THE HEATHER IN LORE LYRIC AND LAY

WHITE AND PURPLE HEATHER

THE HEATHER

IN

LORE, LYRIC AND LAY

By

ALEXANDER WALLACE

Editor The Florists' Exchange, New York

"Up amang the purple Heather,
No' a flow'r that man can gather
Frae garden fair
Or greenhouse rare
Can beat the bonnie, bloomin' Heather."

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TO

MY LOVING WIFE

Rachel Marion

IN GRATEFUL RECOGNITION OF CHEERING
ENCOURAGEMENT AND VALUABLE ASSISTANCE
WHICH LESSENED MUCH MY PRESENT LABORS;
AND OF A CONSTANT DEVOTION THAT
HAS MADE SEPARATION FROM
MY NATIVE HEATHER LAND
A HAPPY EXILE

"One that never shrank from me in my desolation, that never tired of my despondencies, or shut up by a look or tone of impatience my real or imaginary griefs."

PREFACE

RUSKIN, in one of his friendly lecture-talks on art, with the sympathetic spiritual perception and originality of thought which characterize his unique genius, says: "Now, what we especially need for educational purposes, is to know, not the anatomy of plants, but their biography—how and where they live and die, their tempers, benevolences, distresses and virtues." The quaint sentiment voiced by the great philosopher many years ago is somewhat significantly in harmony with this dawning time of a simpler and brighter understanding of humanity and of nature. And could we find for such a flower biography a subject more entrancing, so seductive, almost eerie, so plaintively sturdy, so instilled with romance, with patriotism and with pathos—as the Highland Heather?

There dwells, perhaps, no solitary plant or flower in the sheltered garden or in the lonely wild, whose family ties show no modest record hidden somewhere in the stately annals of history; but the crude fact of history, like a tale that is listlessly told, has little power to charm where lack the flash and glow of emotional ardor; and so I have invoked to my humble biographical narrative of this bonnie floral hermit on our bleak majestic Highlands, that ancient

patron Muse of Scotia's departed minstrels—the Spirit of Caledonia.

We learn from the histories of the vegetable kingdom that Calluna vulgaris—the generally accepted botanical term for Heather—has a wide distribution throughout European countries, and in other parts of the world. But so closely has the word Heather become associated with Scotland, that whenever we hear it spoken, or see it written, the fancy instinctively roams to the "land of brown heath and shaggy wood," the beauty of whose stern mountains, softened with their autumnal vesture of purple and brown blending in every-varying and never exhausted tints, has baffled the painter's genius, enchanted the poet's vision, and inspired monarch and peasant alike to sing its praises.

The Heather enters into the literature, the poetry, the lyrics, and into the home life of the Scottish people, to a degree unsurpassed by any other plant in the history of nations; and the wonder is that its own interesting story has not before been told in some complete form. Scotland and the Heather are inseparable; the flower derives its inheritance of unique renown, and somewhat, too, of rugged temperament, from the Caledonian mountain wild which has become so characteristically its home; thus it is in its identity with the land of Burns that I wish principally to consider it.

For the purpose of a clearer elucidation of the history and utility of the plant itself, however, it has been thought necessary to go beyond Scotland's borders; still it is believed that this further sub-

ject matter presented will be welcomed with interest in localities wherever Scotsmen gather—and by those for whom all things Scottish have a fascination.

A more opportune time, perhaps, could not have been chosen in which to tell the absorbing nature-story of the Heather than this year, the centenary of the council at which Science, in its discernment, removed from the plant its ancient and ill-deserved appellation of Erica, and clothed it with its present designation of Calluna, so much more truly expressive of its unique beauty and charm.

No attempt has been made to enter fully into the botanical or cultural details connected with the plant. These have been treated only in a casual manner; still, it is hoped sufficient information has been given to prove serviceable. The effort has been rather to cull from the multitude of references to the Heather abounding in Scottish and other literature, and to weave the sprays thus gathered into a literary garland the beauty and attractiveness of which shall lie in the depth of the sentiment pervading it, and in the aroma of patriotic love that it exhales.

Defects in the treatment of the subject may assert themselves to the critical reader. No one will be more conscious of these imperfections than is the author; but, in the language of an old writer, for faults of omission and commission, "I referre me wholy to the learned correction of the wise; for wel I wote, that no treatise can alwayes be so workmanly handled but that somewhat sometymes may fall out amisse, contrarie to the minde of the wryter, and

contrarie to the expectation of the reader; wherefore my petition to thee, Gentle Reader, is to accept those my travyles wyth that minde I doe offer them to thee, and to take gently that I give gladly; in so doing I shall thinke my paynes well bestowed, and shall bee encouraged hereafter to trust more unto thy courtesie."

To the friends who have so willingly and generously assisted me in the collection of the information submitted, I tender my sincere thanks. Particularly, in this respect, am I under obligation to Mr. Robert Cameron, Curator of the Botanic Gardens, Harvard University; Mr. Jackson Dawson, of the Arnold Arboretum; Mr. William Falconer, Superintendent of Allegheny (Pa.) Cemetery; Mr. George W. Oliver, of the Bureau of Plant Industry, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.; and Mr. Joseph Meehan, of Germantown, Pa.

