,' augury of the well.

When Christ was not to be found Mary made an augury to discover Him. 'Rinn Moire fleasg d'a glaic agus sheall i troimhe seo agus chunnaig i Crìosda anns an teampall a' deasbad ris na dotairean.'—'Mary made a tube of her palms and looked through this and saw Christ in the temple disputing with the doctors.' Then Mary and Joseph went to the temple and there found Christ as Mary had foreseen.

Mary and Brigit were loving friends. It was the husband of Brigit who brought Jesus the water to wash the feet of His disciples. When Christ was again not to be found Mary asked Brigit to make an augury for His discovery, and Brigit made the augury as Mary asked. She made a tube of her hands as Mary had done and looking through the tube saw Christ sitting at a well. Brigit and her husband went to the well and there found Christ sitting as Brigit had seen Him.

A MAN in Lochs, Lewis, went to Australia 'air tòir an fhortain,' in search of fortune. He was to send home for his wife and three children as soon as he could command means for the purpose. A year passed, two years, three years, and still no news or message came from the man. Then the wife went to a certain woman. The woman asked how long it was since the man left. She then went into a trance and was to all appearance dead and was oblivious of all around her. She opened her eyes and said, 'Tha do dhuine 'na leithid seo do dh'àite agus chan ann far an do shaoil thusa. Tha e slàn fallain ach cha do chinnich leis agus cha do sgrìobh e thugad, ach sgrìobhaidh e thugad a nis agus gun dàil.'—'Thy husband is in such a place and not where thou didst fancy. He is safe and sound but has not prospered and has not written to thee, but he will write to thee now and without delay.'

An ceann trì mìosan an déidh sin thànaig litir bho'n duine anns an dubhairt e r'a mhnaoi, 'An deach thusa far an robh Màiri Nèill air a leithid seo a latha agus air a leithid seo a dh'uir? Bhuail ormsa mar nach do bhuail riamh roimhe orm agus bha mi ris a' bhàs fad fichead mìonaid na h-uarach. Cha robh dùil aig duine gum bithinn beò. Chunna mi Màiri Nèill ma mo choinneamh a chearta cho corparra agus a chunna

mi thusa riamh, agus bhruidhinn i rium . . . Cha deachaidh liomsa anns an dùthaich seo nas mutha na chaidh le iomadh fear eile dha m' sheòrsa.'

Three months after that a letter came from the man in which he said to his wife, 'Didst thou go to Mary daughter of Neil on such a day and at such an hour? I was stricken as I was never stricken before and was like to die for full twenty minutes. No one expected I should live. I saw Mary daughter of Neil before me in the flesh as completely as ever I saw thee, and she spoke to me. . . . I have not prospered in this country more than has many another man of my kind.'

My informant, — Maclean, Ord, Ross, on 21st August 1909, is an educated and highly respected man; he is convinced of the truth of what he told me.

## FRÌTH

Bho Iain Mac Rùiridh, croitear, Tolorum, Beinne Bhadhla.

BHA fear ann am Baile Mhanaich, am Beinne Bhadhla, ris an canaidhte Donnchadh Mac Aonghuis, ach is e gheibheadh e Donnchadh mac Ailein, agus na bu trice mac Ailein. Bha an duine 'na dhuine ainmeil a thaobh frìth, agus bhiodh daoine tighinn am fad agus am farsainn d'a ionnsaigh as gach àite. Chaidh ceathrar fhear fhuadach á Leódhas; cha robh càil fios gu dé a dh'éirich dhaibh, no càit an robh iad, ann an eilean mara no ann an aigeal a' chuain. Cha tànaig bruanlach air tìr agus chan fhacas dad a bhuineadh do'n bhàta. Chaidh daoine gu ruig na h-Eileanan Flannaineach ach nar fac iad dad. Chomhairlich daoine d'an cairdean teachdaire a chur chon mhic Ailein ann am Beinne Bhadhla, agus chuireadh sin. Tha e nas fusa dol do Chanada an là an diugh na bha e dhol do Bheinne Bhadhla á Ùig an là ud. Rànaig an teachdaire a cheann-uidhe, agus ghabh mac Ailein ris agus aige gu caomh coibhneil an déidh a thuras agus uidil. Thuirt mac Ailein ris an duine gun robh e anmoch a nochd a chon frìth, agus gun dèanadh e frìth moch madainneach; agus rinn e sin. Thuirt mac Ailein ris an teachdaire gun robh a chairdean slàn fallain ann an Tìrt seach gach àite, agus gun robh iad a' feannadh mairt aig an dearbh am comhla ri muinntir Hirt, agus gun tigeadh iad dhachaigh anns a' Mhàirt, an tràth a shineadh tràithean agus a dh'fhalbhadh am Faoilleadh. Thachair seo a h-uile dad mar a chunnaig mac Ailein 'na dhailgneachd. Chuir e iongnadh gu leòr air na daoine chaidh fhuadach 'n uair a dh'innseadh dhaibh gun robh iad a' feannadh mairt maol lachdann là fuar Faoillich ann an Eilean Hirt corr is dà fhichead mìle thall thar a' chuan. Dh'fhuadaicheadh na daoine bho an dachaigh fhéin toiseach Dùldachd dorch a' gheamhraidh. Agus le doirbhead nan sian agus miadachd na gailleann cha d'fhuair iad air ais dachaigh gun an robh deireadh Màirt ann. Bha muinntir Hirt glé choibhneil dhaibh, ach 'na dhéidh sin agus 'na dhéidh bha iad seachd searbh sgìth dh'am prìosan, agus cha b'iongnadh dhaibh.

## AUGURY

From John MacRury, crofter, Tolorum, Benbecula.

THERE was a man in Baile Mhanaich in Benbecula, whose name was Duncan MacInnes, but he was called Duncan Alan's son, and oftener Alan's son. He was a man who was famed for augury, and people would be coming to him from far and near from every place. Four men were storm-driven from (Uig in) Lewis; no one had the least knowledge what had happened to them, or where they were, in an isle of the sea or in the depths of the ocean. No wreckage came on shore and nothing belonging to their boat was seen. Men went to the Flannan Isles, but saw nothing. People advised their friends to send a messenger to Alan's son in Benbecula. It is easier to go to Canada to-day than it was to go from Uig to Benbecula at that time. The messenger arrived at his journey's end, and Alan's son received him kindly and treated him courteously after his journey and his wandering. Alan's son told the man that it was late that night for an augury, and that he would make an augury early in the morning; and that he did. Alan's son told the messenger that his friends were safe and sound in St Kilda of all places, and that at that very moment they were skinning a mart along with the St Kilda people, and that they would come home in March, when the days should lengthen and the late winter be past. All this fell out in every particular as Alan's son saw in his presage. The men who had been storm-driven were astonished enough when they were told that they had been skinning a hornless dun mart one cold day of late winter in St Kilda, over forty miles away across the ocean. The men had been driven from their own home in the beginning of the dark depth of winter. And with the severity of the elements and the intensity of the storm they did not get back home until the end of March had come. The people of St Kilda had been very kind to them, but despite that and notwithstanding they were seven times bitterly tired of their prison, and no wonder.

## FRÌTH

THE man or woman performing the augury or divination forms the fingers of the left hand into a tube. He or she blows through this tube



HA mise dol a mach  
Gu starsach mo theach  
An ainm naomha Dé  
'S treasa léir na gach neach.

Théid mi mach an ainm Dé,  
Thig mi steach an ainm Mic,  
Mis a réir do shlighe, Dhé,  
Thus, a Dhé, air mo lic.

Dia romham, Dia dheogham,  
Dia faram, Dia fodham,  
Dia steacham, Dia macham,  
Dia nam feart dha m' threòrach.

Am frìth a rinn Moire dh'a Mac, [an fhrìth, an eòr  
A sheòl Brighid thromh a glac;  
Am fac thu frìth, a rìoghainn iùil?  
Thubhairt an rìoghainn ùr gum fac.

Fios fìrinn gun fios bréige,  
Gum faicim féin  
Samhladh subhach sèimh  
Na bheil uam.

Cf. Henderson, *Survivals in Belief among the Celts*, 223.


## AUGURY

in the name of the Three Persons of the Trinity, and then says the rune.

I AM going without  
 To the doorstep of my house  
     In the holy name of God  
 Stronger of sight than all.

I go out in the name of God,  
     I come in in the name of the Son,  
 I walking in thy path, O God,  
     Thou, O God, upon my doorstep.

God before me, God behind me,  
 God over me, God beneath me,  
 God within me, God without me,  
     The God of marvels leading me.

The augury that Mary made for her Son,  
 That Brigit breathed through  balm;  
     Hast thou seen the augury, guiding maid?  
 The young maid said that she had.

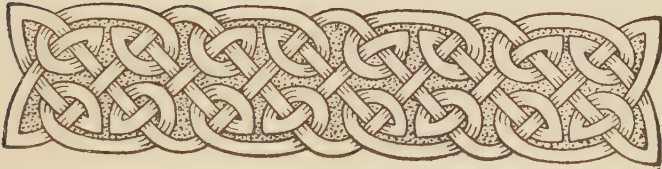
Message of truth without message of falsehood,  
 That I myself may see  
 The semblance, joyous and mild,  
     Of all that is amissing to me.





MAC GILLE CHALUIM  
RATHARSAIDH

MAC GILLE CHALUIM OF  
RAASAY



Iain Garbh Mac Gille Chaluum of Raasay was drowned in April 1671 on his way home from visiting the Earl of Seaforth in Lewis. It is said that he was drowned through the machinations of his own 'muime,' foster-mother, who employed several famous witches to raise the tempest in which he was drowned. These were 'Spòg Bhuidhe,' 'Yellow Foot,' of Màiligir in Skye; 'Gormshuil,' 'Blue-eyed,'\* from Cràcaig in Skye, and 'Doideag Dhubbh,' 'Black Doideag,' from Duart in Mull.

Iain Garbh's foster-mother lived in Tronaidh, usually known as Tronaidh a' Chuain, a small remote island lying north of Trondarnish, Trotternish, Skye. It is not known, though the matter is often spoken of, why his foster-mother was offended with Iain Garbh.†

Iain Garbh left Loch Sealg in Lewis on a day clear and calm, with not a cloud in the sky. The 'muime' saw her 'dalta,' foster-son, coming, and she put milk in a 'miosair mhór,' large vessel, and a 'miosair bheag,' little vessel, floating in the milk. She herself was a milkmaid in the island, and she placed the calf-herd (buachaille laogh) in the door of the 'àirigh,' sheiling, where he could see both Iain Garbh's birlinn and the two vessels, large and small. She herself stood by the fire with her foot in the 'slabhraidh,' pot-chain, reciting incantations. Immediately after she began her incantations the little vessel floating in the large vessel began to sway to and fro like the pot-chain over the fire. The herd-boy called out that the little boyne was going round 'deiseil,' sunwise, in the big boyne, and then being violently agitated and going round 'tuathail,' widdershins, and shaking the side of the big boyne, and then capsizing and floating bottom upwards. At this same moment Iain Garbh's boat disappeared, and the boy saw no more of it.

When the galley was between Sgeir Mhaol and Tronaidh a' Chuain, three ravens were seen hovering about the boat in the raging storm. Soon afterwards twenty birds flew into the boat and assumed the form of frogs (muileacha-màg, mealacha-màg). All the witches of Scotland were there, and all as busy as busy could be; but they could not sink the galley until Iain Garbh said, 'Ciod e an riabhach mòr thug a seo sibh?'—'What the big brindled one (i.e. the devil) brought you here?' Then Iain Garbh became distracted from the number of ravens flying about and the number of frogs leaping aloft. Then a huge raven lighted on the gunwale (beul-mór) beside him, and he drew his sword from its sheath to kill it, and in his fury he drove the sword down through the gunwale and clove the boat right to the keel, in which the sword stuck.

Some say that the first intimation of the drowning came to the witches of the Mìnigeig (buidisichean Mhonadh Mhiongaig) in the north of Atholl. Others say that Iain Garbh's spirit came to his wife, and she told her dream to his mother. The spirit said:

\* *Gormshuil* represents, rather, the old name *Gormlaith*.

† See *Trans. Gael. Soc. Inuss.*, xxix. 270; xxxvi. 392.

Di h-Aoine thànaig a' ghaoth,  
 Is thog i oirre fearg is fraoch;  
 Innis thus a mhàthair mo chuirp  
 Gur h-iad na h-uilc a thug an t-aog.

Friday came the wind  
 And stirred itself to rage and fury;  
 Tell thou to the mother of my body  
 That it was the evil ones who brought death.

This was repeated thrice. When Iain Garbh's mother was told she said, 'Tha laogh mo chridhe air a chall.'—'My heart's darling is lost.'

A seanchaidh in Fiskavaig, Skye, related (30th December 1861): 'Bhàth a mhuime Iain Garbh Mac Gille Chaluum air son airgid, agus cha luithe a bhàth i e na ghabh i an t-aithreachas. Rachadh Iain Garbh agus a bhean á Ratharsaidh do na Hearadh gun duine beò ach iad féin le chéile. Bhiodh ise aig an stiùir agus esan aig an aodach. Turas a bha sin agus iad a' dol do na Hearadh agus iad a sìos taobh Thronarnis, thuit Iain Garbh a mach air a' mhuir á toiseach na h-eathair. Bha am bàta aig astar agus a' mhuir mór, agus dìreach anns an dol seachad air sliasaid a' bhàta rug a bhean air bhad-mhullaich chinn air. 'Greim-eachadh math dhut!' ars esan. 'Na biodh cùram air 'an laoch,' ars ise, 'tha mo gheall fhéin air a' chuspair.' Chuir i an t-eathar a suas anns a' ghaoith agus thug i staigh e. Nach b'i sin am boireannach aig an robh an greim?'—Iain Garbh's foster-mother drowned him for the sake of money, and no sooner had she drowned him than she repented. Iain Garbh and his wife used to go from Raasay to Harris without a living person but themselves together. She would be at the helm and he at the sails. Once on a time when they were going to Harris and sailing along the coast of Trotternish, Iain Garbh fell out into the sea from the bow of the boat. The boat was going at speed and the sea was high, and just as he was going past her quarter his wife seized him by the topmost bunch of the hair of his head. 'Good gripping to you!' said he. 'Let the warrior have no care,' said she, 'I have my own wager on the mark.'\* She put the boat up into the wind and took him aboard. Was not that the woman who had the grip?

The same seanchaidh recited the following lament, ascribed to Iain Garbh's wife:

\* The expression has the second meaning, 'My own love is on the dear one.'

For the historical account of the drowning of Iain Garbh see James Fraser's *Polichronicon* under the year 1671. Traditional accounts, attributing the tragedy to witchcraft, are given in *Clàrsach na Coille*, 290, and in J. Gregorson Campbell's *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Scottish Highlands*, 25. For versions of the song see: Maclean Sinclair, *Gaelic Bards*, i. 95; *Songs of the Hebrides*, ii. 102; *An Gàidheal*, vi. 280; *Gesto Collection*, App., 17; *MacDonald Collection*, 155.

## CUMHA IAIN GHAIRBH



I am shuidh air an fhaoilinn,  
 'S mi gun fhaoilte gun fhurán,  
 Chaoidh cha tog mi fonn aotrom  
 Bho Dhi h-Aoine mo dhunach.

Chaoidh cha tog mi fonn aotrom  
 Bho Dhi h-Aoine mo dhunach,  
 Bho na thionndaidh mo shaoghal,  
 Bho'n chaidh mo dhaoine sna  
 [grunnaibh.

Bho na thionndaidh mo shaoghal,  
 Bho'n chaidh mo dhaoine sna grunnaibh,  
 Gille Caluim a b'òige  
 'S Iain Mór, mo sgeul duilich.

'S iomadh baintighearn bréidgheal  
 Tha gu deurach a' cumha,  
 Agus maighdean ùr uasal  
 De shìol tuath agus cumain.

Tha do mhiolchoin gun ghluasad,  
 Gun luasgan gun fhurán,  
 Gun fhaoilte bho'n uasal  
 D'am bu dual a bhith duineil.

Gun fhaghaid gun iallach,\*  
 Gun triall chum a' mhunaidh,  
 Gu fireach na sealga,  
 Gu garbhloch a' Chuilinn.

Ho ró hill ó ro hó  
 Hill ó hill ùil ill ho ró  
 Hill ó ro bha hì

\* leg. *fhiallach* < *fhianlach*.

## IAIN GARBH'S LAMENT

As I sit on the beach  
 Without joy or gladness,  
 Never more shall I raise a blithe song  
 After the Friday of my woe.

Never more shall I raise a blithe song  
 After the Friday of my woe,  
 Since my world was overthrown,  
 Since my kinsmen went to the depths.

Since my world was overthrown,  
 Since my kinsmen went to the depths,  
 Gille Caluim the younger  
 And Great John, my sorrowful tale.

There is many a white-coifed lady  
 Who tearfully mourns,  
 And many a fresh gracious maid  
 Sprung from tenants and commons.

Thy greyhounds are unstirring,  
 Without wagging or rejoicing,  
 Without welcome from the noble  
 Whose forebears were manly.

Without coursing or huntsmen,  
 Without trek to the hill,  
 To the heights of the hunt,  
 To the rough peaks of the Coolin.

