
The Heresy of Connecting Welsh and Semitic, etc.

Author(s): H. H. Johnson

Source: *The Celtic Review*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Oct., 1904), pp. 160-172

Published by:

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30069790>

Accessed: 03-11-2015 01:01 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



<http://www.jstor.org>

Wordsworth's exquisite lines on the Highland lassie reaping in the fields and chanting at her labour :—

‘Will no one tell me what she sings ?—
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
 For old unhappy far-off things
 And battles, long ago :
 Or is it some more humble lay
 Familiar matter of to-day,
 Same natural sorrow, loss, or pain
 That has been, and may be again ?
 Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
 As if her song could have no ending ;
 I saw her, singing at her work,
 And o'er the sickle bending ;
 I listened motionless and still,
 And, as I mounted up the hill,
 The music in my heart I bore,
 Long after it was heard no more !’

THE HERESY OF CONNECTING WELSH AND SEMITIC, ETC.¹

Professor H. H. JOHNSON, Rennes University.

WELSH has neither part nor lot in Shem and Ham. One had thought that this had been an article of creed for a century and more. And yet in these latter days come *The Welsh People*, by Mr. Brynmor Jones, with its appendix by Professor Morris Jones of Bangor ; Sir W. Preece of Carnarvon on Welsh and Egyptian languages, *obiter dicta* of Principal Rhys of Oxford. These all, directly or indirectly, seem to find connections between Cymric and Semitic (and Hamitic). In the seventeenth century, Dr. Davies's Welsh Dictionary derived practically every Cymric word from Hebrew, and Richards of Trefriw praised his saying. But one had hoped, and in part believed, that all this was an old and evil dream that had passed. And now behold the old-world

¹ [It is entirely coincidence that this article and the one by Sir William Preece should come for the same number of the *Review*, as neither author knew that the other was contributing, nor did I know, till his article arrived, on what subject Professor Johnson was going to write.—Ed.]

fallacy revived ! In vain Professor Kuno Meyer of Liverpool sarcastically disposed of Professor Morris Jones's above-mentioned appendix in a single sentence at Dublin in 1901. In vain are the Aryan affinities fairly clear and reasonably well known. This recrudescence of eighteenth century philology becomes alarming. Brugmann is apparently scouted in 'Gallant Little Wales.' Professor Anwyl, Aberystwyth, says these Welsh derivations of Welsh make one ashamed for the honour of the country, and I certainly see eye to eye with Professors Meyer and Anwyl, as I happen to know Arabic and Welsh at the same time. For one man to know the two, conversationally and otherwise, is perhaps somewhat rare. And this rarity must be my excuse for publishing these lines. One may, of course, say at once that there are extraordinary resemblances between Cymric, on the one hand, and Arabic, Hebrew, and Hamitic (*e.g.* 'Berberi'), on the other. These resemblances pervade accident and syntax, as well as vocabulary. For instance: the verb in Welsh and Semitic languages often comes first, and the subject follows. The pronominal suffixes are similar, *e.g.* the 't' of the second person singular. The verb 'to have' is similarly rendered. An occasional word may be identical in the two, as 'hin,' 'weather' in Welsh, and 'hin,' 'time' in Arabic, remembering always the identity of Gaelic 'amsir,' 'weather' and Welsh 'amser,' 'time.' 'Horn' is rendered quasi-identically, 'corn' and 'qarn.' 'To stop,' *i.e.* 'what would otherwise act,' is 'atal(a)' in Arabic, 'attal' in Welsh. Some of these are in the appendix already twice mentioned.

