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Review

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Source: *The Celtic Review*, Vol. 10, No. 37 (Dec., 1914), pp. 94-95

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30070326>

Accessed: 23-06-2016 06:36 UTC

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The smallest place that meets my eyes  
 I cannot recognise aright,  
 What was in flood with flowing store  
 Is all in ebb before my sight.

Mr. Graves' volume will be welcomed by Celts everywhere, and will make appeal also to all students of literature. To those who would like to know something of the forces which lie behind the modern Gaelic movement, it will reveal a dazzling treasure-house of poetic splendour and inspiration. The author is a trustworthy and accomplished guide and expositor, and the readers whom he introduces to the Celtic 'Otherworld' will associate with their impressions of it the memory of his genial and stimulating companionship.

D. A. M'K.

*Gille A' Bhuidseir : The Wizard's Gillie and other Tales.* Edited and translated by J. G. MACKAY. London : Saint Catherine Press, Oswaldestre House, 34 Norfolk Street, Strand, W.C. 2s. 6d. net.

Ten of the unpublished tales collected by the late Mr. J. F. Campbell of Islay are here issued for the first time to the public. They are translated into clear and concise English, and the original Gaelic is given. One of the most interesting of the tales is the 'little historical piece' about Donald Caol Cameron, the cattle lifter. 'This Donald Caol used to roam far and wide between the cat country, i.e. the country of Mackay, and the most northerly part of the shire of Ross.' On one occasion he set forth with his brother-in-law, Donald Ban, towards Assynt, and there secured a few cattle. The couple were pursued by twelve men and a captain, and when they were crossing a river in the dusk, hanging on to the tails of the swimming cows, Donald Ban was killed by an arrow. Donald Caol afterwards discharged an arrow against the Assynt captain and slew him, whereupon his followers lost courage. 'Donald Caol turned him about again, and cutting off Donald Ban's head with his dirk, put it in a bag that he had on his back in which he was carrying bread. He then went cheerfully off with the cattle, while the Assynt men returned home without cattle or captain.' This is a fragment of an exceedingly ancient story.

Herodotus (II. 121) gives a version in which the thieves are brothers. They robbed the treasury of Pharaoh Rhampsinitus, and one was caught in a snare. The other cut off his brother's head, so that it might not be known who the robbers were. Pausanias (IX. 37) relates a similar tale regarding the treasury of Hyrieus in Orchomenus. The two brothers are Trophonius and Agamedes, and the latter is decapitated. There are other European versions, as Grimm and Campbell have noted. A Tibetan version has an uncle and a nephew. The couple were engaged in housebreaking, and made a hole in a wall. Then the uncle thrust his feet in, but was seized by the people in the house. To prevent detection, which would have brought ruin to the whole family, the nephew cut off the head of his kinsman and escaped

with it. A similar story is told in India, and a notable incident in it appears in the Gaelic tale of 'The shifty Lad' given by Campbell of Islay. The 'shifty lad' cuts off the head of a confederate also, and the king made arrangements similar to those credited by Herodotus to the Egyptian monarch with purpose to catch the escaped thief.

Evidently, 'Donald Caol Cameron' is a fragmentary version of a wide-spread tale. It, however, contains an incident which is peculiar to it. After Donald cuts off his brother-in-law's head he hears spirits calling from the trees. One says, 'Donald Caol! drop the head!' and another, 'He must not drop the head.' It is added, 'Donald could not be certain whether the spirit was that of the head that he had on his back, or that of the Assynt man into whose breast he had shot the arrow.' Mr. Mackay notes that uruigs and fairies in other tales give similarly conflicting advice to human beings. The belief involved apparently connects fairies with the spirit world, and further evidence of like character is attained from stories about green ladies who are ghosts of some people guilty of some crime, or slain before the appointed time.

All the stories in this volume have features of interest to students of comparative folklore and folk-beliefs. There are several illustrations, but the Gaelic fairies in these are too small, and some are wrongly given wings. In Scotland the 'wee folk' had many forms. Sometimes they had, like the 'Red Smith,' one arm, one leg, and one eye, but invariably they were indistinguishable from human beings, except in stature and attire. In more than one story the fairy is detected when her clothing is grasped, and found to be as unsubstantial as that of a ghost. Mr. Mackay's notes are always suggestive and illuminative.

D. A. MACKENZIE.

### The Highland Clearances

*The History of the Highland Clearances.* By ALEXANDER MACKENZIE. With new introduction by IAN MACPHERSON M.P. Stirling: Æneas Mackay. Price 2s. 6d. net.

Thirty-one years have elapsed since Mr. A. Mackenzie published his book on the Clearances. It included Donald MacLeod's 'Gloomy Memories,' the first part of which was issued in 1841. In this new edition the 'Memories' are omitted 'out of considerations for space, and because it is proposed to print them shortly in separate form.' Variety is given, on the other hand, by the inclusion of the defence of the Clearances by Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which is followed by Donald MacLeod's reply. Another vindication of the evictions is from the pen of Mr. James Loch, chief factor of the Sutherlandshire estates. Included here also are extracts from *Memorabilia Domestica*, by the Rev. Donald Sage, whose word-pictures of the Clearances are of vivid character. Other writers on the subject include General Stewart of Garth and Hugh Miller, and their evidence, with the expressions of opinions on the eviction policy by Sir Walter Scott, Dr.