Ho ro hill o ro ho  
 Hill o hill uil ill ho ro  
 Hill o ro bha hi

Women are often in the form of cats when going about as witches. A gentleman in South Uist was out hunting in the 'sliabh sheilg,' mountain of the hunt. A heavy shower came down and he took shelter in a sheiling. The gentleman saw a cat 'air barra-bhalla a' bhothain,' on the top of the wall of the bothy, and he raised his 'musg,' gun, to kill it. He tried two or three times, but each time, although the powder in the pan flashed, the shot did not go off. He thought the cat was uncanny and he put a silver stud in the gun and was raising it to his eye when the cat changed into the form of a woman well known to him. 'An tus tha ann, a Mhàiri?' os easan. 'Is mi,' osa Màiri. 'Nach mór am mìorun tha agad dhomhsa. Feith ri foidhidinn,' os ise, 'agus innsidh mi dhut an t-adhbhar am bheil mise ann an riochd cait.' Agus dh'inns i dha gun robh i fhéin agus mórán bhan eile a' bàthadh Mhic Gille Chaluim Mór Ratharsaidh dar a bha e tighinn dachaigh á Leódhas. 'Tha Mac Gille Chaluim Mór air bruaich bàis air àrainn Rubha Hùnaid. Bha a' bhirlinn aige làn chat agus easan 'gan ruith leis a' chlaidhe-mhór, 'gan sladadh thall agus 'gan slacadh a bhos, dar a bhual e buille dhe'n chlaidh air an sgòd agus bha a' bhirlinn fairis. Is i a mhuime fhéin a thug orm a dhol ann agus bha sinn ann torr mór chat.'—'Is it thou, Mary?' said he. 'It is,' said Mary. 'What a great grudge thou hast against me! Be patient,' said she, 'and I shall tell thee the reason why I am in the guise of a cat.' And she told him that she and many other women were drowning the great Mac Gille Chaluim of Raasay when he was coming home from Lewis. 'The Great Mac Gille Chaluim is on the verge of death in the vicinity of Rubha Hùnaid. His galley was full of cats and he was chasing them with his great broadsword, slashing them here and mauling them there, when he struck the sheet-rope a blow with his sword and the galley capsized. It is his own foster-mother who forced me to go there, and we were there a great swarm of cats.'



MAC MHUIRICH

MACVURICH



## ACHAIN MHIC MHUIRICH

BHA trì iarratais aig Mac Mhuirich Mór Stadhlaigearraidh.

Bha e ri post \* ann an Canaidh turas, mar as minig a bha, a null agus a nall eadar Uibhist agus Mùideart. Moch madainn chual e bean-an-taighe ag eubhach ris an t-searbhanta, 'Éirich! éirich! a nighean, agus uinneag na gaoith an ear an déidh mo bhódradh.' Thuig Mac Mhuirich gun robh am boireannach sgèth dheth fhéin agus dhe dhaoine—'s a Mhoire 's a Mhic, 's cinnteach gun robh an t-adhbhar aice! Dh'eubh Mac Mhuirich r'a ghillean, 'Éiribh! éiribh! 'illean, 's bean-an-taighe sgèth dhinn!' Leum na gillean air an cois, agus thubhairt fear dhiubh, 'Siubhadaibh, ma tà, iarraibh gaoth, agus gun deò á adhar.' Fhreagair Mac Mhuirich agus thubhairt e :

'Gaoth an ear o'n ailbhinn chiùin	[Gharbh-chrioch
Mar achanaigh air Rìgh nan dùl!—	
Soirbheas gun tiomadh gun abhsadh,	[toirmeasg gun
Nach dèanadh gnìomh fabhdach dhùinn.'	fhusadh

'Is bog similidh socharach a dh'iarr thu a' ghaoth,' orsa fear dha na gillean. 'An dubhairt thu rium e, a bhalaich?' orsa Mac Mhuirich le feirg, agus dh'iarr e an dara h-achan :

'Bho arda nam beann	[airde
Gu tarra nan gleann,	[isle
Bheir gaoisid á each	[muing; marc
Agus fianach á fonn,	
Bheir fraoch á fireach	[á fraigh?
Agus seileach á friamh,	
Bheir bàirneach bho sgeir	
Agus iolair bho ian:	
A Dhonnain dhuinn, 'nar deoghaidh i,	
'Na donnalaich 's 'na conabhaich	
'S 'na sradan teine teinntidh!'	[ 'na doinnionn theinidh
	theinntidh

Thànaig a sin a' ghaoth, agus b'i sin a' ghaoth, agus dh'éirich a' mhuir, agus a Mhoire, Màthair nan gràs, b'i sin a' mhuir ghrànda—an t-eathar an dara turas a' fros-laich nam faochaga dubh far feaman na tarraing ann an aigeal a' chuain, agus an turas eile shuas air farabharra nam beann! Cha robh duin innte nach robh 'na shineadh air clàr-ùlair na

\* =port.

See *An Duanaire*, 97; Dr Hector Maclean's MS. (c. 1768), 118 (printed in *An Gàidheal*, vi. 51); J. Gregorson Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Scottish Highlands*, 20. Cf. *Trans. Gael. Soc. Invs.*, xxxvi. 392.

## MACVURICH'S REQUESTS

MACVURICH MÓR of Stiligarra had three requests.

He was once lying at Canna, as he often was when back and fore between Uist and Moidart. Early one morning he heard the lady of the house shouting to the maid, 'Get up! get up! girl, the wind beating on the east window has deafened me.' MacVurich understood that the woman was tired of himself and his men—and O Mary and O Son, it is certain that she had cause! MacVurich called out to his lads, 'Get up! get up! lads, the lady of the house is tired of us.' The lads jumped to their feet, and one of them said, 'Go on, then, ask for a wind, for there is not a breath from the sky.' MacVurich replied and said :

'East wind from the smooth rocks  
As a prayer to the King of the elements!—  
A following breeze without faintness or slacking,  
That would do no harmful deed to us.'

'Softly, feebly, bashfully hast thou asked for the wind,' said one of the lads. 'Sayest thou so, fellow?' said MacVurich in anger, and he made his second request :

'From the heights of the bens	[height
To the depths of the glens,	[lowness
Which will take hair from a horse	[mane
And moor-grass from the ground,	
Which will take heather from the hill	
And willow from the root,	
Which will take the limpet from the rock	
And the eagle from its eaglet:	
Brown Donnan, send it after us	
Howling and raging	
In blazing sparks of fire!	[tempest

Then the wind came, and that was the wind, and the sea rose, and Mary, Mother of grace, that was the ugly sea—the vessel at one time showering the black whelks from the draught seaweed at the bottom of the sea, the next time up on the very tops of the mountainous seas! There

h-cathair anns an taoin a bha tighinn a staigh as a deoghaidh ach Mac Mhuirich Mór fhéin agus lethcheallach ris an cainte Fionnlagh. An uair a rànaig iad Loch Einneort (Loch Sgiobort?), thogadh a mach uan, agus leum cù a mach, agus laigh e sìos ri taobh an uain air mol lom a' chladaich. Sheall Mac Mhuirich air an dithis, agus thubhairt e :

'Mac a' mhadaidh agus mac an uain,  
Is iad 'nan laighe air an aona chluan,  
'S e stoirm na mara agus onfhadh cuain [sgal a' chuain  
Chuir ribh a measg nan nàimhdean.' [an car

Dòigh eile air rainn Mhic Mhuirich Mhóir :

'Iarr gaoth, a Mhic Mhuirich,'

'Gaoth an ear o'n eilbhin chiùin,  
Mar a dh'ordaich Rìgh nan dùl!  
Soirbheas gun iomram gun abhsadh, [chiorram  
Nach dèanadh gniamh fabhdach dhùinn!' [fallsail

'Is lag leibideach a dh'iarr thu i agus mi fhéin air an stiùir,' ars a mhac.

'Gaoth tuath co cruaidh ri slait  
A' sineagaich ri bial a stuic, [ri bruaich  
Mar earba ruadh is i 'na h-airc  
Teurnadh le ceann cam cruaidh cnuic!'

'Cha ruig moladh air (oirre) fhathast,' ars a mhac.

'Ma tha gaoth an irinn fhuair,  
Chonain, cuir 'nar deoghaidh i, [Dhonnain  
'Na deannaibh is 'na taosgaibh,  
'S 'na teine teinibh teinnteach!  
Is ma théid a h-aon air tìr,  
Gura mise féin an tì!  
Is ma théid a dhà air tìr,  
Gur mi féin 's mo ghille!  
Is ma théid a trì air tìr,  
Gur mi féin 's mo ghille  
Agus mo shibheag choin!'

was none who was not stretched on the vessel's floorboards amid the bilgewater she was shipping astern except MacVurich Mór himself and a half-wit called Finlay. When they reached Loch Eynort (Loch Skipport?), a lamb was lifted out, and a dog jumped out and lay down beside the lamb on the bare pebbly beach. MacVurich looked at the two and said :

'The son of the hound and the son of the lamb  
Lying down on the same field,  
It is ocean storm and raging sea  
That afflicted you among your foes.'

Variant versions of MacVurich Mór's verses :

'Ask for a wind, MacVurich.'

'East wind from the smooth rocks,  
As the King of the Elements has ordained!  
A following breeze without rowing or slacking [hurt  
That would do no harmful deed to us!'] [treacherous

'Weakly and contemptibly hast thou asked for it seeing I myself am at the helm,' said his son.

'A north wind as hard as a rod  
Bounding past her gunwale,  
Like a red roe in dire distress  
Descending the hard rugged peak of a hill.'

'It does not admit of praise yet,' said his son.

'If there be wind in cold hell,  
Conan, send it after us, [Donnan  
Hurling and gushing  
In a flaming fiery blaze!  
And if there be one who wins ashore,  
May I be that one!  
And if there be two who win ashore,  
May it be I and my servant!  
And if there be three who win ashore,  
May it be I and my servant  
And my slip of a dog!'

[pp. 310-13

Is e theireadh na seann daoine gun tug Dia trì iarratais do Mhac Mhuirich Mór Stadhlaigearraidh an am a bhreith.

Turas bha sin bha Mac Mhuirich Mór a' tilleadh a dh'Uibhist o Mhùid-eart, o Chaisteal Tioram, rathad nach b'ainmig e a' siubhal, agus 'd é ach gun robh e ri port rathad nan Garbhchrioch no rathad nan Eileana Caola—Canaidh, Rum, no Eige. Moch madainn a bha sin chuala Mac Mhuirich fear an taighe anns an robh iad a' fuireach a' feòraich dh' a mhnaoi 'd é an là bha ann. 'Éirich! a nighean, agus guth na gaoith an ear an déidh mo bhódhhradh,' ars a' bhean. Thuig Mac Mhuirich gun robh am boireannach còir sgèth dhiubh—agus m'anam fhéin, cha b'iongnadh dhi! Dh'eubh e r'a ghillean éirigh air an seasamh-bonn agus gum bitheadh iad a' toir a' chuain dhi, agus dh'éirich iad. Thànaig fannghaoth bhog bhlàth agus thog iad na siùil mhìne bhreaca bhaidealach ri barr nan crann fiùbhaidh fada fulannach. Thug iad a deireadh do thìr agus a toiseach do mhuir agus a h-aghaidhair Uibhist, agus chàirich iad oirre a chuile traoidht a bha 'na colainn, agus thànaigeas air falbh. Bha ràsan roimpe agus cobhar as a déidh, agus ragha agus tagha falbh aig an iùbhraich.

Ach a nis cha robh ann ach ciùchar (ciabharan) beag bochd gaoith, agus cha b'fhada mar sin fhéin gun an do chrìon an soirbheas agus gun do thréig a h-astar an long. Bha na gillean a' cur corc sna croinn agus a' feadalaich gaoith, ach ma bha, 'd é dha sin?—cha robh gaoth a' tighinn no taing air a shon.

Mu dheireadh thubhairt a mhac ri Mac Mhuirich Mór, 'Iarr gaoth, athair, agus gun fhios cuin a gheobh sinn dhachaigh aig an riamanaich seo.' 'Bheil thu ag iarraidh orm, a mhic?' ars Mac Mhuirich. 'Tha,' ars a mhac. 'S ann a sin thubhairt Mac Mhuirich :

'Gaoth an ear o'n eilbhìn chiùin  
Mar achanaigh air Rìgh mo rùn!

Gaoth mhear o'n Gharbh Chrìch  
Mar achanaigh air Tì nan dùl!

Gaoth gun fhusadh gun fhiar gun abhsadh, [fhùbhsadh; iorram,  
Nach dèan gniamh fabhdach dhùinn!] iorral, iorral

Sin thubhairt an gille gun tonaisg :

'Is bog balbh t'iarratas, athair,  
Sinne 's an là d'ar tréigsinn,  
A' ghrian a' laighe air Heacala  
'S gun trian dha'n astar 'nar déidh-ne.'

'An dubhairt thu rium e, a bhalaich?' orsa Mac Mhuirich Mór le feirg; agus thubhairt e :

'Ma tha gaoth an irinn fhuair  
A dhùisgeas tonn bho taobh ruadh, [ragas; ri  
Chobhthaigh] Chonain ghraid, 'nar deireadh i, [deoghaidh  
'Na srada teine teinntidh!'] [an leaghas

Thànaig a sin rag-stoirm agus muir gun chiall, agus an t-eathar an annar

THE old people used to say that God gave MacVurich Mór of Stiliggarry three wishes when he was born.

Once upon a time MacVurich Mór was returning to Uist from Moidart, from Castle Tirrim, a route he not infrequently travelled, and what happened but that he was lying somewhere in the Rough Bounds or in the Small Isles—Canna, Rum or Eigg. Early one morning MacVurich heard the goodman of the house where they were staying asking his wife what day it was. 'Arise, girl, for the howl of the east wind has deafened me,' said the woman. MacVurich understood that the good woman was tired of them and by my soul it was no wonder! He called out to his lads to rise immediately and that they would put to sea, and they arose. A soft warm wind came and they hoisted the smooth speckled towering sails to the tops of the tall enduring masts of wood. They gave her stern to land and her prow to sea. They set a course for Uist, piled on every stitch they had aboard and set off. There was a harsh, grating noise from her prow and foam in her wake, and the galley was making excellent speed.

But now there was only a low slow moan of wind, and it was not long before the breeze died away and its speed forsook the ship. The men were sticking knives in the masts and whistling for wind, but what of that? No wind was coming or anything like it.

At last his son said to MacVurich Mór, 'Ask a wind, father, for goodness knows when we will reach home with this dawdling (?).' 'Dost thou ask me, son?' said MacVurich. 'Yes,' said his son. It was then MacVurich said :

'East wind from the smooth rocks  
As a prayer to the King of my love!  
A brisk wind from the Rough Bounds  
As a prayer to the Lord of the elements!  
A wind without ceasing or veering or slacking,  
That would do no harmful deed to us!'

Then the lad without sense said :

'Soft and dumb thine asking, father,  
And the day fast forsaking us,  
The sun is setting upon Hekla  
And not a third of the distance behind us.'

'Hast thou said it to me, fellow?' quoth MacVurich Mór in anger; and he said :

wrench] 'If there be wind in cold hell  
To raise a wave from her red side, [sturdy?  
O irascible Conan, send it after us  
In sparks of fiery fire.'

There burst upon them a stark storm and cruel sea. It seemed likely

dol dha'n aigeal agus na daoine an annar an cur dha'n t-siorraidheachd. Dh'iarr a mhac air Mac Mhuirich ciùine a thoir air gaoith agus fois a thoir air muir agus cluanas anama agus cuirp a thoir dhaibh fhéin. 'O athair, athair, lagaich a' ghaoth, no tha sinne aig maor an aigeil!' 'A bhuamastair, a bhuamastair, thus a dh'iarr orm a' ghaoth iarraidh, uam do sheanchas gun tonaisg! Chan iarrainn an treas iarraitas air mo Dhia ged a rea'adh i dha na liaghagan!' arsa Mac Mhuirich.

Leum an fhairge mhulcanach bhalcanach a suas 'na binnibh corrach cas agus a sios 'na glinnibh ìseal duaichnidh, liaghagan ruadh an aigeil a' tighinn am barr agus faochagan donna na doimhne a' toir sgailc air urracaga dubha na h-iùbhraich, agus thuit oillt agus eagal air an sgioba gun an robh iad dall bodhar gun mhath dhaibh fhéin, gun mhath do chàcha. Bha iad 'nan glag agus 'nan gràin thall agus a bhos, shìos agus shuas, gun fear dhiubh a b'urrainn a cheann a thogail no a làmh a shineadh chon e fhéin a dhìon no a chomhnadh ged a bhiodh an tòir air a mhuin, ach Mac Mhuirich Mór agus a ghille fhéin, ris an cainte Fionnlagh. Ris a' chiùine bha gach fear a' fanaid air Fionnlagh—e 'na bhall-bùird agus 'na chulaidh-mhagaidh aca shìos agus shuas, thall agus a bhos; ach dar a thànaig an stoirm is e Fionnlagh an aon diùlnach a bha 'nam measg—cha robh aon duin eil ann a chuireadh làmh ri car no ri cuirein ach e. Bha Mac Mhuirich a' stiùradh na sgoth agus a' strith ri a cumail tioram, agus Fionnlagh a' taomadh agus a' strith ris an taoim a chumail fodha, agus m'anam fhéin, bha an diol aca r'a dhèanamh anns a' chàs. Ach bha Fionnlagh treun tromalach, agus mar a stiùradh Mac Mhuirich, thaomadh Fionnlagh. Sin dar a thubhairt Mac Mhuirich :

'Uam Mac Mhuirich, uam Mac Mhairich,  
 Uam Mac Annd 's Mac Cùsbaig,  
 Uam Mac Ceileig, uam Mac Ceallaig,  
 Uam gach blad 's gach ùmaidh,  
 Uam na Guinnich, uam na Lòinnich,\* [Duinnich, Goibhnic  
 Uam gach deòraidh 's diùghaidh,  
 Uam Mac Iogair, uam Mac Cògair,\*  
 Uam gach faidhbh ach Fionnlagh!] [fear foill, deòraidh

Dar thànaig na daoin air tìr bha iad co lag sgìth agus nach b'urra dhaibh cas a chur fòpa. Thànaig cù as an eathar agus laigh e sìos ri taobh uain, gun dragh a chur air an uan. Thubhairt Mac Mhuirich Mór :

'Mac a' mhadaidh is mac an uain  
 An caidribh cluan Céitein,  
 'S e stoirm nan stuagh is nìmh a' chuain  
 Chuir sibh an cluan a chéile.'