Now for the *rationale*. In every language the verb is the soul of the sentence, and it is naturally and rightly put first. Especially is this true when the speaker considers the action everything and the subject secondary. Even in English poetry we find such a strong statement as

'Spake full well in language quaint and olden
A bard who dwelleth on the castled Rhine';

and in French or Italian, languages where style is all important even in prose, any subject followed by adjectives, a

relative phrase, etc., must regularly follow its verb. Nature itself points to this system. Again, the verb must come first when there is no expressed subject, *e.g.* in the Q'rân, 'Qâla' ['said He,' viz. 'God'], whether reverence or sorrow suppresses the subject, which may, however, be omitted to avoid repetition of the well-known. The Arabic rule is that, when you are not exactly sure of your subject, you can begin with the verb (in either gender), the masculine or feminine following indifferently; but, when once you have given your subject to the world, you must make your verb of the same gender as the subject. Hence, to put your verb in the forefront is a positive convenience to the speaker. Thus the Arab says:—

'Qâla il bint, wa hiya kanat Hindan.

'Locutus est puella, et ea nata est Hind(u).'

'Kanat' = 'was' (fem.).

'Dyweddod y ferch, a hi oedd Hind.'

Besides, a verb coming first is in expression strong; following, it is weak. Similarly, in Welsh, the third person singular (active and passive) being indeterminately singular or plural when first in sentence, makes it a positive gain to put the verb first while you are considering (so to speak) what will be your subject, singular or plural.

(*N.B.*—I did not write: 'What your subject will be, singular or plural,' which would have been worse English.) Of course, one can say,

'Il bint qâlat,' etc.

'Y ferch a ddyweddod,' etc.

This is weaker in each language.

The similarity of pronominal suffixes I consider as accidental as that of 'hin' in the two tongues or as that of 'twchu' and 'takhana' ('he was fat'). 'Sound' etymology is rarely sound. It is proving too much to consider the awkwardness of Welsh and Arabic in expressing ownership to be a proof of kinship. As soon would I personally classify together all men lame of the left leg. Besides, Arabic has a real verb 'he had' ('amlaka'), and 'est mihi gladius' is at least as good Latin as 'gladium habeo.' Some words seem practically identical

in most languages, Aryan, Semitic, or other, and that for 'horn' is one of them. Possibly they hark back linguistically to the primitive speech of mankind, of which Lithuanian (or Lettish) is probably our nearest representative nowadays. The similarity between Welsh 'attal' (ad, dal) and Arabic 'atal(a)' is only *apparent*. As soon could one compare the Turanian (Turkish) 'eskijy' ('esgijy') with 'esgid,' Welsh, the first meaning, it is true, 'vamper of old (boots),' and the second 'a boot.' How sweetly did Max Nettlau, the Celticist, laugh when a Welshman drew this analogy in his hearing in Vienna in 1891! *A propos*, 'o' is Turkish for 'he, she, it' (nom.); and is not this excellent North Wales Welsh for 'he,' 'him'? Besides, it is written 'aw' or 'av,' like Welsh 'ef'; 'o' is Basque, too. To return to the general question. Aryan is Aryan, and must not be mixed, however slightly, except as regards loan-words, with other great divisions of human speech. At this time of day, after the immensity of labour expended, especially by the Germans, on Celtic, we cannot flirt with the Semitic, Lost Tribes, and Cornish elements due to the tin trade with the Phœnicians. Mr. Henry Jenner, F.R.S., author of the Cornish Manual lately published by David Nutt, tells me that the utmost research by himself and such apt assistants as Rev. Mr. Lach Szyrma *failed, in effect, to establish the actual existence of any Phœnician elements, linguistic or other, in Cornwall*. A Welsh professor of Celtic, mentioned above, remarked to me on the impossibility of Celtic, of which the travels in the world's history are tolerably well known, having come into contact with Semitic elements that 'stuck.' The same is true of Hamitic elements. Having lived for a decade and more amid Coptic and Nubian, Semitic and Turanian speech, I can soothly swear that I found nothing Celtic among them, though I had eye and ear ever open, and though I spoke Welsh before any other tongue as a child, and continue to speak it.