Especially am I indebted to Miss Elizabeth I. Bierstadt, daughter of Mr. Edward Bierstadt, of New York City, and niece of the celebrated American landscape painter of that name, for the charming life-like painting of the sprays of Heather, reproduced from flowers received from Scotland, which form the frontispiece to this work.

I also tender my acknowledgments to Mr. H. C. Dugan, of Aberdeen, Scotland, for photographs of Scottish mountain scenery.

I send forth this little volume, the result of some years of painstaking research during the spare moments snatched from a rather busy life, as the tribute of an expatriated Scotsman to the mountain flower

of his home land, hoping that a perusal of its pages may but deepen the ardor of Scotland's sons and daughters everywhere to continue to sing, with the best heart and voice at their command, the praises of their native Heather.

ALEXANDER WALLACE.

New York, December, 1902.

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Send a bit of heather o'er the sea
To Scotia's sons, where'er they be;
Its bloom will bring to mind
Scenes and faces left behind,
And anew each heart will bind
To the old countrie.

Send a bit of heather o'er the sea;
Transported back each heart will be
To fair Scotland's wooded hills,
Hear the music of her rills,
And the mavis as it trills
In the old countrie.

Send a bit of heather o'er the sea;
Simple offering though it be,
Prized 'twill be where fairest flowers
Blossom in their tropic bowers,
Or where iceberg frowning towers
O'er the sea.

Send a bit of heather o'er the sea;
A dear remembrance may it be
To the ones now vigil keeping
O'er our soldiers quietly sleeping;
Send the heather—Scotland's greeting—
O'er the sea.

—M. CARTER, in *Scottish American.*

A Heather Patch in Point Pleasant Park, Halifax, N. S.

catl.er at Forest Hills Cemetery, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

ETYMOLOGY

IN old writings the word occurs variously as haudr, had(d)yr, haddir, hedder, hadder, hather, and hether. The word "Heather" is of uncertain origin, and is supposed to have appeared first in the eighteenth century. Skeat, the etymologist, remarks as follows concerning the word Haudr: "Uncultivated land. The plant heath is so named from growing on barren heaths. Heather, an inhabitant of the heath; a heath-er." This latter derivation, while a convenient one, seems to be borne out by others referred to further on. It is common in some parts of Scotland to apply the termination "er," signifying as belonging to. For example: Fifer, a native of Fife. Another writer has endeavored to trace the name to the word "heat," which virtue he ascribes as one of the properties possessed by the Heather.

The form which will appeal most forcibly to, and find the greatest favor with, Scotsmen, at least, is that provided by Dr. Prior, as follows: "Heath, Heather, Hather, A. S. hæo; G. heide; O. N. heioi; Go. haipi, a word which primarily meant the country in which the heath grows; Skr. Kshêtra, a field; Beng. Kheta and Skr. Kshiti, land, from Kshi, to dwell. It is from the same root, Kshi, that is derived Skr. Kshamâ, ground; Prakr. Ḳhamâ, to which

are related G. χαμαι; Go. haims, O. N. heimi, and our home." Then follows this explanation: "When the north of Europe was a forest, open land was naturally preferred for the site of dwellings; the heath was the only open land, and thus acquired a name that has been used to designate a field or homestead."

It is the association of the Heather with the word "home" that makes Prior's explanation so agreeable to the Scottish heart. Earliest recollections cluster around this "flower of the wild;" and as a writer beautifully puts it: "To many a mountain child, the purple hillside is the only flower garden he knows; but what a garden! Reaching from horizon to horizon, it is the best of bedding plants, requiring no care or expenditure; the greener after the worst of storms; when August's sun blisters most fiercely, only more purple and luxuriant; the home of all that is purifying in heart and taste."

Heath and Heather are common in combination with other words. For instance, we have, among moorland birds, heath or heather-bill, heath or heather-cock, heather-lintie, heather-pippit, heather-peeper. Then we have heather-ale, heather-beer, heather-bred, heather-legged, heather-besom, heather-cowe, heather-reenge, heather-rope, etc.

A Galloway bard, almost unknown, named David Davidson, speaks of Burns, who was his contemporary, and who shortly before had passed away, as "heather-headed":

Sic sangs as thae, the heather-headed bard
Of Scotland ranted as he trod the glebe,
And Caledonia's taste thought it nae shame
To croon the o'erword.

A few expressive metaphors taken from the plant are found in our language; e. g., "heather and dub," signifying rough and ready; "to set the heather on fire," to cause a disturbance; "to take to the heather," to flee or become an exile.

Then in northern Scotland we have such names as Hedderwick, Heathcot, Heathery hillock, Heathery gall, Heather cliff, etc.

The Gaelic name of the plant, fraoch, furnishes such designations as Freuchie, Freugh, Frew, etc.

