

## Gadelica: A Journal of Modern Irish Studies

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Review

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is better to refrain from characterising foolishness of this kind as it deserves.

T. F. O'RAHILLY.

ORAIN GHAIÐHEALACH le DONNCHADH MACANTSÁOIR, air an eadar-theangachadh agus air an cur a mach le DEORSA CALDAIR (The Gaelic Songs of Duncan MacIntyre, edited with translation and notes by George Calder). Edinburgh, John Grant, 1912. 6s.

Donnchadh Mac an tSaoir was born in Glenorchy, Argyllshire, in 1724. He was employed during the earlier part of his life as forester to the Earl of Breadalbane, and enlisted in the Edinburgh City Guard some time before 1768. He died in 1812, and was buried in Greyfriars Churchyard, where a monument bearing his epitaph written by himself now marks his grave. This is the sixth edition of his poems, and many of them have also appeared in such anthologies as 'Sar-obair nam Bard Gaelach,' and in Scottish Gaelic periodicals.

A varied array of subjects falls within the range of the poet's verse, which flows with apparent ease and spontaneity in simple, natural language, and in a variety of pretty measures. Some of the love poems are tender enough. The 'Oran Duthcha,' an expression of homesickness, is a touching little piece, full of the passionate love of nature which is characteristic of the poet. Perhaps the finest in the collection are 'Coire a' Cheathaich' and 'Oran an T-Samhraidh,' the former in the charming *ochtfhoclach bec* metre, which is discussed by Professor Ker in the Kuno Meyer Miscellany. The edition is turned out in the luxurious fashion usual in Scottish Gaelic publications—good print, good paper, and good binding. The text is based on a collation of the previous editions and the available manuscripts. The editor has also had the advantage of reading the poems with "persons to whom the language and the locality are alike familiar."

The appendix on metre suggests some interesting questions as to the survival of several of the classical metres—in a modified form—in Scottish Gaelic poetry. The principal difference between these metres as used by the older professional poets and as used by the modern poets is that from the latter we get lines with regular stress, whereas in strict *dán díreach* the rule that regular stress is unnecessary holds good of almost every metre,—it is the number of syllables that matters, and, to the untutored ear, at any rate, rhythm seems wanting.

Some notes on the language and pronunciation of the poet would have been welcome to the student. One wishes that Scottish Gaelic editors could realise that Irish did not cease to exist in the tenth century. It is rather bewildering to see forms in everyday use in 1912 referred to as 'Middle-Irish.' On the curious form *os n-íosal, os n-aird*, the editor writes, "compared with *iscian os accobor lemm farrichtu* (Wb. 7 a 3), the transported *n* seems irregular." One might say that this would not be by any means the sole variation from the Wb. standard in Donnchadh Ban's language, but in this particular instance there seems no reason to separate *os* from the common preposition, as in the corresponding Irish phrases *ós íseal, ós áird*, and the example is therefore irrelevant.

ELEANOR KNOTT.