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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for November 29th, 2019

For the latest news from Scotland see our ScotNews feed at:

<https://electricscotland.com/scotnews.htm>

Electric Scotland News

Boris Johnson is on course to win the General Election with a comfortable 68-seat majority by triumphing in Labour heartlands, according to a projection poll which accurately forecast the hung parliament in 2017.

Of course we'll not know how accurate this is until the actual election but it does poll 100,000 panelists whereas most other polls are only of some 1,000.

The Brexit Party is forecast to win no seats at all. I think that's because there call for a new kind of politics proved to be rubbish. Farage is now looking to rename his Brexit Party to the Reform Party but he's lost the plot and so guess he's going nowhere.

The Lib Dems are forecast to win just one new seat from the last election and it seems there call to cancel the withdrawal bill is at the root of there problems. The SNP are forecast to win 8 new seats with 5 of them from the Labour Party.

Personally I also think the Conservative party is not being honest with the public as there withdrawal bill is more a May deal. Not one party is now backing a no deal scenario which in my view is what we need. I guess the Conservative party is the way forward but don't ever trust them to do what's right. Politics is definitely broken.

I was watching a couple of YouTube videos on skirlie. That's onion and oats cooked together as a side to mince and tatties. I confess I usually put in a cup of oats when I cook my mince. I also watched a few of the stovies recipes and apparently there is a lot of controversy on how to cook them. Some use beef, others sausages and yet others corned beef. I confess my understanding is that this is an onion and potato dish with some left over meat or even some corned beef in it with a touch of beef gravy. The meat was just a little and certainly not an entire tin of corned beef. At the end of the day this was meant to be a cheap meal.

I just made a shepherds pie last night and looking forward to eating it later today and likely for the next two days as well. Essentially this is just mince and tatties and serves three or four. You just cook the ground beef as you would mince with a cup of oats, and one large onion with some mixed vegetables. That goes into a large service dish with a mashed potato topping and then browned in the oven for around half an hour. I use Bisto gravy powder to thicken the gravy and usually put in two OXO cubes in while it is cooking. Salt and pepper to taste.

The ScotNews Feed and our What's New page aren't displaying. I hope to resolve this issue shortly but am having some issues. It appears the program I used to display this feed is no longer available as when I go to their site there is a message "This account has been suspended". I have found another program to display the feeds but for some reason they aren't displaying although they verify the feed is valid.

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

Note that this is a selection and more can be read in our [ScotNews](#) feed on our index page where we list news from the past 1-2 weeks. I am partly doing this to build an archive of modern news from and about Scotland as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines. I might also add that in a number of newspapers you will find many comments which can be just as interesting as the news story itself and of course you can also add your own comments if you wish which I do myself from time to time.

Sir Boyd Tunnock: Queen prefers teacake over wafer

The creator of Tunnock's teacakes, Boyd Tunnock, has received a knighthood at Buckingham Palace.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-50516136>

Fiddling While Australia Burns

As of today, bushfires along Australia's east coast have burnt through more than 1.6 million hectares of land, killing six people and destroying more than 300 homes.

Read more at:

<https://thediplomat.com/2019/11/fiddling-while-australia-burns>

The number of domestic abuse cases in Scotland will shock you

Did you know there were 59,541 incidents of domestic abuse recorded in Scotland (2017/18) and 82 per cent were female victims? These figures are stark. And should remind us all that each and every part of government, the public sector and wider society has an important role to play in tackling this violence.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/columnists/the-number-of-domestic-abuse-cases-in-scotland-will-shock-you-christina-mckelvie-1-5051679>

Re-branding the Curriculum for Excellence

That long-running saga of Scottish education, Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), has been given a makeover.

Read more at:

<http://sceptical.scot/2019/11/re-branding-the-curriculum-for-excellence/>

A fate worse than Quebec: the perils of Scotland's neverendum

Political division, economic stagnation and investment flight all beckon if Scotland persist with Indyref2

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/a-fate-worse-than-quebec-the-perils-of-scotlands-neverendum>

Drinking on rise again among Scottish teenagers

The latest figures showed an increase in the proportion who said they had ever had alcohol, been drunk, or drunk alcohol in the previous week.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-50563843>

Andrew Neil shames Nicola Sturgeon 10 TIMES in just 43 seconds during car crash interview

In the same interview, Ms Sturgeon was grilled by Mr Neil on Scotland's monetary plan if they become independent from the United Kingdom.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1209232/andrew-neil-nicola-sturgeon-bbc-interview-snp-election-latest>

Nicola Sturgeon's spending claims in Andrew Neil interview torn apart by damning report

Yesterday, BBC veteran Andrew Neil quizzed the First Minister of Scotland during an interview, which was dubbed my many a disaster.