*no*

'Mac a' mhadaidh is mac an uain  
 An cairdeas fuar nan cléitean,  
 'S e stoirm nan tonn is toirm a' chuain  
 Chuir sibhs an cluan (gual) a chéile.'

\* These lines should, perhaps, be interchanged.

that the ship would be sent to the abyss and the men to eternity. His son asked MacVurich to give calmness to the wind and rest to the sea and peace of soul and body to themselves. 'O father, father, weaken the wind or we are with the shellfish of the deep.' 'Thou blockhead, thou who didst ask me to seek the wind, away with thy senseless talk. I would not ask the third request of my God should she go to the tangles of the deep,' said MacVurich.

The lashing dashing sea rose in peaks steep and towering and sank in glens low and ugly, the red seaweed of the abyss coming up and the brown whelks of the deep giving cracks on the black thole-pins of the galley. Fear and dread fell on the crew until they were blind and deaf, of no use to themselves and of no use to others. They were fainting with fear on this side and on that, fore and aft, not one of them able to lift his head or stretch his hand to defend or succour himself though the pursuit were close on him, all that is save MacVurich Mór and his own servant Finlay. When it was calm everyone was making fun of Finlay—he was the butt of their ridicule hither and thither, up and down; but when the storm came Finlay was the only hero among them—there was no one else who would do a hand's turn but he. MacVurich was steering the vessel and striving to keep her dry, and Finlay was baling and striving to keep the bilge-water down, and by my soul, they had their work cut out in this extremity! But Finlay was strong and sturdy and as MacVurich would steer Finlay would bale. Then it was that MacVurich said :

'From me MacVurich, from me Mac Mhairich,  
 From me Mac Annd and Mac Cùsbaig,  
 From me Mac Ceileig, from me Mac Ceallaig,  
 From me every boaster and coward,  
 From me the Campbells (?), from me the Macleans (?), [Camerons ?  
 From me the vagrants and scum,  
 From me Mac Iogaire, from me Mac Cògair, e,  
 From me every outcast (?) but Finlay.'

When the men came ashore they were so weak and weary that they could not put a foot under them. A hound came out of the ship and it lay down beside a lamb, without troubling the lamb. MacVurich Mór said :

'The son of the hound and the son of the lamb  
 In the peaceful fellowship of May,  
 It is the storm of the waves and the venom of the sea  
 That have put you at peace with one another.'

*or* 'The son of the hound and the son of the lamb  
 In the cold friendship of the snow-flakes (?),  
 It is the storm of the waves and the roar of the sea  
 That have put you at peace with one another.'  
 (That have made you lie down side by side.)

## MAC MHUIRICH MÓR AGUS A' BHÉIST

BHA Mac Mhuirich Mór a muigh anns a' bheinn a' sealgach sidhinn. Fhuair e làndamh, agus an déidh an damh a ghreallach thilg e an t-sidheann air a dhruim. B'fheudar dha'n duine gabhail toisgeil air Loch Druidibig agus an làndamh air a mhuin.

Ann an còs am bord an locha 'd é chunnaig an duine ach creutair beag bìodach brònach. Thog e leis am bròinein beag beothaich 'na bhrollach agus thug e dhachaigh leis isean na béist. Cha ghann a thug na thànaig a' bhéist dha'n uinneig agus dh'eubh i le guth colgarra cruaidh, 'A mach dhomh mo chuilean, a Mhic Mhuirich Mhóir!' 'Air chumhnant, a bhéist.' 'A mach dhomh mo chuilean, a Mhic Mhuirich Mhóir, no is i a' chlach as airde ad ardraich ghrànda clach as fhàna dha'n stéidh.' 'Air chumhnant,' arsa Mac Mhuirich. 'D é do chumhnant, a thrùillich mhóir?' ars a' bhéist. 'Thu dhèanamh clachan dhomh tarsainn Loch Stadhlabbhal a bheir dhachaigh dhomh mo chuid mòinidh agus a bheir a null agus a nall mo chuid chruidh agus chaorach, mo chuid each agus ghobhar, gun bhàn gun dearg 'nam measg.' 'Och, och,' ors a' bhéist, 'ge cruaidh an ràdh, is fearr a dhèanamh' ars ise. Mu mheadhon mharbh-thràth na h-oidhche thànaig a' bhéist agus dh'eubh i san uinneig, 'Tha siod ullamh, a Mhic Mhuirich Mhóir; a mach dhomh mo bhuiceallach!' 'Cha chuir ach air chumhnant,' arsa Mac Mhuirich Mór. 'Cluinneam do cheannach, a dhuine dhona,' ars a' bhéist. 'Thu thoir dhachaigh a chuile fàd mòinidh a th' agam air fàsach an t-sléibh agus a cur 'na brig air a' chnoc ceann an taighe.' 'Ochan, ochan, ged a bha an clachan cruaidh, is e tha cruaidh buileach a' mhòinidh a thoir dhachaigh agus a cur 'na brig ri ceann an taighe. Ach ge cruaidh an ràdh, is fearr a dhèanamh,' ars ise agus i a' togail oirre dha'n bheinn. Thànaig an sin a' bhéist an treasa turas agus ghlaodh anns an uinneig, 'A Mhic Mhuirich Mhóir, a mach dhomh mo bhucallach bhuidhe, tha siod ullamh.' 'Cha chuir fhathast ach air chumhnant,' arsa Mac Mhuirich Mór. 'Cluinneam do chumhnant, a dhuine dhona,' ars a' bhéist. 'Thu thogail dhomh taigh tàmha agus naoi lànain 'na cheann, air a thughadh le iteach ian agus gun an dà ite air an aon dath.'

'Is cruaidh cruth do chumhnant, a Mhic Mhuirich,' ars a' bhéist. 'Is cruaidh cruth na h-éiginn, a bhéist,' arsa Mac Mhuirich.

Leag a' bhéist stéidh an taighe gu snasail agus thòisich i air a chlach-aireachd; agus a Mhoire, Mhoire, 's ann aice fhéin a bha an làmh ris! Cha robh ach an aon duan a' tighinn as a ceann, ach a' sìor chrònan agus a' sìor mhonaban mar seo:

'CLACH air muin cloiche,  
Clach air muin a dhà;  
Càir mar sin na clacha  
'S bidh am balla slàn.

## BIG MACVURICH AND THE MONSTER

BIG MacVurich was out in the hill hunting for venison. He got a royal stag, and after gralloching the stag he slung the venison on his back. The man had to pass to the left of Loch Druidibig with the royal stag on his back.

In a cranny at the edge of the loch what should the man see but a tiny little creature. He lifted the poor little creature away with him in his breast and thus brought home the monster's whelp. Hardly had he brought it home than the monster came to the window and called out with a loud angry voice, 'Out with my whelp, Big MacVurich!' 'For a bargain, monster.' 'Out with my whelp, Big MacVurich, or the highest stone in thine ugly dwelling shall be the lowest stone in its foundation.' 'For a bargain,' said MacVurich. 'What is thy bargain, thou dirty rascal?' said the monster. 'That thou build me a causeway across Loch Stadhlabbal on which my peats may be brought home and on which my cattle and sheep, my horses and goats, may pass back and fore without a white or red one among them.' 'Alas! alas!' said the monster, 'though hard the saying, it is better to fulfil it,' said she. In the dead of night the monster came and called out at the window, 'That is ready, Big MacVurich; out with my bouncing boy.' 'No, except for a bargain,' said Big MacVurich. 'Let me hear thy terms, thou wicked man,' said the monster. 'That thou bring home every single peat I have on the hill slope and make a stack of them on the hill at the end of the house.' 'Alas! alas! though the causeway was hard, harder still is it to bring the peats home and make them into a stack at the end of the house. But though the saying is hard, it is better to fulfil it,' said she, setting out to the hill. The monster then came a third time and called out at the window, 'Big MacVurich, out with my bouncing yellow boy, that is done.' 'Not yet, except for a bargain,' said Big MacVurich. 'Let me hear thy bargain, thou wicked man,' said the monster. 'That thou build me a dwelling-house with nine couples in its roof, thatched with birds' feathers, and no two feathers of the same hue.'

'Hard is the form of thy bargain, MacVurich,' said the monster. 'Hard is the form of necessity, monster,' said MacVurich.

The monster laid the foundations of the house neatly, and began on the mason-work; and Mary, Mary! 'tis herself that had the hand for it! There was but the one song coming from her mouth, she was ever crooning and murmuring thus:

'STONE on top of stone,  
Stone on top of two;  
Set the stones thus  
And the wall will be complete.

Clach air muin cloiche,  
Clach ghlas r'a taobh;  
Clach air muin cloiche,  
Clach ghlas 'na h-aor.

Clach ri aghaidh cloiche,  
Clach ri aghaidh dhà;  
Clach ri aghaidh cloiche,  
'S bidh am balla 'n aird.

Clach air muin cloiche,  
Pinne chur san toll,  
Leagan air gach leagan  
Bho bhràigh gu bonn.

Cabar ris a' chabar,  
Sgrath air muin sgrath,  
Reang air gach reang,  
Criadh air criadh crath. [Gu cumail diar a mach

It' air muin iteach  
Bho 'n taobh a steach,  
Sgrith sgrath sgolban  
Bho 'n taobh a mach.

Sgrith sgrath sgolban  
Gu ceann taigh a' chealgair,  
Sgrios na nathrach obann [odhar  
Air bogha a' bhalgair. [bhobag

Gach fiodh sa choill ach fiodhagach,\* [itheagach  
Gach fiodh sa choill ach fiodhagach,  
Gach fiodh sa choill  
Gu taigh na foill [Mhic Raing  
Ach critheann chroinn is fiodhagach.' [eidheann,  
iubhar cam, draigheann dreang

Mar seo bha i a' seinn agus a' sireadh gon an robh crìoch air an taigh.  
Cha robh màthair-eòin san ealtainn ghrinn ghuirn nach tànaig le ite gu  
cuideachadh tughadh an taighe leis an truas a bha aca ris a' bhéist.

Thànaig a sineach a' bhéist treis roimh ghairm-choileach agus dh'eubh  
i anns an uinneig agus thubhairt i, 'Tha siod ullamh, a Mhic Mhuirich,

\* *Fitheagach, itheagach; fiodhagach, iodhagach*: wild fig. The wild fig

See *Trans. Gael. Soc. Invs.*, xxvi. 264; *An Duanaire*, 123 ff.; *Celtic*

Stone on top of stone,  
 Grey stone by its side;  
 Stone on top of stone,  
 Grey stone to build it.

Stone in front of stone,  
 Stone in front of two;  
 Stone in front of stone,  
 And the wall will be up.

Stone on top of stone,  
 A peg placed in the hole,  
 Layer upon layer  
 From the top to the base.

Beam set to beam,  
 Divot upon divot,  
 Pole upon pole,  
 Clay on clay shake. [To keep out the drip

Feather upon feathers  
 From the inside,  
 Gravel (?), divot, wooden wattle  
 From the outside.

Gravel (?), divot, wooden wattle  
 To the roof of the deceiver's house,  
 The sudden destruction of the serpent [dun  
 On the scoundrel's vaulted roof.

Every timber in the wood save the wild fig,  
 Every timber in the wood save the wild fig,  
 Every timber in the wood  
 To the house of treachery [Rankin  
 Save the aspen of the cross and the wild fig,' [ivy,  
 crooked yew, blackthorn

Thus she sang and sought until the house was finished. There was not a brood-bird in the beautiful blue sky that did not come with a feather to help with the thatching of the house, out of compassion for the monster.

The monster then came some time before cock-crow and she called out at the window and said, 'That is done, MacVurich; out with my whelp.'

is 'crossed,' *air a chrosadh*, probably because of the incident near Bethany. *Criitheann chroinn*: the aspen of the cross.

*Monthly*, iii. 44; cf. *History of Clan Macrae*, 5; *Urquhart and Glenmoriston*, 424-5.

a mach dhomh mo bhuracallach.'\* 'Seo dhut do chuirean, a bhéist mhór mhangach, agus na faiceam do shùil na do shròn, do spòg na t'aghaidh, air an fhonn seo gu bràtha tuilleadh.' Agus le sin a ràdh chàirich Mac Mhuirich Mór Stadhlaignearraidh curralach na béiste móire a mach air an uinneig. 'Och, och,' ars ise, 'ge cruaidh càcha, tha an càs seo cruaidh buileach,' agus i togail a' chuirein air fras-mhullach a guailleann.

Chàirich a' bhéist a h-isean air a druim agus dh'fhalbh i leis an duan as a ceann agus an sgrìob as a cois:

'Is fada bhuam fhìn bonn Beinn Eadarra,  
 'S fada gun teagamh uam Bealach a' Mhorghain,  
 Cùl nam monaidhean, bràigh nam bealaichean,  
 Bonn nam bearraichean 's Bealach a' Mhorghain.'†

\* *buraclach, buaraclach*: the whelp of the water monster.

† See *An Gàidheal*, iii. 73; *Celtic Monthly*, iv. 69, xix. 169; Frances Tolmie's Collection, no. 32 (and see Appendix); *Trans. Gael. Soc. Invs.*, xxix. 102. These verses properly belong to the 'Colann gun Cheann' story; see *West Highland Tales*, ii. 101-2 (2nd ed.); J. Gregorson Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Scottish Highlands*, 191-4.

'Here is thy whelp, thou great crafty monster, and let me not see thine eye or thy nose, thy paw or thy face, on this ground ever again.' And so saying MacVurich Mór of Stiligarry thrust the great monster's brat out at the window. 'Alas! alas!' said she, 'though the other conditions were hard, this is the worst predicament of all.' And she lifted the whelp on to her shoulders.

The monster placed her brat on her back and she set off with a mighty stride singing this song:

'Far from me is the base of Beinn Eadarra,  
Far from me undoubtedly is Bealach a' Mhorghain,  
The back of the hills, the slope of the passes,  
The base of the cliffs and Bealach a' Mhorghain.'

The above is a conflation of many MS. versions, some of them fragmentary.





MEASGAIN  
MISCELLANEOUS

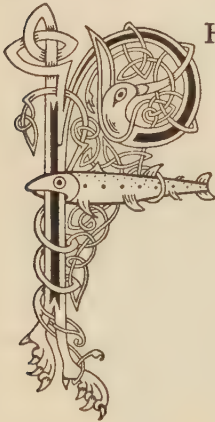


## LATHA SEALBHACH

Bho Chairistlona Nic Gill-Ìosa, Dùn Gainmheachadh, Beinne Bhadhla.

BHA òganach ann roimhe seo agus dheasaich e chon falbh agus a dhùthaich agus a dhaoine fhàgail agus an saoghal carraideach a chur fo a cheann. B'e an t-òganach aona mhac a mhàthar. Bha cridhe na màthar làn leòin agus bròin, làn deòir agus tuirim, a chionn a h-aona mhic a bhith 'ga fàgail agus gun fios ciod e an dòigh a dhèanadh i chon a chumail aice fhéin.

Thubhairt an gille suairce ri a mhàthair, 'Cò nis, a mhàthair, an latha dh'fhalbhas mi? Cò idir latha sealbhach na seachdain?' Is ann a sin a fhreagair màthair an òganaich agus a labhair i na briathran a leanas.



HIR a dh'imicheadh a màireach,  
 Illinn hó ro hù o hù o  
 Dèan fuireach beag mar a thà thu,  
 Hillirinn hó ro hù o hù o  
 Hillinn o ì hu ó ho ì  
 Hó hiura bhi hù o hù o  
 Hill ó a bha hillinn ó ro  
 Gun an dèan mi léin an t-snàth dhut;  
 Tha fuireach is fuireach dhà sin:  
 Chuireadh an lion is cha d'fhàs e,  
 Tha a' chlòimh air caor an fhàsaich,  
 Tha bheart-fhighe 'n coille Phàdraig,  
 Tha 'm bac anns a' chraoibh as airde,

Printed originally in *Yorkshire Celtic Studies*, i. 46. With the first part of this poem cf. the Weaving Lilt from Barra published in *Songs of the Hebrides*, ii. 6-10. Cf. Nicolson's *Gaelic Proverbs*, 324: *Na falbh Di-Luain*, etc. In Macintosh's *Collection of Gaelic Proverbs* these lines are given in explanation of the proverb: *Triall a' bhodaich o thaigh féin*, but the collector adds that 'some call it the young maid's request of her wooer whom she did not incline to part with.' (Cf. MacLagan MS., no. 177.) The following version of the words occurs in the Carmichael papers:

## THE AUSPICIOUS DAY

From Christine Gillies, Dùn Gainmheachadh, Benbecula. Also from Mary MacDonald, wife of Alexander MacNeil, Ceann Tangabhal, Barra, 25th September 1872. Mrs MacNeil spoke of the mother's 'taibhse,' vision of the second sight.