The genesis of a false idea is sometimes interesting. When the Bible was translated into Welsh by Bishop Morgan and confrères from the original Hebrew, Chaldee, and Greek,

Wales took it up with enthusiasm. This enthusiasm temporarily culminated in the charming notion that the primitive tongue of the world was Hebrew. From Hebrew, then, came everything, including Welsh, *lingua Paradisiaca*. So Dr. Davies, of Latin-Welsh 'Geirlyfr' fame, and all his followers. The first half of the last century gave this notion its apparent quietus. But an inveterate falsity dies hard. It is ever more dying than dead, and more sleeping than dying. Hence any occasion of life revives it. A great man, for example, in a moment of uncritical insouciance, perhaps because he is a great man and can afford to jest, unthinkingly compares Welsh to Iberian. Small men swear he speaks true; they have each a score of examples for his one; they ransack the old seventeenth and eighteenth century superannuated books, and produce an appendix or a paper, which the great man honours, it may be, with a preface or a word of praise. Welsh is Basque, Welsh is Hebrew, Welsh is Hamitic. Let us hear Huxley:—'The Celtic and the Teutonic dialects are members of the same great Aryan family of languages; but there is evidence to show that a non-Aryan language was at one time spoken over a large extent of the area occupied by Melanchroi in Europe. The non-Aryan language here referred to is the Euskarian, now spoken only by the Basques, but which seems in earlier times to have been the language of the Aquitanians and Spaniards, and may possibly have extended much further to the East. . . . The hypothesis by which I think (with de Belloguet and Thurnam) the facts may best be explained is this: In very remote times Western Europe and the British Islands were inhabited by the dark stock, or the Melanchroi, alone, and these Melanchroi spoke dialects allied to the Euskarian. The Xanthochroi, spreading over the great Eurasiatic plains westward, and speaking Aryan dialects, gradually invaded the territories of the Melanchroi. The Xanthochroi, who thus came into contact with the western Melanchroi, spoke a Celtic language, and that Celtic language, whether Cymric or Gaelic, spread over the Melanchroi far beyond the limits of intermixture of

blood, supplanting Euskarian, just as English and French have supplanted Celtic. Even as early as Cæsar's time, I suppose that the Euskarian was everywhere, except in Spain and in Aquitaine, replaced by Celtic, and thus the Celtic speakers were no longer of one ethnological stock, but of two. Both in Western Europe and in England a third wave of language—in the one case Latin, in the other Teutonic—has spread over the same area. In Western Europe it has left a fragment of the primary Euskarian in one corner of the country, and a fragment of the secondary Celtic in another. In the British Islands only outlying pools of the secondary linguistic wave remain in Wales, the Highlands, Ireland, and the Isle of Man. If this hypothesis is a sound one, it follows that the name of Celtic is not properly applicable to the Melanchroic or dark stock of Europe. They are merely, so to speak, secondary Celts. The primary and aboriginal Celtic-speaking people are Xanthochroic—the typical Gauls of the ancient writers, and the close allies by blood, customs, and language of the Germans.’¹

That is to say, that, according to ethnology and philology, a connection exists between Euskarian (Basque) and Celtic. Now for a cursory glance at what relation between them is shown by a *coup d'œil* of Basque grammar. We shall find it very small. The ‘g’ invariably hard; the love of euphony; the change of hard explosives (k, t, p) into the corresponding soft g, d, b, after l, m, n (reminding one of the mutations in Welsh); agglutination, e.g. ‘gizon-a’ (‘the man’), like ‘plenty-n’ (from ‘plant,’ with modified vowel?); the pronoun ‘self’ being rendered by ‘buru’ (‘head’), like Welsh ‘pen’ in the idiomatic ‘pawb ar ei ben ei hun’; the counting by scores² in

¹ Professor T. H. Huxley, ‘British Ethnology’ (Some fixed points in), *Contemp. Review*, 1871, reprinted in *Critiques and Addresses*, and in *Collected Essays*, 1897, vol. vii. pp. 269, 270.