Read more at:

<https://theoneworldnews.com/europe/nicola-sturgeons-spending-claims-in-andrew-neil-interview-torn-apart-by-damning-report/>

Thousands sign up for new online Gaelic course on Duolingo

More than 20,000 people have signed up to learn Scottish Gaelic on a free online learning app which launches the new course on St Andrew's Day.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-50579327>

Tories to win 68-seat majority, as Labour set to lose dozens of seats
Boris Johnson is on course to win the General Election with a comfortable 68-seat majority by triumphing in Labour heartlands, according to a projection poll which accurately forecast the hung parliament in 2017.

Read more at:

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/news/uk-world/1030334/tories-to-win-68-seat-majority-as-labour-set-to-lose-dozens-of-seats-poll/>

Talk of a Tory majority doesn't help Boris - it's all still to play for
The route to a Conservative victory is open - but it relies on the Lib Dems not getting any worse

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/talk-of-a-tory-majority-doesnt-help-boris-its-all-still-to-play-for/>

Electric Canadian

The Best Moose Documentary Ever

Which I've added to our Moose page which was filmed in Russia along with another video showing a year in the life of a moose and her calf.

You can view these at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/moose.htm>

A Sermon

Preached in St. John's Church, Cornwall on the Occasion of the Lamented Death of the Late Minister of that Church, the Rev. Hugh Unquhart, D.D., by the Rev. Neil MacNish, M.A., B.D. (1871) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/urquhart.pdf>

The Book of Games

With directions on how to play them by Mary White (Eighth Edition) (1898) (pdf). To the game-loving people who so kindly welcomed the first appearance of this little book (under the title, "The Book of a Hundred Games"), I send my warmest thanks. That it was so cordially received in England, the paradise of sports, has been most gratifying, and this encourages me to send it forth again with fifteen additional games and a new dress.

This may well be a useful book for the Christmas holidays.

You can read this at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/bookofgames.pdf>

Electric Scotland

The Home Preacher

Added Service 17 by Dr. Raleigh

You can read this at: <https://electricScotland.com/bible/homepreacher/week17.htm>

Clan Henderson Society

Got in the June, September and December 2019 newsletters along with a commitment to send in some of the older issues and a regular feed of the new ones to come.

You can read these at: <https://electricScotland.com/familytree/newsletters/henderson>

The Vale of Strathmore

Its Scenes and Legends by James Cargill Guthrie (1875) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://electricScotland.com/books/valestrathmore.pdf>

Templars and Rosicrucians the inner and secret part of the Temple Order

The Brotherhood of the old Rose+Croix. The aim is to clarify and give justice to the persecutions suffered by our predecessors (Knights Templar) and to convey their spiritual values in a more understandable way.

You can read this at: <https://electricScotland.com/history/domizio.htm>

A Walk in the Hay-Fields
A Children's story

You can read this at: <https://www.electricscotland.com/kids/stories/walkinhayfields.pdf>

Vagabond Songs and Ballads of Scotland first and second series
With Many Old and Familiar Melodies Edited with Notes, By Robert Ford in 1898 and 1901.

This can be read at: <https://electricscotland.com/poetry/vagabond.htm>

My first visit to Scotland

Watched a two part video on YouTube which seemed to me to be a great look at Scotland. Have posted this up in our Community

You can watch this at: <http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/5477-My-first-visit-to-Scotland>

Annals of Tyrone County

Or, The Border Warfare of New York, during the Revolution by William W. Campbell (1831) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://electricscotland.com/history/america/annalsoftryoncounty.pdf>

Scotland Matters

The case for Scotland In the UK and against independence.

We're different We encourage Labour, Lib Dem & Conservative parties to produce the policies to win the Holyrood elections 2021. Our supporters meet up, discuss & get informed. The opposition's miles behind in the polls. If nothing changes, the SNP will win again, condemning us to 5 more years of Indyref, division and decline. They need to be stopped!