THERE was a youth before now and he prepared to go away, and to leave his country and his people, and to place the wrangling world under his head. The youth was the only son of his mother. The mother's heart was full of grief and of sorrow, full of tears and of weeping, her only son to be leaving her, and she not knowing how she would contrive to keep him with herself.

The kindly youth said to his mother, 'What day now, mother, shall I go? Which is the auspicious day of the week, at all?' Then the mother of the youth answered and spoke the words that follow.

THOU man who wouldst travel to-morrow,  
 Illinn ho ro hu o hu o  
 Tarry a little as thou art,  
 Hillirinn ho ro hu o hu o  
 Hillinn o i hu o ho i  
 Ho hiura bhi hu o hu o  
 Hill o a bha hillinn o ro  
 Till I make a shirt of thread for thee;  
 There is waiting and waiting for that:  
 The lint was sown but has not grown,  
 The wool is on the sheep of the wasteland,  
 The loom is in the wood of Patrick,  
 The beam is in the highest tree,

Siubhal Domhnach na toir uat,  
 Di-Luain na h-éirich moch,  
 Iomasgarach am Màrt,  
 Leig na trì làithean seach;  
 Ciadaoin nan cuisle craobh,  
 Daorn nan aonach nochd,  
 Aena nan olc leig uat,  
 Cha dual düt falbh a nochd,

[a' Mhàrt .

[buadh

Tha an spàl aig Rìgh na Spàine, [spàl-fighe  
 Tha 'n t-iteachan aig a' Bhànri'nn,  
 Tha bhaineach gun bhreith dh'a màthair.  
 Fhir a dh'ìmicheadh a màireach,  
 Chan fhalbh thu Luan, chan fhalbh thu Mhàrta,  
 Tha 'n Ceud-Aona cuarach cràiteach,  
 Tha an Daorna buaireach bàireach, ['na latha brànrach  
 Tha 'n dara h-Aona 'na là tàmh,  
 Tha 'n Satharna dha'n Mhoire Mhàthair,  
 Moladh an Domhnach an t-Ardrìgh.  
 Fhir a dh'ìmicheadh gu làidir,  
 Chan fhalbh thu Luan [Chiadain] chinn an ràithe.

Fhir a dh'ìmicheadh gu h-eutrom,  
 Tha fuil dhearg an lùib do léine;  
 Chan fhuil earba, chan fhuil fhéidh,  
 Ach fuil do chuim 's tu làn do chreuchdan.

Ghléidh am boireannach bochd a mac aice fhéin agus cha do thréig e i  
 riamh gun do dhùin e a sùil an uair a chaidh i thairis air abhainn dubh  
 a' bhàis.

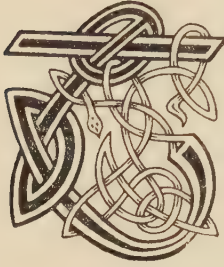
The shuttle is with the King of Spain,  
The bobbin is with the Queen,  
The weaver is not born to her mother.  
Thou man who wouldst travel to-morrow,  
Thou shalt not go on Monday nor shalt thou go on Tuesday,  
Wednesday is tormenting, hurtful,  
On Thursday are temptation and turbulence,  
Friday is a day of rest,  
Saturday is to the Mary Mother,  
Let the Lord's Day praise the High King.  
Thou man who wouldst travel strongly,  
Thou shalt not go on Monday [Wednesday], the end of the  
quarter.

Thou man who wouldst travel lightly,  
There is red blood upon thy shirt;  
Not blood of roe nor blood of deer,  
But blood of thy body and thou full of wounds.

The poor woman kept her son with herself, and he never forsook her  
till he closed her eyes when she went over the black river of death.

## NA FIR CHRÒDHA

SOME disease occurred among the wild birds of St Kilda, greatly lessening



HA na fir chròdha  
 Air chomhnard an fhirich,  
 'S tha na boireannaich bhòidheach  
 Air chomhnard a' ghlinne,  
 Le 'm breacanan glasa  
 'S le 'n casan as gile,  
 Is ge milis an diar  
 'S i an t-sidheann a shir mi.

O hì ri-ag hó ro-ag hó ró  
 Sna hi ri rì ri-ag hó ro ho hù

'S iad mo ghaol luchd nan taighean  
 Air nach laigheadh an gruaman,  
 A dhèanadh an t-sidheann  
 Far nach ruigeadh an luaidh orr,  
 'S nach iarradh am fùdar  
 Gus an dùsgadh 'nan gluasad,  
 Luchd marbhaidh an t-sùlair,  
 'S iomadh cliù tha ri luaidh orr!

O hì ri-ag hó ro-ag hó ró  
 Sna hi ri rì ri-ag hó ro ho hù

Ach fear a Chlann Fhearchair,  
 Cha dearmaid mi 'n cùil thu,  
 Is mi féin cho dearbhtha  
 Nach cearbach do ghiùlan;

## THE BRAVE MEN

the food supply of the people of the island. The following poem was made on that occasion.

THE brave men are  
 On the flat of the moor,  
 And the beautiful women  
 On the flat of the glen,  
 With their grey plaids  
 And their pure-white feet,  
 And though sweet is the . . .  
 It is venison I sought.

O hi ri-ag ho ro-ag ho ro  
 Sna hi ri ri ri-ag ho ro ho hu

My love are the households  
 On whom gloom would not settle,  
 Who would procure venison  
 Where lead would not reach the birds,  
 And who would not require powder  
 To wake them into activity,  
 The killers of the solan goose—  
 Much fair fame is theirs to tell of.

O hi ri-ag ho ro-ag ho ro  
 Sna hi ri ri ri-ag ho ro ho hu

But a man of Clan Farquhar,  
 I would not leave thee neglected in a corner,  
 Seeing I am so persuaded  
 That thy conduct is faultless;

Bheireadh tu an fhalc  
 Far leacainn an Dùnain,  
 Is nam faigheadh tu cleachdadh  
 Is tu chreachadh am fulmair.

O hì ri-ag hó ro-ag hó ró  
 Sna hì rì rì ri-ag hó ro ho hù

Is fear a Chlann Domhnaill,  
 Cha chòir dhuinn a thilleadh; [’uinn  
 Tha colas an tairbh ort,  
 Amhach gharbh is dà shlinnein;  
 Mura deachaidh mi ’m mearachd,  
 Is tu ’s treasa de d’ chinneadh,—  
 Gur reamhra do chalpa  
 Na corp am bheil sine! [cairbh, cairb, dealbh

O hì ri-ag hó ro-ag hó ró  
 Sna hì rì rì ri-ag hó ro ho hù

Thou wouldst bring the razor-bill  
 From the ledges of the Dunan,  
 And didst thou but get practice  
 Thou wouldst harry the fulmar.

O hi ri-ag ho ro-ag ho ro  
 Sna hi ri ri ri-ag ho ro ho hu

And a man of Clan Donald,  
 'Twere not right to rebuff him;  
 Thou art fashioned like a bull,  
 Thick of neck and broad of shoulder;  
 If I be not mistaken  
 Thou art the mightiest of thy clan,—  
 Stouter the calf of thy leg  
 Than a well-matured body!

O hi ri-ag ho ro-ag ho ro  
 Sna hi ri ri ri-ag ho ro ho hu

## GIÙRAN

'S E Giùran mac Giùrain  
 Fear rùsgadh nan lann,  
 Fear chuartach na dùthcha,  
 Fear sgiùrsadh dhubh-Ghall;  
 Is a dh'aindeoin gach diumba,  
 Gach sgùlain 's gach cainn, [sgùlaidh, ulthrais  
 'S e Giùran mac Giùrain  
 Mo rùn dhe na th' ann.

Thug mi bliadhna am bhreislich  
 Am freasdal do ghaoil;  
 Thug mi bliadhna an teasaich,  
 Mo bhriathr gun robh aor;  
 Bha mo mhàthair a' deasbad,  
 Bha m'athair am fraoch,  
 Ach Giùran nan geasla [geaslann  
 Mo cheistean dha'n t-saol.

Thug mi corr agus bliadhna  
 Am fiabhras do ghaoil;  
 Thug mi corr agus bliadhna,  
 Mo bhriathr cha b'e 'm faoin;  
 Bha m'athair a' grìosadh,  
 Mo mhàthair a' caoin,  
 Ach Giùran nan giall  
 Mo chiallan de dhaoin.

This is in the measure of another old song beginning:

Mun cuart do Loch Creuran  
 Cha téid mi gu bràth  
 Gun bhogha gun saighead  
 Gun chlaidhe-dà-lámh.

Cf. iv. 328 ff. For other versions see *Scottish Highlander*,

## GIÙRAN

GIÙRAN son of Giùran is  
 The unsheather of swords,  
 The ranger of the countryside  
 And the scourge of black Saxons;  
 And despite all the resentment,  
 The gossip and talk,  
 Giùran son of Giùran is  
 My love of them all.

I spent a year in delirium  
 Awaiting thy love;  
 I spent a year in a fever,  
 My word! I had cause;  
 My mother was wrangling,  
 My father was enraged,  
 But Giùran of heroic deeds [magic blades  
 Is the dearest in the world to me.

I spent more than a year  
 In the fever of thy love;  
 I spent more than a year,  
 My word! 'twas not a trifle;  
 My father was cursing,  
 My mother was weeping,  
 But Giùran of the hostages  
 Is my darling of men.

About Loch Creran  
 I shall never go  
 Without bow and arrow  
 And two-handed sword.

## MHIOG! MHAG! HÓ!

CATHERINE MACAULAY had the curious belief that she could convert storms into calm by singing this song. Her voice was strong and sonorous, yet melodious and delightful to hear. 'By the Book, Mr Carmichael, you would travel many miles to hear her. You never saw such a stir as she created in the midst of our "baile," townland, when her turn came in the circuit at the *céilidh*.' Catherine MacAulay's family, along with several others, was evicted from Benmore, the young and strong being sent to Nova Scotia, the old and frail being sent to live upon the people of the plains of Uist. The representative of the Gordon estates declared before the Crofters' Commission and again before the Deer Forest Commission that there had been no people in Benmore, that is, upon the east side of South Uist. The writer, however, has a list of families who had been evicted from Benmore. This list gives their various destinations, and was compiled by the Reverend Donald MacColl, priest of the parish during many years, a man of outstanding ability and integrity. [The original list is now in the possession of Mr J. L. Campbell of Canna.]

According to Duncan Maclellan, a reliable informant, Catherine MacAulay could relate many vivid and interesting stories of Prince Charlie during the time when he was among the crofters of Benmore. I took notes of some of these.

MHIOG! mhag! hó!

Comann nan cóig mag.

[miog]

Cha dèan mi comann le Earc

[Searc, Art

Na le Mac an Iarla Ruaidh

Gon an toir an seangan sac

Hi hiùra bhi hoireann ó

Dha'n bhraich bhach thar a' chuan.

Mhiog! mhag! hó!

Comann nan cóig mag.

Cf. *Mac Òg an Iarla Ruaidh*, Sinclair's *Òranaiche*, 175; *Leabhar na Féinne*, 212.

## MHIÖG! MHAG! HO!

The Reverend John MacAulay, grandfather of Lord Macaulay, was minister of South Uist in Prince Charlie's time. He was a highly capable man but obstinate in his opinions and an anti-Jacobite. When he came to know that the Prince had left Benmore for Stornoway he sent a messenger to his father, the minister of Harris, and his father sent a messenger to his son, a solicitor at Stornoway. When the minister of Harris came to know that the Prince was in the Island of Scalpay he hurriedly got together a crew of his kinsmen and retainers and hurried away at midnight to seize him. The Prince was staying in the house of Donald Campbell, tacksman of Scalpay, a dependant of the House of Argyll. Campbell had men on watch around the island. In the early morning one of these reported that a boat from Miabhaig a' Chuain was making for Scalpay. Campbell got up, took his 'claidhe-mór,' big two-handed sword, and hurried down to meet the boat, which was that of the minister of Harris and his kinsmen. In the discussion which followed Campbell declared that the Prince was indeed in his house, and that, while he himself was in principle no friend to every claim of the House of Stuart, he would fight and die for the fugitive who was a guest in his house. The minister and his party eventually retired.\*

MHIÖG! mhag! ho!

The communion of the five 'mags.'

I shall not make communion with Earc  
 Nor with the Son of the Red Earl  
 Until the ant shall bring a sack  
 Hi hiura bhi hoireann o  
 Of the heady malt across the ocean.

Mhiog! mhag! ho!

The communion of the five 'mags.'

\* Cf. J. L. Buchanan, *Travels in the Western Hebrides*, 65-7.

Cha dèan mi suirgheachd le Earc  
 Na le Mac an Iarla Ruaidh  
 Gon an toir an seillean breac  
 Hi hiùra bhi hoireann ó  
 A' mhill 'na ghlaic thar a' chluain.

Mhiog! mhag! hó!  
 Comann nan cóig mag.

Cha dèan mi suairceas le Earc  
 Na le Mac an Iarla Ruaidh  
 Gon an toir am bradan breac  
 Hi hiùra bhi hoireann ó  
 Na trì ghleac an crò nan uan. [air achadh buan

Mhiog! mhag! hó!  
 Comann nan cóig mag.

Cha dèan mi cliarachd le Earc  
 Na le Mac an Iarla Ruaidh  
 Gon an toir am beachan breac  
 Hi hiùra bhi hoireann ó  
 Comhlan feachd air leachd nan tuam.

Mhiog! mhag! hó!  
 Comann nan cóig mag.

Cha dèan mi suaimhneas le Earc  
 Na le Mac an Iarla Ruaidh  
 Gon an tig a' bheinnd ud shìos  
 Hi hiùra bhi hoireann ó  
 Chumail sìth ri beinnd ud shuas.

Mhiog! mhag! hó!  
 Comann nan cóig mag.

I shall not make wooing with Earc  
 Nor with the son of the Red Earl  
 Until the speckled bee shall bring  
 Hi hiura bhi hoireann o  
 The honey in its grasp \* across the meadow.

Mhiog! mhag! ho!  
 The communion of the five 'mags.'

I shall not make pleasantness with Earc  
 Nor with the Son of the Red Earl  
 Until the speckled salmon shall give  
 Hi hiura bhi hoireann o  
 The three struggles in the pen of the lambs. [on a reaping  
 field

Mhiog! mhag! ho!  
 The communion of the five 'mags.'

I shall not make poet's minstrelsy with Earc  
 Nor with the Son of the Red Earl  
 Until the speckled little bee shall bring  
 Hi hiura bhi hoireann o  
 A band of troops upon the flagstone of the tombs.

Mhiog! mhag! ho!  
 The communion of the five 'mags.'

I shall not make repose with Earc  
 Nor with the Son of the Red Earl  
 Until yonder mountain below shall come  
 Hi hiura bhi hoireann o  
 To keep peace with yonder mountain above.

Mhiog! mhag! ho!  
 The communion of the five 'mags.'

\* Or perhaps 'to the hollow.'

Cha dèan mi suairceas le Earc  
Na le Mac an Iarla Ruaidh  
Gon an tig Fionn flath nam feachd  
Hi hiùra bhi hoireann ó  
A chumail ceart ri Art nam buadh.

Mhiog! mhag! hó!  
Comann nan cóig mag.

I shall not make pleasantness with Earc  
Nor with the Son of the Red Earl  
Until Fionn prince of the troops shall come  
Hi hiura bhi hoireann o  
To keep justice with Art of triumphs.

Mhiog! mhag! ho!  
The communion of the five 'mags.'

## BEAN-TUIRIM

IN Tíree the 'tuirimeag' or 'bean-tuirim,' mourning-woman, was found until the middle of last century. There was some ill feeling between the last mourning-woman and a neighbour called Domhnall Ruadh, Red Donald. At their last encounter the woman said, 'Bheir mis ort, a Dhomhnaill Ruaidh, gum bi thu beò an déidh do bhàis.'—'I will make thee live after thy death, Red Donald.' The man died and the mourning-woman took her place at the head of the funeral procession according to custom. Beneath her cloak she carried a cat, and at the end of each verse of her elegy the cat called out. The young were amused, but the older were shocked to see the woman's malice and her misuse of her position. She was never again asked to mourn at a funeral, and the custom finally died out through her unseemly conduct. The aged narrator of this, Donald MacDonald, crofter in Manal, Tíree, quoted the saying :

Gheobh badhbh a h-achan,  
Ge nach faigh a h-anam tròcair.

A wicked woman will get her prayer,  
Though her soul shall not get mercy.