² Professor V. Henry (p. 26, Preface, note, ‘Lexique étymologique, Fasc. iii., Faculté de Lettres de Rennes) says:—‘Alone of all Indo-Europeans, all the Celts have the plan of counting by scores (Br. *daon-ugent*=40). This peculiarity is common to them and the French, unique among all the romance speakers (*quatre-vingts, six-vingts, les quinze-vingts*);

Welsh and Basque, with 'hogeï' (Basque) = 'hugain' (Welsh); the verb-poverty of both languages, present and imperfect being sole tenses of Basque indicative, but Basque is strong in perfect passive participle, mostly expressed by adjectival—'edig' in Welsh; resemblance of stray themes: 'gal,' 'coll(edig), 'lost,'—for instance—or 'gabe,' 'heb,' 'without' (unless Welsh 'heb' is connected rather with 'secus' in Latin). But, though these random resemblances between Welsh and Basque can be gleaned, with others like them, the differences are so enormous and so deterrent that any drawer of similarities would be chilled to the heart. The two are now so absolutely different, the parentage has become, if it existed, so untraceable! Basque apparently has neither MS. nor printed book earlier than 1545 A.D. (Dechepare); in spite of dogmatic W. von. Humboldt, Basque may have no great connection with Iberian. W. J. Van Eys, in his Dictionary, implied that the Basques were of a fair complexion. Huxley, we have seen, calls them Melanchroi, or brunettes. Iberian inscriptions found near Este, Padua, etc., show how large an extent of country was occupied by Iberians.¹ The relationship between Welsh and Euskarian, then, remains unproven.

Sir W. Preece the other day wished to connect Welsh and Coptic. That Hamitic tongue is old enough in all

and the French are also the only inhabitants of a district once exclusively Celtic. One is, then, forced to think of prehistoric occupants, non-Indo-European, counting, as do the modern Eskimos still, *e.g.*, by the ten fingers, then by the toes, again re-beginning. These may have bequeathed their system to the invading Celts.' (M. Duval gave Henry this idea.)

¹ Professor d'Arbois de Jubainville considers that the domain conquered by the continental Celts was Liguria. But what do we know of Ligurian? Hardly anything. Still less is our knowledge of Iberian, supplanted as it probably was by Ligurian. Here come in the Celtic vestiges discernible in Latin, especially of Gallic writers, and in Italian. Among the latter are, perhaps, 'folto' (W. 'gwallt'), 'camminare' (W. 'cam'), 'cazzo' (cf. W. 'cedor') 'cipolla' (W. 'sibol'), 'guai' (W. 'gwae'), 'padella' (W. 'padell'), 'scopa' (W. 'ysgub'), 'soldo' (W. 'swllt'), etc. Among the former Macbain in his Dictionary puts Bēnacus, of which he considers the first syllable to be the Celtic for 'white'; add probably 'rosea (rura)' = 'rhosydd,' in Vergil, *Aen.*, vii. 712, 'betulla' = 'bedw,' 'Brennus' = 'brenhin.' 'Cat' (in comp.) = 'cād,' 'Epona,' connected with root of 'ebol.'