A new web site which can be viewed at: <https://scotlandmatters.co.uk/>

Wild Sports of the West

With Legendary Tales and Local Sketches by William Hamilton Maxwell (1832)

You can read this at: <https://electricscotland.com/history/ireland/wildsportsofwest.pdf>

The Story

Wild Sports of the West

INTRODUCTION BY THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN

To properly appreciate the following pages the reader should first adjust his critical faculties to the date in which the letters were written—unless, indeed, he has actually cultivated a taste for the artificial periods, the practical joking, the elaborate puns, the sentimentalities and the somewhat pompous humour of the period. The art of description was not one in which the amateur writers of the early nineteenth century excelled. And it is not for its style that this book is valuable to us now. It is for the picture it presents of life and social conditions painted, presumably, by an Anglicised Irishman during a sporting visit to a remote part of Connaught in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

Everything was new to the supposed writer; most of what he had to tell, I imagine, was new also to the average reader of the time. For this book was almost a pioneer in its day. It was the first of a series beginning with Charles Lever and continuing to our own time in which the lives and manners of the Irish people, the sport and scenery of the country, are set forth in detail for the information and entertainment of British and Anglo-Irish readers. I will not go so far as to say that but for this book the vivacious works of Miss Somerville and "Martin Ross"—to say nothing of Miss Jane Barlow and Cannon Hannay—might never have been written. But he is to a certain extent, their forerunner; and, to a still greater degree, his book is the forerunner of such stories as "Handy Andy," "Harry Lorrequer," and "Castle Rackrent." And, indeed, as pointed out in the preface, Lever drew from personal intercourse with him, as well as from a full acquaintance with his Irish writings, the desire to follow him in the same field of fiction.

One great advantage of the book is that it is written from the outside point of view—the standpoint of an intelligent Anglo-Irishman educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and that the author visited Connaught much as an explorer might visit a newly-discovered savage island. We hear too much, perhaps, of the value of observations written from the inside. These are, strictly speaking, not observations at all, but expositions ; and although they have their place in providing the material from which full knowledge of a subject must be derived, it is the outsider who really sees a thing as a whole, in its truest proportions and in reasonable relationship to the rest of the

world.

It is obvious that our author has but a very external knowledge of the Connemara people of his day. He did not know their thoughts, and might, perhaps, have been surprised if he could have learned their view of him. To him they were just the natives of the place, and their ways and habits were of small importance compared with those of salmon, grouse, snipe, and the red deer. But he tells us what he saw, and a good deal of what he heard ; his narrative, so far as is possible for a writer of the period, is a straightforward one, and has the intrinsic value of every document which sets forth a piece of life that a man has actually experienced.

The author describes a community in course of transition. The days of the hard riding, hard drinking, duelling, lavishly hospitable landed gentry, ruling over contented tenants and a whole host of dependents and hangers-on, in a country where the King's writ did not run, had not passed away. The clan system still existed, though in a degenerate form. The landlord, "the master," was chief, and held tenaciously to illegal rights frankly recognised by the clan. When, for instance, a portmanteau, the property of a visitor to the Lodge, was abstracted en route, there was no question of appealing to the law and of setting the police in motion. An outrage to the authority of the chief had been committed and the clan took it up. An armed emissary was dispatched, and presently returned with the portmanteau and an apology.

Fosterage was still deemed a tie as strong or stronger than one of blood. Hennessey " my foster brother," was loved and protected. One abduction and three homicides were chargeable against him. " He had been unfortunate," poor man. In fact the law—the written law and the legal executive were ignored or derided. Custom, the unwritten law and the legal executive were ignored or derided. Custom, the unwritten law of the master sanctioned by illegal physical force, prevailed. Private quarrels were speedily settled by a duel. Family feuds and clan feuds were of frequent occurrence resulting in faction fights, many broken heads and some loss of life. As though such causes of quarrel did not afford sufficient opportunities for a fight, mullet fishing was, for some inscrutable reason, deemed a fitting occasion for a small battle between the retainers of neighbouring landlords. The people believed that they had a prescriptive right to rob mullet nets, and, in consequence, would never be at the trouble of setting them unless they had a sufficiently strong party to protect the fish when taken. Of course the dependents of one landlord would not rob his nets, but they would rob his neighbours; the neighbouring tribe would retaliate ; and on the occasion of a great catch there were plenty of broken heads, and sometimes not a few gunshot wounds. One of these adventures involved the summoning of our author's host, "and it cost me a cool hundred before I got clear of the Honourable Justices."