A verse of the woman's elegy will suffice :

Shiubhail thu, shiubhail thu!  
Shiubhail is cha d'fhuirich thu!  
Chan fhaic sinne tuilleadh thu,  
Dhomhnaill duibh dhuaidh!

Thou art gone, thou art gone!  
Thou art gone and hast remained not!  
We shall see thee no more,  
Black evil Donald!

## MOURNING-WOMAN

In Lismore the place over which, whether by design or by accident, a funeral procession travels is ever after considered sacred and has a right of way.

In Barra a corpse is left forty-eight hours above ground, in Uist from three to five nights.

The 'séis,' 'séisig' or 'séisig-bhàis,' death-mourning, or death-music, was the mourning in the house after the death. The 'tuiream,' 'tuirim,' lament, was the mourning in the open after the journey to the place of burial.

Piping. John MacDonald, Strombane, Lochmaddy, used to pipe after funerals in North Uist. I knew John MacDonald, a famous piper; he died about twenty years ago [dated 21st June 1904].

'Gul, gal,' weeping or sobbing, was applied to professional mourning. This has fallen into disuse in Scotland, though it is still practised in Ireland, where it is called 'caoineadh,' keening. The writer prevailed upon a woman in Barra to give a practical illustration of this lost and almost forgotten art. The burial was that of a crofter-fisherman who died young; his house was in Lag nan Druisean, the Hollow of the Brambles, lying below Heaval, the highest hill in Barra. The scene was remarkable; below and right before us on its tidal rock stood the magnificent ruin of Ciosmal Castle, the ancient residence of MacNeil of Barra, and beyond this for twelve miles out to sea lay one behind another the isles of the Atlantic, usually wild and foamy, like lions at bay, this day peaceful and calm as lambs tired of play. The 'bean-tuirim,' rehearsing- or lamenting-woman, was tall and handsome, though somewhat gaunt and bony, with long features and long arms. At first she was reluctant to sing, but by degrees she came to use her magnificent voice to the full and the result was striking in the extreme. She and I followed the body as it was carried in simple fashion on three staves by a man at either end of each. The woman rehearsed the grief, the bitter grief, of the winsome young widow, the cries, the bitter cries, of the helpless young children, asking, plaintively asking, who would now bring them the corn from the breird, the meal from the mill, the fish from the sea and the birds from the rocks? Who indeed? No one now, since he was laid low. She then rehearsed the sorrows of the poor and the needy, the friendless and the aged whom he had been wont to help. Who would help them now? Who indeed? No one now, since he was laid low.

See reference to the coronach in *Minutes of the Synod of Argyll*, i. 61; *Scotland and Scotsmen (from the Ochtertyre MSS.)*, ii. 429-33. Cf. iii. 378-85.

## TUIRIM-TÒRRAIDH

Cò sin agaibh air na maidean?  
 Cò ach mo ghuala thacsa,  
 Cò ach mo loma losga,  
 Cò ach mo chomhnadh chagair,  
 Cò ach mo ghual chreachaidh,  
 Cò ach mo luaidh 's mo thasgaidh,  
 Co ach sùgh sùigh mo chéille.

## DIRGE

WHOM have you there upon the staves?  
 Whom but my supporting shoulder,  
 Whom but my utter burning,  
 Whom but my close succour,  
 Whom but my burning coal of loss,  
 Whom but my darling and my treasure,  
 Whom but the sap of the sap of my heart.

## TUIRIM-BHÀIS

## THRENODY

MARY MACLEOD the poetess, Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, lived for a time in Benbecula at Aird near Nunton, the house of Clan Ranald. A sister who lived with her died there, and her body was taken to Rodel in Harris for burial. On the way through North Uist, a professional 'bean-tuirim,' mourning-woman, accidentally met the funeral procession and instinctively joined in weeping and wailing, like to break her heart. After a while at this, the woman asked in an aside:

Ach, a Rìgh shaoghail      [shaoghlaich/ghaolaich MS.  
 'S a Rìgh fheartaich,  
 Cò bu shloinneadh  
 Dha mo loma-logadh?

But, O King of the world  
 And King of wondrous power,  
 What was the clan-name  
 Of my utter burning?—

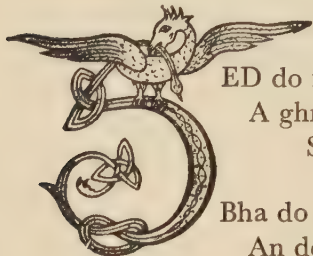
i.e. of the dead person who was causing her such grief. The person she addressed happened to be Mary MacLeod, the sister of the deceased, and she at once replied:

Nan robh thu, ghaoil, an Cille Mhoire,  
 No 'n Einneort nan giùlan troma,  
 No 'n Roghadal nan leachda loma,  
 Chan fhaighnichte cò do shloinneadh!

Wert thou, my dear, in Kilmuir,  
 Or in Eynort of the solemn processions,  
 Or in Rodel of the bare tombstones,  
 It would not be asked what was thy surname!

## SÉISIG-BHÀIS

THIS lament or dirge (séisig-bhàis, tuirim-bhàis) was composed in Barra towards the end of the eighteenth century. A family of one son and two daughters were left orphans, and were devotedly attached to each other. The son was carried off through the night by the press-gang, and was either mortally hurt in the struggle or was killed soon after. Thereafter



ED do fhuair thu am bàs,  
A ghràidh, cha ruigeadh tu leas;  
Still uam, still am.

Bha do cheapagan càis  
An déidh an càradh air gad;  
Still uam, still am.

Bha do chiosgagan ime [chiosganan,  
An déidh an limeadh le d' bhas; mhiosgagan  
Still uam, still am.

'S bha do chisteagan mine  
An déidh an dinneadh le d' chas.  
Still uam, still am.

Cà an téid sinn d'ar gearan [S an t-earrach cho  
'S sinn air acras sa chuart? cruaidh  
Still uam, still am.

Cà an téid sinn d'ar garadh  
'S sinn d'ar lathadh le fuachd?  
Still uam, still am.

*Cf. Poetry of Badenoch, 229.*

## DEATH-LAMENT

the sisters lost their reason in part, and went about from house to house and from island to island. The people were kind to them, and MacNeil of Sandray was especially good to them. When he died they composed several laments for him, of which this is one. The sisters were known as Na Goimhseagan or Na Gòragan.

ALTHOUGH thou hast died,  
 Love, thou hadst not needed to die;  
 Still uam, still am.

Thy little kebbocks of cheese  
 Had been placed on the withe;  
 Still uam, still am.

Thy little kegs of butter  
 Had been smoothed by thy hand;  
 Still uam, still am.

And thy little chests of meal  
 Had been pressed by thy foot.  
 Still uam, still am.

Where shall we go to make our plaint  
 When we are hungry on the round?  
 Still uam, still am. [The Spring  
 being so hard

Where shall we go to warm ourselves  
 When we are chilled with cold?  
 Still uam, still am.

Cà an téid sinn d'ar fasgadh  
 'S do theallach gun tuar? [cheallach, chagailt  
 Still uam, still am.

Cà an tathaich 's an tadhail  
 'S do thaigh, a ghaoil, fuar?  
 Still uam, still am.

Ged do fhuair thu am bàs,  
 Cha bu ghnàs dhut a' ghruam;  
 Still uam, still am.

'S math dh'fhaodadh tu fuireach  
 Gu toir gruithim do shluagh. [A thoirt  
 Still uam, still am.

Ach a Mhoire mhìn ghràidh,  
 Dèan-sa bàidh ri mo luaidh.  
 Still uam, still am.

The 'bean-tuiream' followed the body, every now and then striking the coffin with her hands like a drum, and making all the din possible, and keeping time with the movements of the men. All the virtues of the

Thubhairt Catrìona Phearsan, Ceann Tangabhal, Barraidh: Bha bean-ghlùin agus bean-tuiream anns a chuile baile am Barraidh. Agus bha e mar fhiachaibh air muinntir a chuile baile fiar samhraidh agus fodar geamhraidh fhaicinn aig gach té dha'n t-seòrsa gu àilgheas a' mhaoir air faobhar a' chlaidhe. Agus chan fhaodadh na daoine dìth no deireas fhaicinn air té seach té dhiubh seo, los gum bitheadh gach té dhiubh murrach air a dleasdanas a dhèanadh dar a thigeadh e m'a coinneamh, agus mo thruaigh an té nach dèanadh—b'e ise té a' chruaidh-fhortain!

Where shall we go for shelter  
Since thy hearth is now dead?  
Still uam, still am.

Whom shall we resort to and visit  
Since thy house, love, is cold?  
Still uam, still am.

Although thou hast died,  
It was not thy wont to be gloomy;  
Still uam, still am.

Well mightest thou have stayed  
To give crowdy to folk.  
Still uam, still am.

But, O gentle loved Mary,  
Be thou kind to my love.  
Still uam, still am.

dead, and a few more, were mentioned and extolled, and the genealogy for many generations praised and lauded.

Catherine Pearson, Ceann Tangabhal, Barra (24th September 1872), said: There was a midwife and a mourning-woman in each townland in Barra. And it was an obligation on the people of each townland to find each woman of the sort in summer grass and winter fodder to the satisfaction of the bailiff on the sword's edge. And the people might not see one of these suffer loss or want more than her fellow, in order that each of them should be able to do her duty when it came to her, and alas for her who should not—she was the woman of the hard fate!

## CUMHA MHIC AN TÒISICH



URA mis a' bhean mhulaid,  
A' giùlan na curraic,  
O'n a chuala gach duine  
Gur ann 'na mhullach bha 'm fàbhar.

[sic]

Gura mis atà tùrsach  
O'n a chuireadh san ùir thu;  
Thoir mo shoiridh le dùrachd  
Gu tùr nan clach arda.

Gura mis atà cianail  
O thoiseach na bliadhna;  
Dé cha ghabhainn dha m'iarraidh  
Mac iarla no stàta.

Tha an latha geal grianach,  
Tha ceòl air na liana,  
Tha féile, tha fìon ann,—  
Cha tog sin dlomsa mo phràmhnan.

Dé cha téid mi gu banais,  
Chaidh gu féill no gu faidhir,  
'S ann toiseach an earraich  
Fhuair mi 'n t-saighead a chràidh mi.

Mo rùn air mo leannan,  
Lùb ùr a' chùil chlannaich,  
Gum bu chubhraidh na 'n caineal  
Liom anail do bhràghad.

Cf. *Killin Collection*, 46; *An Gàidheal*, ii. (1873), 168; *Celtic Monthly*, iii. 137; *Celtic Magazine*, ii. 235; *MacDonald Collection*, 336; *Gillies Collection*, 204 (=Maclagan MS., no. 61).

## MACKINTOSH'S LAMENT

It is I am the wife of sorrow,  
Wearing the cap of dolour,  
Since all men have come to know  
That on its crown is the favour.

It is I am in dire distress  
Since in the earth they laid thee;  
Carry my blessing with earnestness  
To the tower of the high stones.

It is I who am sad  
Since the beginning of the year;  
Yet would I not have seek my hand  
The son of earl or peer.

The day is bright and sunny,  
There is music on the meadows,  
There is wine in plenty there—  
That will not banish my gloom.

Yet shall I not go to wedding,  
Never more to feast or to fair,  
'Twas in the beginning of springtide  
I received the arrow that pierced me.

Beloved was my sweetheart,  
Beauteous branch of the clustering locks,  
More fragrant than cinnamon  
To me the breath of thy mouth.

Mo ghràdh air mo chùrteir,  
 Geug àlainn na dùthcha,  
 Mar ghàrradh nan ùbhlán  
 Do shùgradh 's do mhànrán.

Is tu dhannsadh gu comhnard  
 Dar sheinneadh ceòl dut,  
 'S cha lùbadh tu 'm feòirnean  
 Fo shròin do bhròig arda.

Bu tu sealgair an fhéidhe,  
 A' bhric air an leuma,  
 A' chabhair air gheuga,  
 Gun reubte 'n t-ian bàn leat.

M'eudail thu 's m'aighear  
 Am éirigh 's am laighe,  
 Aig féill agus faidhir,  
 Do shaighead a chràidh mi.

Is mise bha cuireideach,  
 Mireagach mearshuileach,  
 Is mise ta muladach  
 Is m'ulaidh fo'n fhàileig.

[curaideach

Am flon bha gu d' bhanais  
 'S ann chaidh e gu t'fhalair;  
 Rìgh, gur mi a bha galach  
 An am nan galan a thràghadh.

Gur mis a' bhean dheurach  
 Gach madainn 's mi 'g éirigh,  
 A' giùlan na bréide  
 Gach féill agus Sàbaid.

Beloved was my courtier,  
Loveliest branch of the country,  
Like the garden of apples  
Was thy dalliance and mirth.

It is thou who wouldst dance evenly  
When they played to thee the music,  
And thou wouldst not bend the grass-blade  
Beneath the point of thy high shoe.

Hunter of the deer thou,  
Of the grilse on the waterfall,  
Of the capercailzie on the bough,  
While the white bird thou wouldst kill.

My love and my joy  
Both early and late,  
At feast and at fair,  
'Tis thy arrow that pierced me.

It is I who was gay,  
Mirthful and merry-eyed,  
It is I who am now sad  
Since my treasure lies under the sod.

The wines for thy wedding  
They went to thy wake;  
Ah King! but I was tearful  
While the measures were being drained.

'Tis I am the woman of tears  
Every morning as I arise,  
Bearing the kertch  
Each feast-day and Sabbath.

Is mi muirne na dunaich  
 Nach aithnichear mi tuillidh  
 O'n taca seo 'n uiridh  
 O'n chuireadh orm fàinne.

Gura mise tha tùrsach,  
 Is tric ligh air mo shùilean,  
 Ag ionndrainn an fhiùrain,  
 Marcraich ùr nan steud àlainn.

[snigh

Bha mi 'm mhurnaich 's am bhréidich,  
 Bha mi 'm churnaich 's am chéilich;  
 Och nan och, mar a dh'éirich  
 Dhomh féin san aon làtha!

Bha mi 'm stìomaich 's am bhréidich,  
 Tha mi 'm bhantraich bhochd dheuraich,  
 Lot nan lot dha mo léireadh,  
 'S cha dèan céirein dhomh stàtha.

Mo ghaol air mo leannan,  
 Mo ghaol ort ri m' mhaireann,  
 Mo ghaol ort air thalamh  
 'S ann am flathas an Ardrigh.

Mo ghaol thu 's mo rùn thu,  
 Mo ghaol 's mo chruit chiùil thu,  
 Mo ghaol thu 's mo dhùrachd,  
 'S mo dhùil dhut am Pàrras.

Eóghain òig, leagadh tu,  
 Eóghain òig, leagadh tu,  
 Eóghain òig, leagadh tu  
 Am bealach a' ghàrraidh.

'Tis I am the maid of great grief  
Whom none again will recognise  
Since this time last year  
    When the ring was put on me.

'Tis I who am in sore distress,  
Often the tears flow from mine eyes,  
I missing the noble sapling,  
    The gallant rider of comely steeds.

I was a maid, I was kertched,  
I was veiled (?) and mated;  
Alas, alas, what befell me  
    All in the space of a day!

I was snooded, I was kertched,  
I am a poor, tearful widow,  
The wound of wounds is paining me grievously,  
    No plaster can avail me.

Beloved is my sweetheart,  
Beloved while I live,  
Beloved on earth  
    And in the kingdom of the High King.

My love and my desire art thou,  
My love and my harp of music art thou,  
My love art thou and my devoted one,  
    My hope for thee is in Paradise.

Young Ewen, thou art fallen,  
Young Ewen, thou art fallen,  
Young Ewen, thou art fallen  
    In the breach of the wall.

Och nan och, leagadh tu,  
 Och nan och, thogadh tu,  
 Och nan och, leagadh tu  
 Am bealach a' ghàrraidh.

Leag an t-each cionnann thu,  
 Thog an t-each cionnann thu,  
 Leag an t-each cionnann thu  
 An ionad a' ghàrraidh.

[ionnar

Och nach robh mis an sin,  
 Och nach robh mis an sin,  
 Och nach robh mis an sin,  
 'S bheirinn air làimh ort.

[thogainn; thu

Mharcraich an eich leumraich dhuibh,  
 Leumraich dhuibh, leumraich dhuibh,  
 Mharcraich an eich leumraich dhuibh,  
 Reub an t-each bàn thu.

Eóghain òig, leagadh tu,  
 Eóghain òig, leagadh tu,  
 Eóghain òig, leagadh tu  
 Am bealach a' ghàrraidh.

Alas, alas, thou art fallen,  
Alas, alas, thou art raised,  
Alas, alas, thou art fallen  
    In the breach of the wall.

The bald-faced horse threw thee,  
The bald-faced horse raised thee,  
The bald-faced horse threw thee  
    By the site of the wall.

Oh! an I were there,  
Oh! an I were there,  
Oh! an I were there,  
    I would have grasped thine hand.

Rider of the prancing black steed,  
Prancing black steed, prancing black steed,  
Rider of the prancing black steed,  
    The white steed tore thee.

Young Ewen, thou art fallen,  
Young Ewen, thou art fallen,  
Young Ewen, thou art fallen  
    In the breach of the wall.