conscience, but Hamitic is not Aryan. And surely we have, as good Welshmen, little cause to connect ourselves with Gibbon's 'race of illiterate beggars' (vol. iii. pp. 305, 306), the Copts, or with the Nubians (or 'Berberi'), 'pure negroes, as black as those of Senegal or Congo, with flat noses, thick lips, and woolly hair' (Buffon, *Hist. Nat.*, v. pp. 117, 143, 144, 166, 219, Paris, 1769). If we *had* so to connect ourselves with such undesirable relations, well; but if every presumption is against such a blood-tie, if history and ethnology and philology are repugnant, if sense itself is a bar, why conceive the gratuitous, graceless theory? Why enunciate it if conceived? To revert to and illustrate the ghost of Welsh derivations from the Semitic, let us quote at random the time-honoured philology of Dr. Davies of Mallwyd, from his *Rudimenta*, 1621, and his *Dictionarium Duplex*, 1632. The Doctor begins with: 'I should venture to affirm that the British tongue has an obvious agreement and affinity with Oriental languages, both in vocables and construction, on the one hand, and in pronunciation, on the other.' Let us touch on Edward Llwyd, M.A., F.R.S. (*obit* 1709) and his *Archæologia*. Thus, 'aberth' comes from Heb. 'zebach' ('b' same in both!); 'achles' from Heb. 'chalak'; 'adrodd' from Heb. 'davar'; 'addoli' from Heb. 'hadhar'; 'adduned' from Heb. 'nedher'; 'agoriad' from Arabic 'muftah'; 'agos' from Heb. 'nagash'; 'amllder' from Heb. 'mala'; 'amser' from Arabic, Turkish, Chaldee, etc., 'zeman'; 'anwadal' is Chaldee 'taltal'; 'aredig' is from Chaldee 'redei' (however Aryan one had considered agricultural 'earring' to be in each Aryan language); 'aros' is Chaldee 'shera'; 'asgen' from Heb. 'nezek' (the 'e' being identical in both!); 'athraw' from the 'Torah,' or Pentateuch; 'bagad' from Heb. 'gad'; 'bagl' from Heb. 'makl' (in spite of 'baculum' being at hand in Latin in same sense). But the number of these absurdities is endless. And the reason is plain. In the seventeenth century, Welsh lexicographers were Welsh-speaking Welshmen who left for Oxford—Jesus College, for choice—and there had to learn Hebrew, with an illustrative smattering of Arabic and

Chaldee, for their fellowships in Holy Orders. The current theory at that time and till a much later date was that Hebrew was the language of Adam; pre-Adamites were unknown; and the antiquity of Welsh required the Welsh folk to claim its origin as contemporary with Adam's creation. Similarly, Camden (*ex Giraldo in Topographia Walliæ*) introduces us to the old Welshman, who, being asked by Henry II. of England what he thought of the strength of the Welsh and of his royal expedition against them, said: 'That race can be annoyed and largely destroyed by your majesty's forces and those of others, nowadays, as often before; but utter extinction will never be its lot from human anger, unless Divine Wrath coincide. And Welsh, methinks, and not another tongue, will especially be responsible to the Supreme Judge on the day of exactest reckoning, for this corner of the world, whatever befall the majority.' With such a past (not to speak of such a promised future, to which all Celts will cry 'Amen'), none can wonder at 'the phonetic irregularities, still enamelling Celtic etymology; points of controversy among specialists; such and such rare forms and such and such over-arbitrary orthography' (Victor Henry, *prof. de Sanscrit et Grammaire comparée des Langues indo-européennes à l'Université de Paris: Rennes, 1900*). Henry says in one sentence what few Celts nowadays apparently believe, a verity of verities, a fact of facts such as the Celt has ever regarded as tyrannous and has accordingly rebelled against: 'Etymology does not consist in drawing close, at haphazard, two words that are alike in two tongues *less or more different*.' What he adds of Breton is true of any other Celtic language: 'Suppose a Breton word absolutely identical with a *Japanese* word of the same signification' (as, *e.g.*, the Welsh word 'tal' resembles Arabic 'tala'—meaning, the one, 'tall,' and the other, 'was tall'): 'that is a fortuitous circumstance hardly worth remarking upon.'

So, if Prof. Rhŷs refuses, as I heard him refuse, to cancel his equation: 'Brethyn = Brython,' or if Prof. Morris Jones (so modest and shy in company, so fierce on paper) compares

pronominal suffix 'ha' and 'hi,' in Arabic and Welsh, respectively, we may, perhaps, with all possible gentleness refer the one to the conceivable connection of 'brethyn' and old Erse 'bratt,' Irish and Scots Gaelic 'brat,' 'mantle,' to the Welsh 'brat' and to Breton 'brôz,' 'brothrac,' 'broud,' 'brout,' with a side look at Cymric 'brwyd.'