What will at once strike the reader is the extraordinary change that has taken place in Ireland. When these letters were penned, the only social system in Connaught worth the name was the clan system ; and in a day of peasant proprietors, co-operative agriculture, Land Commissions, Congested District Boards and all the other agencies by which the complicated social machinery of Ireland is at present conducted, it is interesting to look back to this time, such a little while ago, when the only people of any importance were the landlord, the priest, and (in a lesser degree) the excise officer. The tribal picture presented in the book is definite and complete. Within and around the residence of the landlord was collected a host of dependents and hangers-on, some with duties and some with none, but all apparently with privileges; all dependent directly on the landlord for shelter, food and drink, game, the produce of lakes, rivers and the sea, and illicitly distilled whiskey.

It must have been a happy life for them. They lived, as their landlords lived, in a world of perpetual sport; when there had been a great kill there was a great feast, and when there was a great feast there was a great carouse. The successful running of a smuggled cargo of French brandy was the occasion of jubilation throughout the entire countryside, in which the magistrate landlord took part. And on the days when the weather was too severe for outdoor sport the turf was piled high on the hearth, fishing-rods and guns were brought out and cleaned, and the whole energies of the tribe given up to the overhaul of sporting apparatus of every kind.

A social condition existed which certainly would not appeal to the moralist or economist of the present day, but on the whole the people were happy and contented in it. The landed interest—owners and tenants—were well-to-do, and there was rough plenty for the paid and unpaid retinue of the landlord in those days before the "piping times of peace" had brought down prices by the run, and the great famine and its consequences had ruined the gentry and broken the hearts of the people.

For those who were not afraid of roughing it in a comfortable way, it was a sportsman's paradise. It is true that the actual appetite for killing seems to have been indulged in, rather childishly. "It was a bright and cheerful day ; the sun sparkled on the blue water, which, unruffled by the gentle breeze, rose and fell in the long and gentle undulations which roll in from the westward when the Atlantic is at rest. While pulling to the cove, we amused ourselves by shooting puffins as they passed us, or trying our rifles at a distant seal, while my kinsman's anecdotes whiled away the tedium of the voyage." Puffin shooting, and "trying rifles at a distant seal " would not be regarded to-day as very worthy occupations for a true sportsman, especially in a country which abounded with such variety of legitimate game. On the very day, for example, on which this incident is described, a party enjoyed the two very different sports of coursing and mullet fishing, and, after a magnificent run with Irish and English greyhounds, netted upwards of a hundred mullet weighing from four to ten pounds each.

Abundance of interesting lore is to be found in these pages for the sportsman of any country ; particularly for him who still frequents the mountains and streams of Connemara. The wild red deer of Ireland are all gone now; they were scarce in those days, but afforded splendid sport. The account of the pike on Lough Corrib is extremely interesting, as also are the notes on the trout found in

the high mountain loughs. "Two loughs, situated in the same valley, and divided only by a strip of moorland not above two yards across, united by the same rivulet, and in depth and soil on bottom apparently similar, were found to produce fish as utterly different from each other as it is possible for fish of the same species to be; in the centre lake the trout were ill-shapen and dark-coloured, with large heads, lean bodies, and little fight in them. In the adjacent lough they were golden and pellucid in colour with bright vermilion spots, compact in shape, and vigorous fighters; and as much superior at table as they were in the water." Very interesting, too, is the account of a lake a hundred feet higher in the mountains producing trout remarkable both for their size and for their peculiarity in never rising at a fly or taking bait; and which were yet frequently observed by the herdsmen rising over the water, or, as they said, "tumbling about like dogs." The local assumption was that there was a sea-horse or other devil in the lake which prevented the fish from rising to the fly.