## CUMHA MHIC AN TÒISICH

THIS lament was written down for me by the late Mr Paul Cameron, Blair Atholl, from the dictation of Ann Forbes, Blair Atholl. Versions were afterwards obtained from Mr James Macpherson, Union Bank, Edinburgh; Sholto Douglas, cab-driver, Stockbridge, Edinburgh, and

,



A do thogail air lunndaiddh  
 Cha chluinnear do chomhradh,  
 Ann an ciste chaoil chuimir [chumhainn  
 Dhe'n ghiuthas bu bhòidhche.

Ùbh ùbhanaich! oich oicheanaich!

Ùbh ùbhanaich! oich oicheanaich!

Ùbh ùbhanaich! oich oicheanaich!

Ùbh ùbhanaich! agus ochan,

ochan, mo thruaighe!

'S e do chur anns an uaigh

Thionn mo shuaimhneas gu dòlas,

[bròn domh

Thug mo shùilean gu sìleadh,

Dhubh misneach is treòir dhomh,

Thug mo latha gu caoidhrich,

[caoidheachd

Thug m'oidhche gu brònraich,

[deòrachd

'S cha robh cord a bha 'm chridhe

Nach do thimich cheart chomhla.

Ùbh ùbhanaich! oich oicheanaich!

Ùbh ùbhanaich! oich oicheanaich!

Ùbh ùbhanaich! oich oicheanaich!

Ùbh ùbhanaich! agus ochan, ochan, mo thruaighe!

## MACKINTOSH'S LAMENT

others. Sholto Douglas was a native of Blair Atholl, and knew that district well; he was a well-built, intelligent, and respectable man, and spoke Atholl Gaelic admirably.

THOU art being lifted on the bier,  
 Thy converse is not heard,  
 In a coffin slender, shapely,  
 Of pine the fairest.

Ubh ubhanaich! oich oicheanaich!  
 Ubh ubhanaich! oich oicheanaich!  
 Ubh ubhanaich! oich oicheanaich!  
 Ubh ubhanaich! And ochan, ochan,  
 my affliction!

Thy being placed in the grave  
 Has turned my gladness to sorrow,  
 Has turned my eyes to weeping,  
 Has darkened hope and strength to me,  
 Has turned my day to wailing,  
 Has turned my night to mourning,  
 Nor was there a string within my heart  
 That was not daunted all at once.

Ubh ubhanaich! oich oicheanaich!  
 Ubh ubhanaich! oich oicheanaich!  
 Ubh ubhanaich! oich oicheanaich!  
 Ubh ubhanaich! And ochan, ochan,  
 my affliction!

An t-each dubh 's an t-each lachdann  
 'Nan laighe san ràidhlean,  
 An t-each dubh 's an t-each lachdann  
 'Nan laighe san ràidhlean,  
 An t-each dubh 's an t-each lachdann  
 'Nan laighe san ràidhlean,  
 'S Mac an Tòisich gun othail,  
 Gun chobhair dh'a chairdean.

[réidhlean

[omhail

Marbh 'nam ghlacaibh! marbh 'nam ghlacaibh!  
 Marbh 'nam ghlacaibh! marbh 'nam ghlacaibh!  
 Marbh 'nam ghlacaibh! marbh 'nam ghlacaibh!  
 Marbh 'nam ghlacaibh! macan maise nam fuarbheann!

Rìgh nan dùl is nan aingeal,  
 Cum do ghealladh dha'n dòbhach,  
 Rùisg urla do lainne,  
 Brùchd an aghaidh nam foirne!  
 An sgùil a sgathaich mo leannan  
 An ùr allaileachd òige,  
 'S a rùisg m'anam gu geurghuin,  
 Rìgh na gréin, bi dh'an tòrachd!

[Ailpich

[Rìgh Géig

Air sgàth 'n Tì chaidh a cheusadh,  
 Rìgh, geuraich do ghnùis dhaibh,  
 Crùn do rùn air luchd reubainn,  
 Cum do gheurlann an dùsgadh!  
 Feuch mis air mo léireadh,  
 Feuch creuchdan mo dhùthcha,  
 Glac am madadh 'na gharaidh,  
 'S gabh an aicheamhail dhùbailt!

The black steed and the dun steed  
Lie prone upon the plain,  
The black steed and the dun steed  
Lie prone upon the plain,  
The black steed and the dun steed  
Lie prone upon the plain,  
And Mackintosh without stirring,  
Unable to succour his kin.

Dead in my arms! dead in my arms!  
Dead in my arms! dead in my arms!  
Dead in my arms! dead in my arms!  
The beautiful son of the mountains!

Thou King of life and angels,  
Keep Thy promise to the wicked,  
Bare the edge of Thy sword,  
Press against the people of rapine!  
The dastards who slew my love  
In the fresh glory of youth,  
And who awakened my soul to anguish,  
O King of the Sun, do thou pursue them!

For the sake of Him who was crucified,  
O King, sharpen now Thy face to them,  
Crown Thou Thy will upon the assassins,  
Keep now Thy sharp blade alive!  
Behold Thou me in mine agony,  
Behold Thou the wounds of my country,  
Seize Thou the wolf in his lair  
And exact a double vengeance!

A Mhic an Tòisich mhacanaich,  
 Bha am ball-seirc ad aodann,  
 Gheobhte farch is fidheall agad,  
 Croit is clàrsach chaona;  
 Bhiodh gruagaichean is gaisgichean  
 An dual do thalla faoilidh,  
 Bhiodh ceòl do phìob san lasganaich  
 Cur ruaig le d' mhacain ghaolach!

A Lachlainn an àidh! a Lachlainn an àidh!  
 A Lachlainn an àidh! a Lachlainn an àidh!  
 A Lachlainn an àidh! a Lachlainn an àidh!  
 A Lachlainn an àidh! gu là bhràtha cha ghluais tu!

Dòigh eile air an rann mu dheireadh :

Bhiodh stròlaichean is brataichean  
 San tòir air faithche fraoich leat,  
 Bhiodh nuall do phìob san racanaich  
 A' casgairt clann na daobhachd!

Tha Lachlann 'na shuain! tha Lachlann 'na shuain!  
 Tha Lachlann 'na shuain! tha Lachlann 'na shuain!  
 Tha Lachlann 'na shuain! tha Lachlann 'na shuain!  
 Gu Là Luain cha dùisg e!

Thou Mackintosh of manly mien,  
 The beauty spot was on thy brow,  
 Lyre and viol were in thy house  
 And crowd and harp of melody;  
 Maidens and heroes were wont to be  
 In thy proud plenteous halls,  
 While thy pipes sounded passionately  
 Following the rout with thy sons beloved!

Thou Lachlan the gracious! thou Lachlan the gracious!  
 Thou Lachlan the gracious! thou Lachlan the gracious!  
 Thou Lachlan the gracious! thou Lachlan the gracious!  
 Thou Lachlan the gracious! till doomsday thou wilt  
 not stir!

Variant of the last verse :

Streamers and banners would be  
 In the pursuit on the heath with thee,  
 While the wail of thy pipes sounded furiously  
 As the sons of evil were being slaughtered.

Lachlan is in his sleep! Lachlan is in his sleep!  
 Lachlan is in his sleep! Lachlan is in his sleep!  
 Lachlan is in his sleep! Lachlan is in his sleep!  
 Till doomsday he will not waken!

## MAIREARAD BHÒIDHEACH

Beulaiche: Donnchadh Camshron, ‘policeman,’ Loch Àlainn,  
A’ Mhorbhairne.

BHA dithist nighean mhór bhriagh aig Fear Bhròlais am Muile. B’e Ealasaid a theirte ris an dara té (teithe, teithidh) agus Mairearad ris an té (teithidh) eile dhiubh. Ge nach robh an teaghlach ach bochd, bha iad uasal mar bu dual da na Leathanaich:

‘Móralachd nan Domhnallach, [Pròis  
Leòmarachd nan Leathanach.’ [Leòmachd, Leòm

Arsa bean uasal ann am Muile:

‘Ged tha mi bochd tha mi uasal,  
Mar bu dual do Leathanach.’ [Mar as

Bha suirghichean a’ tighinn an rathad, spailpirean uasal agus leth-uasal dhaoinè (ghillean). Ge nach robh iad a’ riarachadh na cloinn-nighean, ghabh Ealasaid ri fear dhiubh seo. Cha toireadh Mairearad sùil air leannan, cha toireadh sùil fhéin, agus cha robh fios ’d é dhèante rithe. Bha Ealasaid a’ faicinn tromaltan air gnùis Mairearaid agus bha i ’ga clathadh feuch an innseadh i dhi fàth a bròin agus gum bu luaithe thig an sgeul rùin a mach air a glùn na mach air a beul. Dh’innis Mairearad dhi gun robh leannan falaich aice dhe na Domhnallaich, ach mar a bha na Domhnallaich agus na Leathanaich an aghaidh a chéile gun robh eagal oirre gun robh dòbhairt ri tachairt. ‘Bhruadair mi a raoir agus bhruadair mi a bhòn-raoir gun robh mo leannan marbh, agus tha càs cruaidh orm agus mi a’ falbh leis a nochd,’ arsa Mairearad. Bha cùram mu dheighinn Mairearad air Ealasaid, agus innsear seo dha leannan fhéin.

‘Cha sgeul rùin e  
Bho chuala triùir e.’

Dh’innis leannan Ealasaid seo dha na fir a bha tighinn a thoir a mach Mairearaid, agus ghabh iad fàth air an Domhnallach, agus mharbh iad e an uair a bha e falbh leis an nighinn. Ghlac Mairearad a leannan ’na gàirdeanan, agus as a siod cha tugt i,—a bheò no mharbh, a dheòin na dh’aindeoin.

‘Fhuaradh an àilleag ’s i brònach,  
Is beò cha bhuinte bho gaol i,—  
Beul ri beul is uchd ri uchd,  
Mar iadhadh slait mu stoc aosda.’

Cf. 384 *infra*.

## BEAUTIFUL MARGARET

Reciter : Duncan Cameron, policeman, Loch Aline, Morvern.

THE laird of Brolas in Mull had two tall good-looking daughters. Elizabeth was the name of one of them, Margaret that of the other. Though the family were but poor, they were noble, as was natural to the Macleans :

‘The dignity of the MacDonalds, [pride  
The conceit of the Macleans.’

Said a lady in Mull :

‘Although I am poor I am noble,  
As were natural to a Maclean.’ [As is

Woovers were coming the way, gallants noble and half-noble (well-born and half well-born). Though they did not satisfy the daughters, Elizabeth took to one of these. Margaret would not cast an eye on a suitor, not so much as an eye, and none knew what should be done with her. Elizabeth was seeing trouble on Margaret’s face, and was questioning \* her, in hope that she would tell her the cause of her sorrow, promising that the secret would come sooner out of her knee than out of her mouth. Margaret told her that she had a secret lover, one of the MacDonalds, but that since the MacDonalds and the Macleans were at odds, she feared that mischief would happen. ‘Last night I dreamed and the night before that I dreamed that my sweetheart was dead, and I am in a sorry plight, for I am going away with him to-night,’ said Margaret. Elizabeth was anxious for Margaret’s sake, and told this to her own sweetheart.

‘It is no secret  
When three have heard it.’

Elizabeth’s sweetheart told this to the men who were coming to win Margaret, and they lay in wait for MacDonald, and they killed him when he was going off with the girl. Margaret took her lover in her arms, and from that spot she could not be taken, alive or dead, of her will or against her wish.

‘The lovely maid was found in sorrow,  
And living she could not be torn from her love,—  
Mouth to mouth and breast to breast,  
As the clasp of a tendril round an aged stock.’

\* pressing ?

Ach rugadh air an nighinn agus splonadh (thruiseadh) air falbh i air fras-mhullach ghuaillan dhaoine.

Cha robh na Leathanaich a muigh na mach air son an nighean, agus i cho mór agus cho briagh agus cho eireachdail, a leigeil leis na Domhnallaich. Chaill an nighean a ciall agus bha i a' falbh feadh Mhuile feuch am faigheadh i for air a leannan. Dé cha d'fhuair. Cha robh i tighinn fo dhruim taighe agus cha robh i a' gabhail sgath bithidh, ach an aon sgrìob bho cois agus an aon duan bho beul (ceann).—'Am fac thu mo leannan?'

Fhuaradh Mairearad marbh am bràigh na Beinne Móire, gun tuar air feòil, gun snuadh air fuil, mar a chaith i as (shnaidh i as), agus mar a chaidh i bhuaidh. Bhàsaich athair agus màthair Mairearaid le bròn agus le leòn agus le briste-cridhe, agus chaill Ealasaid sealladh nan sùl le tùrs agus le tuiream. Dh'fhàg na daoine a mharbh an Domhnallach an dùthaich, agus cha do thog iad ceann riamh tuilleadh.

But the girl was seized and plucked away on the very summit of men's shoulders.

The Macleans were no way for letting the girl, so stately and fine and handsome as she was, go with the MacDonalds. The girl lost her reason, and was going about throughout Mull in hopes that she might get word of her sweetheart. She got none. She would come under no house-roof nor take a morsel of food, but her feet ever on the move and the same cry ever on her lips,—‘Hast thou seen my sweetheart?’

Margaret was found dead in the brae of Ben More, without colour on flesh, without hue on blood (wasted and bloodless), so had she dwindled and pined away. Margaret's father and mother died of grief and hurt and heartbreak, and Elizabeth lost the sight of her eyes with mourning and lamenting. The men who killed MacDonald left the country, and never showed up again.

## MAIREARAD BHÒIDHEACH

Tha cathair mo mhàthar fàs fuar falamh,  
 Tha m'athair thug luaidh dhomh 'na shuain anns an lic ;  
 Tha mi falbh nam fàsach gun stàth dhomh air talamh,  
 'S gun agam dha m' chuideachd ach piuthar  
 gun iochd.

Tha sunnag mo mhàthar fàs fuar falamh, [suidheag  
 Tha m'athair thug gràdh dhomh a' tàmh anns an lic ;  
 Tha mi siubhal nan aonach am aonar air talamh,  
 'S gun san t-saoghal dha m' chuideachd ach piuthar  
 gun iochd.

Dh'iarr ise 's leig mise dhi fios air mo dheuchainn, [dha mo  
 'S gun agam fo'n ghréin ris an leughainn mo rùn ;  
 [leiginn  
 Ach dh'fhairich mi siod, 's thug e ligh air mo léirsinn, [snigh  
 Gura luaithe thig sgeul thre bheul na thre  
 ghlùn.

Nara cinnear dha'n chùis anns an cuir thu do rùn,  
 Nara silear dha'n driùchd air ùir do lis, [lios,  
 Nara seinnear dha'n smùid os cinn do bhùith, [fhosg, fhosg,  
 Nara faicear dha d' shùil an cruth tha fo d' chrios. uiseag

Gun robh a' chrom 's a' chnoidh an cothram do stòir,  
 [a' chruinn; a' chnoidheag; an torran  
 Gun robh 'n lóman 's am botas am bord do chist ;  
 [lotas; fo bhord  
 Nan robh guidhe aig piuthair ri tuirim 's ri bròn,  
 ['S ma tha  
 Gun dlòladh a deòir ge b'ann air do shliochd. [dlòltar

Cf. *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition*, v. 97. The second quatrain may be merely a variant version of the first.

## BEAUTIFUL MARGARET

THE chair of my mother is void, cold and empty,  
 My father who loved me is sleeping in the tomb;  
 I am travelling the wilds to no purpose on earth,  
 Since I have now none of my kindred but a sister without  
 pity.

The 'sunnag' \* of my mother is void, cold and empty,  
 My father who loved me is dwelling in the tomb;  
 I am travelling the heights all alone upon earth,  
 Since in the world there is none of my kindred save a sister  
 without pity.

She sought and I gave her the cause of my distress,  
 Since I had none under the sun to whom to read my secret;  
[reveal  
 But this I felt, and it brought the flood to mine eyes,  
 That sooner will a secret come through the mouth than  
 through the knee.

Never prosper the thing in which thou puttest thy love,  
 Nor ever fall the dew on the earth of thy garden,  
 Nor ever sing the lark over thy dwelling,  
 Nor ever behold thine eye the form beneath thy girdle.

May the worm and the maggot possess thy store,  
 May the moth and the belly-worm work within the lid of  
 thy chest;  
 Were there hearing of the prayer of a sister sobbing and  
 mourning,  
 Avenged would be her tears even upon thy children.

\* Chair made of twisted straw.

Gun robh an taghan 's an clamhan a' clabail do chearc,  
 Gun robh am màrtainn 's am madradh a' malairt do chìr,  
 [chìob  
 Gun robh bhoil agus an tòchd an tòir air do mharc,  
 Gun robh an earnach 's an t-earchall a' tearbadh do nì.  
 [Gun robh dubhach is deargach an earbsa do nì.

Tha mi siubhal nan arn 's tha mi siubhal nan ard, [gach;  
 màin; carn  
 Tha mi siubhal nan àit am bu ghnàth le mo luaidh;  
 [gach; màin  
 Tha mi siubhal nan doire 's nan coire 's nan coille  
 Bho chomhnard nam monadh gu cola nan cruach.  
 [a' mhonaidh

Tha mi faire nam bealach 's a' gabhail nan gleanna, [s a' faire  
 Feuch am faic mi mo leannan bha farasda suairc;  
 Chan fhaic, a ghaoil, chan fhaic mi dhìot sealladh  
 Am barraibh nam beannaibh na 'n oirir a' chuain.