And Prof. Morris Jones in the appendix to Mr. Brynmor Jones's (collaborated) work has, with all due deference be it whispered, erred not slightly, in the opinion of such an excellent professor as Kuno Meyer, a host in himself. The ideal Celtic etymologist starts from our corrupt modern Welsh and traces a word of to-day to its pre-Celtic source as far as Sanscrit, Greek, Latin, etc., allow him. Positing such a common form—the source, as he takes it—he redescends all the way to the form of to-day. It is a double toil, induction ascending and descending, a Jacob's ladder angelic, essential to all self-sufficing etymology that can give reason for its existence. Phonetic laws must be his phylacteries, and these laws have been adumbrated with something of fixity already. These laws are sometimes ascertained precisely, even to the minutest detail, in 'Indo-European,' than which there is nothing else in Europe, except, of course, Basque with its six varieties, and Hungarian, Turkish, and Finnish. And here one may enter a caveat against Celtic scholars of the Sir William Jones school. Greek, as far as determining exactly the primitive vocalisation is concerned, surpasses Sanscrit. To believe otherwise is as false as, say, to consider the Bretons of our time as the immediate continuation of the Gauls of Armorica, a country which all spoke Latin in the fourth century A.D. Latin (with Umbrian, Oscan, and the other Italian peninsula old tongues) is serviceable, also, but of much less use than Greek. One may, in some sort, compare Greek to Latin as one compares Arabic to Hebrew. The preservation of Latin is much less than that of Greek, or of Sanscrit, or of Germanic languages. This is true especially for the Indo-European scholar. For the Celtic student Latin has three important aspects. Firstly, everything seems to show

that Celts and Latins were, at least, neighbours, if no more nearly allied, up to a date relatively late. The strange (impersonal) 'r' common to Latin and Celtic (cf. 'cerir,' W., or 'kareur,' B.) seems almost to justify the tentative expression 'Italo-Celtic quasi-unity.' Secondly, as Great Britain Celts are the sole ancestors of existing Celts, and as these former were so largely subject to Roman culture, especially as regards Christian cult, Romanisms or Italicisms run riot in, e.g., Welsh. Now Wales was one of the earliest British countries to be Christianised, and the last to leave spiritual Rome in the seventeenth century. Rhætian and Roumanian alone among Romance tongues have avoided frequent contact with Celtic idioms.

What I should wish to be understood by the above, then, is that we should not be led astray by unscientific etymologies of Welsh, due, as a rule, to the Welsh themselves, who have philologically been their own most able 'Vitruviuses of ruin.' Your German may be *rough*, may hold you impaled on the dilemma of 'abysmal ignorance' or 'deliberate misrepresentation,' but, generally, he is not ignorant himself, nor unscientific. Let us Welsh, then, learn from the Germans and from strangers all, and not be ashamed of learning. Let us not scout the Welsh-speaking Breton. Also, let us not quarrel one with another in Wales over Welsh. We are so few as a people and so weak that *we cannot afford to be more centrifugal than Nature has made us*. We require to be cautious in philology, almost painfully cautious; and, if other scholars who are not Celtic are more prudent than we, let us follow them. We can all, even the best, afford to learn from strangers. Also, 'we do not all know everything—no, not even the youngest'—as Dr. Thompson told Professor Jebb. Let this not be a hard saying: almost all foreigners writing on Welsh philology have written thereon better than we have. We are too easily led into the wilderness of alien, absolutely alien, tongues, in the search for home derivations, that are at our very hand, but which we miss, because they are so close to us. Welsh philologists, if Welsh-

men, are like British tourists who compass heaven and earth (so they be a Continental heaven and a Continental earth) to find one holiday-ground, while the loveliest spots are at home in this our despised Britain. Your Frenchman, Italian, German, Austrian, turned Celticist, looks for British Celtic roots in Britain or in Brittany.