Charming, indeed, is the author's picture of the sporting lodge in the wilds of Erris, the home of his Irish kinsman, which was the head-quarters whence the sporting expeditions described in his narrative were made ; and pleasant, indeed, to his city eyes, must have been the sight of the narrow creek, with the snug thatched dwelling at the head of it where, although the Atlantic spray sometimes drifted against the windows, a great cliff broke the force of the sea winds, and a high hill on the land side sheltered it from the north. In the chilly evenings a turf fire burned in the parlour hearth ; and there, by the light of dried bogdeal added to the embers instead of candles, the sportsman and his guests sat over excellent claret that had never paid the revenue a farthing, or brewed toddy from the more potent spirit which was at once the produce and scourge of the district. The long roar of the Atlantic breakers was their lullaby at night; the cries of wild birds and the cheerful hum of the farmyard awoke them in the morning. From the windows they could see the salmon flinging themselves over the smooth tide as they hurried to the mouth of their native river, or trace the outline of the Mayo hills where the original red deer of Ireland were still existing. No wonder the supposed stranger was delighted with the place, and in the course of a day or two, had thoroughly domesticated himself in it; no wonder, after expeditions to the mountain hut where they encamped for a week or two, when in quest of the remoter game, or after an expedition to Achil after grouse or sea-fowl or rabbits, or snipe, or cock, he returned to it, as to a home. It was a strenuous life, and a very delightful one ; they were out all day on the mountains or along the shore ; came back at nightfall with full bags with which to replenish their wild larder ; and if they held something like a carouse after dinner, the long day's exercise in the wonderful air seems to have rendered both mind and body immune from any ill-effects. Be it noted in passing that there was no Eve in this paradise.

The human aspect of things is always interesting when politics and economics leave us cold ; and it is the scenery, the sport, the legendary lore, the lives and habits of the people that chiefly engage our author. Politics and economics he leaves on one side for the very good reason that they were non-existent in the part of Connaught which he visited; and people who enjoy playing the game of "Then and Now," of comparing things as they were with things as they are, will find this book a document of great value, enabling them to estimate to what extent a century's march of civilization has affected the remoter west of Ireland.

The book teems with incidents of sport, shooting, hunting, coursing, fishing on sea and river, and with many pertinent remarks on the fauna and scenery of the country. How far these descriptions are applicable to-day is for those who visit the wild west to say. Socially and economically the Connemara of to-day would be unrecognisable to one who visited it nearly a century ago. Good roads now traverse the then unmapped and trackless wilderness, and good hotels minister to the wants of the modern traveller. The ragged and somewhat irresponsible bands of personal retainers have dwindled down to harmless necessary gillies and guides. Produce, such as it is, can find a market, and barley and oats not needed for home consumption are no longer destined to the illicit still. The wild red deer is long ago extinct, and the most industrious trapper would fail to make a living now-a-days out of killing otters; but seals are numerous, salmon leap their way upwards from the sea, and the eagle may reward the vigilance of the tourist, The same great Atlantic billows thunder against the same stupendous cliffs. Mountain, lake and river are unchanged.

The author is fond of introducing legends and anecdotes. Among the latter, the story of "The Man Who Would Not Do For Galway" is a fine example of the kind of Irish anecdote which remained very popular for many a year afterwards; and the account of Mr. Dawkins, of Toole Castle, and how he was eaten up by the sporting friends of his wife, and finally ruined in mind and estate, is a convincing instance of that riotous extravagance both of narrative and of life in which writers upon Ireland of the period delighted. Much more real and quite beautiful in its way is the account of the death of Antony, the otter-killer. In fact, this old peasant, so full of unselfish affection, so wise in the lore of the mountains, the rivers and the lakes, and so skilful in his craft, is the one real portrait that stands out in the book. His simple devotion to his master whose education in matters of sport had been in his hands from childhood, who had served three generations of the family and knew no world beyond it, is well indicated; and in this respect, at any rate, one is happy to think that times have not altogether changed in Ireland, and that faithful and affectionate servants like Antony may still be found, honourably serving a master who loves and honours them for their service. His last words were beautifully characteristic of personal devotion and reverence for the name. "Master Julius, will ye listen to a dying man, he that carried ye in his arms, and loved ye better than all the world besides. Marry, Julius avourneen—the ould name that since the. days of Shamus a Croaghagh held land and honour— surely ye won't let it pass! You will mind the dog for my sake, Master Julius, and ye'll let trap and fishingrod hang up in the hall, to put ye in mind of old Antony." No wonder his master was heavily afflicted at the loss of his old friend and monitor; no wonder he felt that, although the old man had died surrounded by those who loved him, full of years, and ripe for his rest, "He could have spared a better man."

Dunraven.

Go to <https://electricScotland.com/history/ireland/wildsportsofwest.pdf> to read this book.

And that's it for this week and hope you all have a great weekend and our American friends enjoy their Thanksgiving. Also hope you all enjoy the November 30th St. Andrews Day Dinner and Dance which is celebrated around the world.

Alastair