Tha mi tadhall nan tuil 's tha mi tadhall nan sruth,  
 Tha mi tadhall nam brugh, nan uiridh 's nan uamh,  
 Feuch am faic mi do chruth, feuch an cluinn mi do ghuth;  
 Chan fhaic mi 's cha chluinn mi ach caoidhrich a' chuain.

May the marten and the harrier be plundering thy fowls,  
May the fox and the wolf be bartering thy sheep,  
May madness and blindness be searching out thy horses,  
May murrain and spring-losses be sundering thy kine.  
[May black spaul and red pleura be in charge of thy kine.

I am travelling the sheilings (?), I am travelling the heights,  
I am travelling the places frequented of my love ;  
I am travelling the groves and the corries and the woods  
From the base of the mountains to the crest of the hills.

I am watching the passes and traversing the hollows,  
To see if I behold my lover who was gracious and kind ;  
I see not thee, my love, I see not glimpse of thee  
On the tops of the mountains nor at the edge of the sea.

I am visiting the streams and I am visiting the rivers,  
I am visiting the bowers, the rock-shelves and the caves,  
To try if I can see thy form, to try if I can hear thy voice ;  
I see and hear nought but the sorrowing of the sea.

## TÀLADH



HA nead an fhithich  
 Ann an creig an sgithich,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n  
 t-ian. [Caidil thus, a leinibh, . . . thu

Tha nead na faoileig  
 Ann an creag an aolaich,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead an tarmaich  
 Ann am beinn a' gharbhlaich,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na smeòraich  
 Anns a' bhadan bhòidheach,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na londubh  
 Ann am broinn a' chrogain,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na h-uisgeig  
 Ann an lorg na Dubhaig,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

*Cf. Celtic Magazine, xii. 299; Poetry of Badenoch, 27.*

## LULLABY

THE nest of the raven  
Is in the hawthorn rock,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the seagull  
Is in the rock of droppings,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the ptarmigan  
Is in the rough mountain,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the mavis  
Is in the bonnie copse,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the blackbird  
Is in the withered bough,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the skylark  
Is in the track of 'Dubhag,' [a cow  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

Tha nead a' chalmain  
 Anns na creaga dearga,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na lachann  
 Ann am bràigh an lochain,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na cuthaig  
 Ann an nead na riabhaig,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na bòdhaig  
 Anns a' mholan chomhnard,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead a' chrannlaich  
 Ann am bràigh na craoibhe,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na curracaig  
 Ann an lòn nan tulman,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead a' chlamhain  
 Ann an ceann a' chreachainn,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead an draithinn  
 Ann am preas na carraig,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na feadaig  
 Ann an coill nam badan,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

The nest of the pigeon

Is in the red crags,

My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the wild-duck

Is in the bank of the lakelet,

My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the cuckoo

Is in the hedge-sparrow's nest,

My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the sealark

Is in the level shingle-beach,

My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the tealduck

Is in the breast of the tree,

My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the lapwing

Is in the hummocked marsh,

My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the kite

Is high on the mountain-slope,

My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the wren

Is in the rock thicket,

My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the plover

Is in the wooded copse,

My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

Tha nead na ruadhchirce  
 San fhraoch uaine ruadhcheannach,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na truide  
 Fo sgéith na tughaidh,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na liathchirce  
 Am bràigh an tomain chriaraiche,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na guilbnich  
 Anns a' mhòintich bhuilgnich,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead a' bhrìdein  
 Anns na mola mìne,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na curra  
 Anns na craobhan corra,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead a' chorcain  
 Ann an coill a' ghlacain,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead a' chloichrein  
 Anns a' ghàrradh thobhta, [thobhtaidh  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

Tha nead na feannaig  
 Ann am barr na crannaig,  
 Nì mo leanabh cadal agus gheibh e 'n t-ian.

The nest of the red-hen  
Is in the green red-tipped heather,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the starling  
Is under the wing of the thatch,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the heath-hen  
Is in the marshland mound,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the curlew  
Is in the bubbling peat-moss,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the oyster-catcher  
Is among the smooth shingles,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the heron  
Is in the pointed trees,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the bullfinch  
Is in the wood of the dell,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the stonechat  
Is in the garden dike,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

The nest of the rook  
Is in the tree's top,  
My little one will sleep and he shall have the bird.

## SEUN MO LEANNAN FHÉIN SA BHLÀR

Bho Chiorstai Nic Gill-Ìosa, coitear, Dùn Gainmheachadh, Beinne  
Bhadhla.

ÒGAIN a théid san fhaghaid,  
Bha mi trò 's bu mhi do raghainn,  
An ògag tha shuas ri t'aghaidh,  
Shaoil mi trò nach b'i do thaghadh.

I ag éile bhó i ó  
Bhó hì ro hó hug ó  
I ag éile bhó ró  
Bho hì ro ro ró  
Hao ri o hù

Fhir as deise théid air bhlàr,  
'S ioma fuil uasal tha 'nad phàirt;  
O Thus a cheusadh os chionn chàich,  
Seun mo leannan fhéin sa bhlàr!

I ag éile bhó i ó  
Bhó hì ro hó hug ó  
I ag éile bhó ró  
Bho hì ro ro ró  
Hao ri o hù

Is aigeannach am fear am fiadh  
Anns a' bhrughain bhriain a' tàmh,  
Ach ge lùth luimneach a leum,  
Chan éirich e o'n eug a ghnàth.

I ag éile bhó i ó  
Bhó hì ro hó hug ó  
I ag éile bhó ró  
Bho hì ro ro ró  
Hao ri o hù.

## SAIN MINE OWN LOVER IN THE FIELD

From Kirsty Gillies, cottar, Dùn Gainmheachadh, Benbecula.

THOU youth who goest in the chase,  
 There was a time when I was thy chosen one,  
 The maiden now pillowed by thy face,  
 Once methought she was not thy choice.

I ag eile bho i o  
 Bho hi ro ho hug o  
 I ag eile bho ro  
 Bho hi ro ro ro  
 Hao ri o hu

Thou man the most comely who moves on plain,  
 Much noble blood is kin to thee;  
 O Thou who wast crucified above the others,  
 Sain mine own lover in the field!

I ag eile bho i o  
 Bho hi ro ho hug o  
 I ag eile bho ro  
 Bho hi ro ro ro  
 Hao ri o hu

A sprightly fellow is the stag  
 In the brindled bower dwelling,  
 Yet though strong and sturdy be his bound,  
 He cannot aye escape from death.

I ag eile bho i o  
 Bho hi ro ho hug o  
 I ag eile bho ro  
 Bho hi ro ro ro  
 Hao ri o hu

Tha mo leannan bòidheach bionn,  
 Glac ghoil dh'a math dh'an tig lann,  
 Fear furanach fòil fialaidh fionn,  
 Miuchar mòdhar mèinneach mann.

I ag éile bhó i ó  
 Bhó hì ro hó hug ó  
 I ag éile bhó ró  
 Bho hì ro ro ró  
 Hao ri o hù

My loved one is beauteous and fair-shapen,  
A hand of valour which a blade well becomes,  
A man welcoming, mild, generous, liberal,  
Blithe, mannerly, pleasant of temper, well-endowed.

I ag eile bho i o  
Bho hi ro ho hug o  
I ag eile bho ro  
Bho hi ro ro ro  
Hao ri o hu

## RANND OIHCHE CHALAINN

NOCHD oidhche Chalainn chruaidh,  
 Thàna mi le uan g'a reic,—  
 Thuirt am bodach thall le gruaim  
 Gum buaileadh e mo chluas ri creig.

Thuirt a' bhean a b'fhearra glòir  
 Gum bu chòir mo leigeil a steach;  
 Air son m'ithidh agus m'òil,  
 Crioman còir agus rud leis!

## RANN CALAINN

Tha an rann a leanas air son clann-ghillean aig nach bheil rann eile.

NAR bheil fuath agam air càise,  
 Nar bheil gràin agam air ìm,  
 Ach drùdhag bheag a shùgh an eòrna  
 Tha mi deònach a chur sìos!

## HOGMANAY VERSE

TO-NIGHT is the hard night of Hogmanay,  
I am come with a lamb to sell,—  
The old fellow yonder sternly said  
He would strike my ear against a rock.

The woman, better of speech, said  
That I should be let in;  
For my food and for my drink,  
A morsel due and something with it!

## HOGMANAY RIME

The rime that follows is for lads that have no other rime.

I HAVE no dislike to cheese,  
I have no disgust of butter,  
But a little sip of barley bree  
I am right willing to put down!

## DUAN CALAIG

Bho Iain Mac Rùiridh, Tolorum, Beinne Bhadhla.

A NOCHD oidhche mu dheireadh na bliadhna,  
 Bithibh fialaidh rium san ardraich,  
 Dol a ghabhail mo dhuan Calaig,  
 Thugaibh an aire 'na thràth dhomh.

Banais gille dubh an t-snaoisein  
 'S adhbhar smaointean anns an àite;  
 Nam bithinn-sa a measg na laoisig,  
 'S mór bhiodh ann do dhaoine grànda.

Cuid ri brosgal, cuid ri briagan,  
 Cuid ri briathran mi-ghnàthaicht,  
 Cuid eile 'g itheadh nan ciaban  
 Bh'ann an cearcan liath a' chàrsain;

Cuid diubh a' stalcaidh nan cùlag  
 Anns na h-uilt bha 'n cùl na tònach,  
 Is cuid diubh 'nan dalla-chrùban  
 Ann an cùil air torr bhuntàta.

Tha iad as gach cearn de'n dùthaich,  
 Ceachairean nan cùil 's nan carnan;  
 'S e rumpall an cuirp thug triùir dhiubh [rumpall  
 Air astar co dhiùbh do'n àite.

. . . an isean ann á Leódhas,  
 Cas-a-luidean á Ceann tSàile,  
 Sliopaireach mór bha 'n Tìr Iodha  
 Dh'ith an t-imdeal 'm Baile Mhàrtainn.

## THE SONG OF HOGMANAY

From John MacRury, Tolorum, Benbecula.

TO-NIGHT is the last night of the year,  
Be generous to me in the dwelling,  
As I come to sing my Hogmanay song,  
Give to me timely heed.

The wedding-feast of the black lad of the snuff  
Is a cause of pondering in the place;  
Were I among the rabble,  
Many an ugly fellow there would be.

Some at flattery, some at lies,  
Some at words unwonted,  
Others devouring the gizzards  
Of the wheezy grey fowls;

Some of them fixing their back-teeth  
In the back joints of the cattle,  
And some of them hunkering down  
In a corner on a heap of potatoes.

They are from every quarter of the land,  
The hungry ones of the corners and the cairns;  
'Tis the rumbling of their bodies has brought  
Three of them, at any rate, to this place.

. . . the chicken here from Lewis,  
A ragged-foot from Kintail,  
A great clumsy lout that was in Tíree  
Who ate the milk-pail-cover in Balemartin.

Bho nach fiù dhomh bhith ag innseadh  
 Mar tha 'n tìr seo leis a' ghràisg ud,  
 Tha mi 'n dùil gum faigh mi mìrean,  
 'S gum bi ìm air agus càise.

Guidhim leannanachd is sìth dhuibh  
 Gu bliadhna bho'n tìm seo, chairdean,  
 'S bho na tha mo chasan rùisgte,  
 Fosglaidh dhomh dùnadh na fardraich. [cumhla

Since it is not worth my telling  
The state of this country with yon rabble,  
I hope that I shall get a morsel,  
And that there will be butter and cheese on it.

I pray for you sweethearting and peace  
Until a year from this time, O friends,  
And since my feet are bare,  
Open to me the fastening of the house. [door

## EALASOID ODHAR

PHÒS! phòs! phòs Ealasaoid odhar,

Is tha mac aic an cobhair ri Lachlann ruadh, [an comain  
Lachlann seang mar mhang nam fireach

'S a bheireadh le siorradh air biorach a' chuain.

[a' chluain; le sitheadh air giomach

Bu sgaiteach do chorrann an toradh nan dlò,—

Dhèanadh tu cothram a dhà dhlò an sguab;

Ach bhuaill Gruagach a' Chuirn thu cùl nan dorn,

Is bhuaill i snàithe do chòtain ruaidh. [bhris; uain

## DUN ELSPETH

MARRIED! married! married is Elspeth the dun one,

And a son has she with the help of Lachlan the red,

Lachlan, slim like the fawn of the mountain slopes,

Who would seize with a rush the dogfish of the ocean.

[the filly of the field; with a dart the lobster of the ocean

Keen was thy sickle in reaping the corn-wisps,—

Thou wouldst fairly fill at two sweeps the sheaf;

But the Gruagach of the Cairn \* struck thee in the back of  
thy hands,

And she plucked the thread of thy red kirtle. [broke; green

\* or Horn, Goblet.

Cf. *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition*, v. 97, where the verses are said to be by Mairearad Bhòidheach (360 *supra*) to her sister, Ealasaoid Odhar.

## THA CEÒL ANN AN TAIGH NA BAINNS

## THERE IS MUSIC IN THE MARRIAGE HOUSE

THE following was uttered by a maiden whose lover had forsaken her and was arranging, with the usual feast and merrymaking, a marriage with another girl in the townland :

‘Tha ceòl ann an taigh na bainns,  
Tha beòir ann, tha bruidhinn;  
Ach nan robh cuimhn air a’ mhath a bh’ann,  
’S i mhath a bh’ann a bhitheadh.’

‘There is music in the marriage house,  
There is ale, there is speaking;  
But were there remembrance of the good that was,  
’Tis the good that was which would be.’

The words were repeated to the errant lover, and he said, ‘Is fìor sin, a ghràdhag nan nighean!’—‘That is true, thou best beloved!’ and took up his plaid, staff and bonnet and returned whence he had come.

## GLEANN LIADAIL

From John Maclellan (Iain Bàn), aged 82 years,

OLD John Maclellan had a great many old poems and songs, got from his father and mother. He had many Ossianic lays, very full and finished, and containing old words and phrases not in other versions known to the writer; but these, owing to pressure of other work, I was not able to take down.

Gleann Liadail or Liathadail is a glen in South Uist, adjoining Corodale. No one dared to go into Gleann Liadail without singing the song to propitiate 'daoine beaga [*sic*] a' ghlinne,' the little folk of the glen. The only persons who could go were Clann 'ic Ìosaig, the MacIsaacs, better known as Clann 'ic 'ille Riabhaich, the clan of the son of Gille Riabhach, the brindled lad. There are some of this clan in South Uist, who call themselves Mac Ìosaig, MacIsaac, and some in North Uist, who call themselves MacDonald.

Reilig Ni Ruairidh, the burial place of the daughter of Roderick, is in Benmore, near Liadal. It was the custom of the women of Benmore to pour libations of milk on Reilig Ni Ruairidh when milking their cows in the neighbourhood. One day, however, a woman of less faith than her



LEANN mo chridhe-sa Gleann Liadail,  
Gleann nach bheil fiata ri fhaicinn,  
Gleann am bheil tathaich an t-saoghail,  
Gleann am bheil faoich agus fasgadh.

Théid mi annad, a ghlinn ghlais,  
Is thig mi asd mar théid mi ann,  
Air chumha comaraig nam fear mór  
Shiubhladh an ró mar an gleann.

Dìreadh ri Sidhean a' Bhealaich,  
Chunna mi sealladh na gréine,  
Dol deiseal Reilig Ni Ruairidh,  
Far an dèan na h-uaisean éirigh.

Mr J. L. Campbell of Canna has drawn my attention to the reference to this glen in Martin Martin, *A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland*, 152 (4th ed., 1934): 'There is a valley between two mountains on the east side [of South Uist] called Glenslyte [*sic*], which affords good pasturage. The natives who farm it come thither with their cattle in the summer time, and are possessed with a firm belief that this valley is haunted by spirits, who by the inhabitants are called the great men; and that whatsoever man or woman enters the valley without making first an entire resignation of themselves to the conduct of the great men will infallibly grow mad. The words by

## GLEN LIADAIL

crofter, Hàcleit an Ìochdair, Benbecula.

neighbours said, 'Cha dòirt mi dìleag tuillidh air Reilig Ni Ruairidh—chan fhaic mi adhbhar air.'—'I will not pour another drop on the Grave of Ni Ruairidh—I see no reason for it.' Laigh a ban-chompanaich air a' bhoireannach bhochd gun an cleachdadh prìseil a bhriseadh agus gun am bainne a dhiùltadh, neo gum faiceadh i cìod e dh'éireadh dhì fhéin no d'a cuid no d'a cuideachd. 'A roghainn sin 's a bhith aige,' ors ise, 'chan òbair mi dìleag tuillidh do Reilig Ni Ruairidh.' Goirid an déidh sin mharbhadh a mac le sinteig a thug e. Theirear ris an àite an tug an gille an t-sinteag 'Sinteag mhic Iain mhic Ailein' chun an là an diugh.—Her woman companions pressed the poor woman not to break the honoured custom and not to refuse the milk, or she would see what would befall herself or her goods or her kindred. 'Be that as it will,' she said, 'I will not offer up another drop to the Grave of Ni Ruairidh.' Soon after that her son was killed by a leap which he made. The place where the lad made the leap is called to this day 'the Leap of the son of John son of Alan.'