D. M'Causland, Q.C., LL.D., says: 'We have traced a third (the Shemite), and, to some extent, a fourth (the Hamite) band of emigrants of the same race, and speaking languages kindred in their nature to those of the Indo-European family, into Assyria, Palestine, Egypt, and the southern shores of the Mediterranean, where they have ever since remained' (*Adam and the Adamites*, p. 277). This, save the 'kindred language' clause, may perhaps pass muster. And why not leave Shem to Shem, and Ham to Ham? Go to Teutonic, if you will, for Celtic affinities.

The *Grammatica Celtica* shows that recurring Celtic Teutonisms are as, about, 50; Celtic Latinisms as, roughly, 20; Latino-Græcisms as some 12. The relation between Celtic and Teutonic is, approximately, that between Celtic and Latin, but with a preponderance on the side of Teutonic. This in vowels. In the diphthongal system, Celtic comes decidedly nearest to the Teutonic and at least much nearer to Litho-Slav. than to Latin and Greek. In consonants, Celtic is connected with Litho-Slav. I have dwelt on this connection because it is too little insisted on, and because the eighteenth century, and middle seventeenth century system was that of which we now have a recrudescence in our own land; a recrudescence due to our local teachers, men of light and leading. Such teachers need a kindly remonstrance. They resemble our compatriot of whom Mirabeau (*Essai sur le Despotisme*) wrote: 'One knows Owen's quibble, wretched enough, of course, but comprising much sense'—

'Divitias et opes, *Hon* lingua Hebræa vocavit:
Gallica gens *aurum* 'or'; indeque venit *Honor*.'

'Hebrew has called wealth and riches *Hon*, French has dubbed "gold" *or*; whence has come *Hon-or*.' Only our moderns' derivations have little of the *grand sens*.

In Welsh etymology all too many, even in this twentieth century, are like Ben Jonson with his 'breeches' = 'bear riches' (*Cynthia*); Guidobaldo de' Bonarelli, with 'donna' from 'dono'; an unknown genius, who found 'Pépin' in the Greek word *ὄσπερ*. Thus carried on, philology becomes the counterpart of theology, defined as 'The art of composing chimæras by combining qualities irreconcilable' (*Système de la Nature*). All this is too bad when we remember how old our tongue is.

But I must draw to a close, begging to be kindly criticised, even as I have tried kindly to criticise my countrymen, who go after the accursed thing in philology, the (long ago condemned) deriving of Welsh as a tongue, and of the Welsh as a people, from impossible sources; but who will yet, I trust, do justice to themselves and to their great, their undoubtedly great, attainments.

OISEAN AN DEIGH NA FEINNE

KENNETH MACLEOD

[The following tale comes from the Island of Eigg. There was also a ballad describing the 'Passing of Ossian.' It began—

'S moch a sheinneas eoin an t-sleibhe

'S muiche dh' eireadh Oisean caomh.'

'Early sing the birds of the hillside,

Earlier would rise the beloved Ossian.'

It is to be feared that the poem is now lost.]

BHA Oisean leis fhein an deigh na Feinne. Bha e dall, 's an aois air a mhuin. B' e aon mhiann a chridhe a' ghrian fhaicinn aon uair eile ag eirigh 's a mhaduinn air aghaidh nam beann anns an aird an ear 's a' siubhal troimh na speuran gus an laigheadh i feasgar cul nan tonn anns an aird an iar. Mus goireadh an coileach ruadh anns a' mhaduinn, rachadh Oisean gu cnocan gorm ri cùl gaoithe 's ri h-aodainn greine, 's dh' fhanadh e an sin dà thrìan de 'n latha los an sealladh bu mhiann leis fhaotainn. An ciaradh