GLEN of my heart is Glen Liadail,  
 A glen that is not wild to see,  
 A glen whereto the world resorts,  
 A glen wherein are fields and shelter.

I will go into thee, thou green glen,  
 And I will go from thee as I went in,  
 Under compact of the safeguard of the great ones,  
 Who would travel the plain as well as the glen.

Ascending the Fairy-Hill of the Pass,  
 I saw a sight of the sun,  
 Going sunwise around Ni Ruairidh's Grave,  
 Where the spectres rise.

which he or she gives up himself to these men's conduct are comprehended in three sentences, wherein the glen is twice named, to which they add that it is inhabited by these great men, and that such as enter depend on their protection. . . . there had happened a late instance of a woman who went into that glen without resigning herself to the conduct of these men, and immediately after she became mad. . . .' It is clear from this and from the poem that 'daoine beaga a' ghlinne' should be 'daoine móra a' ghlinne,' the great men of the glen. An alternative form of Reilig Ni Ruairidh is Reilig nan Ruairidh.

## RÌGH SIONN

BHA Sionn 'na rìgh air Sionn, no mar a their cuid 'na rìgh air Sionnaidh, no mar a their cuid eile 'na rìgh air Sionnathan. Is iad an Siol Sionn siol bu dorra cur riutha eadar ùir agus adhar an ceithir ranna ruadha an domhain mhóir. Bha iad cho seòlta ris na sionnaich fhéin, chionn b'iad sin an treabh bho'n tànaig iad agus is iad an aon ghineil a bha annta. Bha iad làn gheas agus ghiodag agus ghiobag, làn phrat agus ubag, làn chuilchionn (choilchionn) agus chuilchinneachd agus chuilbheirt agus cha robh cur riutha ann.

Bha Macan Mór Rìgh (Ridire) na Seilg a muigh sa bheinn air tòir làndamh agus gu dé, a rùn, air an tànaig e ach air ainneir àillidh òig ann an còs creige am bràigh na bearraidh [sic]. Bha an rìoghainn donn an cadal suain am blàthas na gréine ann an uaineas uiridh nam beann. Labhair Macan Mór Ridire na Seilg ris an roideig (rodaig, rodaidh) ruaidh am bonn nam preas agus am bràigh nan dos. Thug an rìoghainn donn ruisg a dà shùl mhìogarra mhogarra ghorm bho dhà chlàr a chéile agus sheall i air leannan na Seilg ann an clàr lom an aodainn, ach cha tug i a dà bhile bhog ghile-bhog bhlàth dhearg bho sgàth airinn a chéile.

Thog Macan Mór Rìgh na Seilg an rìoghainn rodaidh ruadh air fras-mhullach a ghuaile agus thug e dhachaigh i a chon taigh athar agus a mhàthar. Cha b'e an taing a b'fhearr a fhuair e air son na gnìomha sin bho mhàthair agus cha b'e moladh math a thug athair dha.

Rug a' ghruagach dhonn mac do Mhacan Mór Ridire na Seilg agus chuireadh fios air cléireach na sgìre tighinn agus an leanabh a bhaisteadh. Thànaig an duine dachaigh agus chuir e an t-uisg air an aoihean \* a thànaig dhachaigh agus bhaist e an leanabh a bha eadar Macan Mór Ridire na Seilg agus nighean Rìgh Sionn.

Chuireadh fios fad farsainn feadh na rìoghachd chon a' bhaistidh, agus thànaig an sluagh mór dhachaigh a choimhead na rodaidh ruaidh agus na gruagaich duinne; thànaig, is thànaig daoine as gach cearna dhe'n rìoghachd a choimhead na rìoghainne duinne.

Chuir Ban-ridire na Seilg a' ghruagach dhonn, nighean Rìgh Sionn, 'na seasamh air cailbh aig ceann na cuilm agus chuir i coinneal bhuaice 'na làimh air gheall agus gum faicheadh sluagh an domhain sealladh air an rodaidh ruaidh, nighean Rìgh Sionn. Cha do chord an obair ris an rodaidh ruaidh agus ge nach do labhair i riamh roimhe seo, labhair i a nis agus labhair i gu math :

\* naoidhean?

## THE KING OF SIONN \*

SIONN was king of Sionn, or as some say king of Sionnaidh, or as others say king of Sionnachan.† The Race of Sionn were the hardest to outwit between earth and sky in the four mighty quarters of the great world. They were as crafty as the foxes themselves, for these were the tribe from which they came and they were of the one stock. They were full of spells and of charms and of sorceries, full of tricks and of incantations, full of wile and guile and cunning, and there was no besting them.

The Big Young Son of the King (Knight) of the Hunt was out in the hill chasing the grown stags, and what did he come upon, my dear, but a beautiful young damsel in the niche of a rock in the breast of the cliff. The brown-haired maiden was wrapped in slumber in the warmth of the sun, in the remoteness of the couch of the mountains. The Big Young Son of the Knight of the Hunt spoke to the russet-haired damsel at the foot of the thickets and in the breast of the bushes. The maiden parted the lids of her two smiling . . . blue eyes and looked at the sweetheart of the Hunt straight in the face, but she did not open her two soft fair tender warm red lips.‡

The Big Young Son of the King of the Hunt lifted the russet-haired damsel on the very summit of his shoulder and took her home to his father's and his mother's house. It was not the best thanks that he got for that deed from his mother, and it was not good praise that his father gave him.

The brown-haired maid bore a son to the Big Young Son of the Knight of the Hunt, and they sent for the parish priest to come and baptise the child. The man came to the house and put the water upon the little guest that had come home and baptised the child that was between the Big Young Son of the Knight of the Hunt and the daughter of the King of Sionn.

Summons was sent over the kingdom far and wide to come to the baptism and the great company came to the house to see the russet-haired damsel and the brown-haired maid; they came, and people came to see the brown-haired maiden from every corner of the kingdom.

The Lady of the Hunt set the brown-haired maid, daughter of the King of Sionn, standing on a pedestal at the head of the feast, and put a wick-candle in her hand to make sure that the world's people should have sight of the russet-haired damsel, daughter of the King of Sionn. The business did not please the russet-haired damsel and though she had never hitherto spoken, she spoke now and she spoke well :

\* Some words in the translation are doubtful.

† All these names are connected with *sionnach*, a fox.

‡ Lit. 'took the lids of her two . . . eyes from the two flat surfaces of each other, but she did not take her two . . . lips from the shelter of each other's edge (?)'. Or *drainn*, 'vicinity, nearness,' etc.?

A' CHOINNEAL chruinn chruaidh

Chuireadh mi chumail san uair

Ann an deathach na buaic: [druaip, duaidh, truaigh

Bha mi uair 's cha b'e m'abhaist;

Ach bhith dìreadh nam bearra

'S a bhith sireadh nan coire

'S a bhith tadhall nam monadh

[nan doire

Is nan glacagan gràdhach;

Siubhal bràigh Beinn a' Bheithir,

Siubhal bràigh Beinn a' Cheathaich,

Falbh le m'athair 's le m' sheanair

A' sealg aighean is làndamh.

Cha b'e tùrlach na deathcha

[deathaich

An robh mi air thùs air mo chleachdadh,

Ach teach gun smùrlach gun smalan,

[smùrach, smùran

Dùn muirneach m'athar 's mo mhàthar.

[rùnach

THE candle hard and round  
Which I am now set to hold  
In the smoke of the wick :  
    Once that was not my custom ;

But to be scaling the steeps,  
And ranging the corries,  
And visiting the hills  
    And the hollows beloved ;

Traversing the breast of Beinn a' Bheithir,  
Traversing the breast of Beinn a' Cheathaich,  
Going with my father and my grandfather  
    Hunting hinds and grown stags.

It was not a smoky bonfire  
To which I at first was used,  
But a house without ashes or dust,  
    The blithe castle of my father and mother.

## FUIDHEALL

I DO not know to what the following fragment refers, nor did the reciter, a man of much natural intelligence, Eachann (mac Alasdair) Mac Leòid,



ÀIR nan cath air tulach Shamhna

Os mo chionn-sa;

Gul nam ban air faithch na h-amhna

'M beul an luim-sa. [na luinne

Mnathan tulach, leaba chorrach,

Is garbh an sglèò

Thig 'na deoghaidh, thig trom orra,

Is garbh an sglèò.

## A FRAGMENT

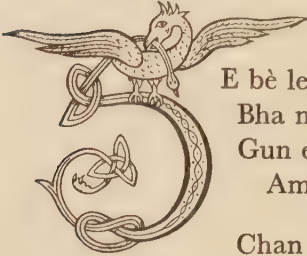
Hector (son of Alexander) MacLeod, cottar, Lianacuidh, Iochdar. St Michael's Day 1872.

THE roar of battles on the hillock of Samhain  
Above me;  
The weeping of the women on the haugh of the river  
At the entrance to this plain. [the enclosure

Women bereft (?), a rugged bed,  
Fierce the contest  
That will come after it, that will come heavily on them,  
Fierce the contest.

## A' GHEARR

Bho Iain Eóghan Mac Rùiridh, croitear, Tolorum, Beinne Bhadhla,



E bè leughas mo theistear,  
Bha mi beusach 's cha cheist e,  
Gun éislein gun eismeil  
Am chàileachd.

Chan ithinn am fòlach,  
Cha bu bhiadh dha mo sheòrsa  
Ach bileagan bòidheach  
Nam fàsach.

Mo churrac ge ruadh e  
Bu mhiann le mnà uaisle,  
Is mo shliasaid ge fuar i  
Le àrmainn.

'S bochd an sgeul tha r'a ìnnseadh,  
Mi bhith nochd ann am shìneadh  
Agus claban mo chinn  
'Ga spàladh,

[smàladh

An déidh dhaibh mo chòta  
Thoir dhìom chon mo bhròga,  
Is mo chlosach a ròstadh  
Air àine.

[gealbhan

Cha b'ionann 's mar bhà mi  
Aig am na Féill Màrtainn,  
Ri ruideis 's ri àbhachd  
Nan garbhhlach.

## THE HARE

From John Ewen MacRury, crofter, Tolorum, Benbecula. December 1894.

WHOEVER reads my testimonial,  
I was unquestionably virtuous,  
Without gloom or servility  
In my nature.

I would not eat rank grass,  
What was food for my kind  
Was the fine herbs  
Of the moorlands.

My cap, though it be reddish,  
Was beloved by gentle ladies,  
And my haunch, though cold,  
By gentlemen.

'Tis a sad tale to tell  
That I am to-night laid low  
And that my brain-pan  
Is being mangled,

[smashed

After they had removed my coat  
Right down to my paws,  
And roasted my carcass  
On embers.

[a fire

Not thus was I at  
The Martinmas season  
Frisking and sporting  
Mid the rough hills.

Gun smaointean an tràth sin  
 Gun tigeadh an gàrlach  
 Le a rioba dha m' thàsaid \*  
 San anmoch.

Bha mi eòlach sna frìthean  
 An robh m'athair 's mo shinnsir  
 Gu mireanach inntinneach  
 Meanmnach;

A' criomadh nam bileag  
 Feadh crinnleit † is firich,  
 Ged chaidh mi san rioba  
 Bha searbh dhomh.

\* Leg. *shàsaid*?

† = *cruinn-leathaid*? *crìn-l.*?

Without thought at that time  
That the villain would come  
With his gin to ensnare me  
    In the gloaming.

I was at home on the heaths  
Where my father and ancestors  
Were sportive, merry  
    And spirited;

Nibbling the blades of grass  
On rounded slopes (?) and moors,  
Though I fell into the snare  
    Which was grievous for me.

## SEIRBHSICH OISEIN

Bho Dhùghall Domhnallach, Manal, Tiriodh.

БНА Oisean dall ach bhitheadh e a' dol a mach a chuile h-oidhche mu dheighinn na spréidhe. Bha gille agus seirbhiseach daonnan aige.

Chaidh an gille mach agus their e steach agus thubhairt e :

'S ann a muigh atà an torman trom, [na bouton  
An sileadh trom bho bharr nan crann;  
Cha chluinn mi fàrsan nan tonn  
Le cithe trom a chiobhan chrann.

Tha aghaidh nan siant bho'n ear,  
Sneachda geal is dile dhubh;  
'S e dh'fhàg an fhaithche cho fuar  
An cathadh cruaidh agus an cur.

Tha croinn na coille air chrith,  
Am brith air fàs 'na charn dubh, [am barr  
An sneachd a' fìor-mharbhadh nan eun: [sìor-?  
'S ionann sin 's an sgeul tha muigh.'

Ars an nighean :

'Éirich thusa, Oisein, a choimhead  
A' chruidh ghuaillinn chaisinn (?),  
Tha gaoth fhuar na h-aitimh  
A' lùbadh slat coill nan cnò.'

Fhuair na gillean farmail. Bha iad romh Oisean. Bha fear cùl amhaich agus greim aige air dhà chluais an Oisean 'ga stiùradh chun na spréidhe. Bha an nighean agus sguab barraich aice agus a' tumadh a' bharraich anns an fharmail agus a' sadadh an uisge ann an aodann Oisein. An tràth rànaig iad an spréidh dh'fhàg iad Oisean agus an treòraich an sìod. Bha an oidhche anabarrach briagh. 'Tha mi tuigsinn an rud a th' ann,' ars Oisean; agus cha do chuir Oisean a mach urra riamh tuilleadh air oidhche a choimhead spréidhe.

This is more probably a half-remembered version of the story of the night spent by the Bard O'Daly in the house of the farmer Gille-Brighde.

## OISEAN'S SERVANTS

From Dugald MacDonald, Manal, Tiree.

OISEAN was blind but he used to go out every night to attend to the cattle. He always had a gillie and a servant.

The gillie went out and he came in and said :

' It is outside the heavy rumbling is,  
 Heavy rainfall from the tops of the trees ;  
 I cannot hear the heaving (?) of the waves  
 For the heavy showers showering (?) from the trees.

The storms are coming from the east,  
 White snow and a black deluge ;  
 What has left the plain so cold  
 Is severe fall and drift of snow.

The trees of the forest are quaking,  
 Their fruit (?) has become a black mass, [their tops  
 The snow is truly killing the birds :  
 That is what it is like outside.'

Said the girl :

' Arise, Oisean, to look to  
 The white-shouldered, white-footed cattle,  
 The cold wind of the thaw  
 Is bending the branches of the nut wood.'

The lads got a water-tub. They were in front of Oisean. There was one behind Oisean who had a hold of him by his ears guiding him to the cattle. The girl had a brushwood broom and she was dipping the brushwood in the tub and sprinkling the water in Oisean's face. When they reached the cattle they left Oisean and the guide there. The night was very fine. 'I understand what it is,' said Oisean ; and Oisean never again sent anybody out at night to look after the cattle.

See *Highland Monthly*, ii. 432. But cf. *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition*, iv. 102-3.

## NAOI DEILG OISEIN

BHA naoi deilg aig Oisean 'na stamaig a' cumail a staigh a ghoile. Bha e faighinn biadh chóig dhuine dhiag agus thogadh e slinntean a suas air bràigh dorais a dh'fhairlicheadh air cóig ceatharnach dhiag dhaoine. 'An car a b'fhearr,' ors iadsan. 'Nan tugadh na daoine tha staigh dhomh biadh nan sia duine diag cha robh car an siod,' ors Oisean.

## OISEAN'S NINE SKEWERS

OISEAN had nine skewers in his stomach to restrain his appetite. He was getting the food of fifteen men and he could lift a lintel above a door which fifteen warriors could not manage. 'That was the best feat,' said they. 'If the people inside gave me the food of sixteen men, that were no feat,' said Oisean.

## CAIM NA CORRAIG



Ó tha romham?  
 Có tha dheogham?  
 Có tha fodham?  
 Dia agus Domhnach.

Có tha dha m' thaic?  
 Teòra nam feart,  
 Athair agus Mac  
 Agus Spiorad fòile.

## THE FINGER-COMPASSING

Who is before me?  
Who is behind me?  
Who is beneath me?  
    God and the Lord.

Who upholds me?  
The Three of power,  
Father and Son  
    And Spirit of peace.









THE first two volumes of *Carmina Gadelica*, published in 1900, made so profound an impression in this and many other countries that they soon ran out of print, and became scarce and costly. Dr Carmichael's daughter Mrs W. J. Watson, prepared a second edition which appeared in 1928, and contains all the matter in the original, along with some small corrections and additions.

Volumes three and four published in 1940 and 1941 are uniform with the new edition of Volumes I and II, and a direct continuation of the work. They were edited by Dr Carmichael's grandson, James Carmichael Watson, Professor of Celtic in the University of Edinburgh, who in his note writes :—"In the fifth volume I hope to explain fully how I have dealt with the material and to what extent I am responsible for the final form of the work. But lest the opportunity should be withheld, I say now without reserve that I have made as little change as possible. To the Gaelic text no word has been added, and, save that a few broken lines or stanzas have been omitted, no word has been taken away. In translating I have tried to follow, as best I could, my grandfather's usage in the first two volumes."

Tragically the opportunity has been withheld due to Professor Watson's death on war service, and it is Angus Matheson of Glasgow University who has edited the present volume. Professor Watson's purpose has been maintained and the completion of this historic work will be made with the sixth volume.

The many ornamental initial letters, headpieces and tailpieces are the beautiful work and generous gift of Mr Robert Burns.