BOTANICAL HISTORY

HEATHER (Calluna vulgaris) belongs to the natural order Ericaceæ, and up to the early part of the nineteenth century was known by the appellation given to it by Linnæus, Erica vulgaris. An eminent English botanist, named Richard A. Salisbury, in a paper read before the Linnæan Society of London, in 1801, called attention to some peculiar characteristics distinguishing the Heather from all other Ericas, and succeeded in having the name changed to Calluna vulgaris.

Salisbury's remarks are found in the Transactions of the Linnæan Society for the year 1802; so that the Heather has been in possession of its present designation for just a century. I give his statement in part in the original Latin, and the translation as under:

"Mirum fortasse nonnullis videatur, Ericam *vulgarem* desiderari in sequentibus paginis: sciant autem velim, hancce stirpem, si quæ alia in toto Ordine, proprium constituere genus: jure antiquiore profecto suum nomen retinuisset, sed cum tot aliæ stirpes, apud omnes Botanicos jam eodem cognomine gaudeant, satius duxi hanc unam novo insignire titulo: itaque *Callunam* appellavi, ob usum ejus frequentissimum in scopis conficiendis: essentia generis, quâ differt ab Ericâ, est in pericarpii valvis ad latera locu-

lorum dehiscentibus, septis axi relictis: habitus, absque ullo rudimento petioli pedunculive, omnino sessilis. Alterum genus, cum illo pariter confusum, ob stigma grande *Salaxis* mihi audit, cujus calyx irregularis, et pericarpium drupaceum, triloculare, trispermum: quatuor species innotuere, faciem Ericæ *scopariæ* præ se ferentes."

The translation of the foregoing follows: "To some people it may seem strange that Erica vulgaris should be discussed in the following pages; they may come to know, however, that this plant constitutes a distinct genus, if any in the entire order does. Under the older rule it would have retained its name, but as so many other plants now enjoy the same cognomen, among all botanists, I have thought it better to distinguish this one by a new title; hence I have called it Calluna, because of its very frequent use in making brooms. The essential points of the genus, in which it differs from Erica, are that the valves of the pericarp dehisce at the sides of the compartments, the dissepiments remaining on the axis: habit, without any rudiment of a petiole or peduncle, altogether sessile. On account of its large stigma I understand Salix as another genus, equally confused with this, having an irregular calyx and a drupaceous, 3-locular, 3-seeded pericarp; four species are to be noted, having the appearance of Erica scoparia."

In an article by the late Professor Meehan, in Meehan's Monthly for May, 1899, the following less technical explanation appears: "The distinction is very striking, and yet it is remarkable that of the many hundreds of species of Erica known in the

Old World, the south of Africa, especially, only this one should present those special characteristics. This is connected with the calyx. Ericaceous flowers are monopetalous, but one would think that the flowers of Calluna were divided into four petals. But, in truth, what appears to be four pink petals are four sepals or divisions of the calyx, which have been unusually enlarged so as to enclose the monopetalous corolla, and have assumed the rosy pink tinge the corolla ought to have had. To replace the ordinary calyx, four normal leaves have become enlarged, and serve as calyx-like bracts to the real calyx. The common name Heather, however, clings to it yet. It was proposed, when Calluna was separated from Erica proper, that it should be known as Ling, while Heather should be retained for the other three species of the old genus, which is found to a limited extent in various English localities. But this has not been generally adopted."

Rand says of this change: "It is proper to add that the Calluna is the 'oldest' Erica, if we may so speak, and was the type of the genus of Linnæus. When the many other Ericas were found, it was discovered that they differed slightly botanically from the Calluna, but all had been classed as Erica. Calluna was but one, it was easier and less productive of confusion to change one than so many, so the original Erica became Calluna."

The word "Ling" is, by some botanists and writers, characterized as a synonym of heath and Calluna vulgaris. It is of Scandinavian origin, and doubtless by the hardy Norsemen, during their temporary pos-

session of part of Scotland, was applied to the Heather which they saw abounding there. Quoting Prior again, he says in connection with the word "Ling:" "Dr. Nor. and Sw. Lyung; a word which Holmloe considers to represent the Skr. gangala by replacing g with l; the common heath. This word is often combined with Hede, a heath, as in Swedish Ljung hed, Danish Lynghede, ericetum, a heath land, and, conversely, hedelyng, a heath plant, leading to the belief that heath was the waste land and Ling the shrub growing on it. Calluna vulgaris, Linn."

Miller says: "Heath is called 'Ling' in some parts of England; in Shropshire, 'Grig' (this is from the Welsh Grûg), in Scotland, 'Hather.' It is remarkable that Shakespeare enumerates heath and ling as different plants. The former of these plants is from the German Heide, and the latter from the Danish Lyng; in Swedish it is Liung; in Italian, Erica; in Spanish, Brezo; in Portugese, Urze, Erice, Torga or Estorga; in Russian, Werese." The French call it Bruyère commune.

Dr. Johnson gives Ling (N. S.) heath; yet Bacon seems to distinguish them, as in "Heath and Ling and Sedges."

In some parts of Scotland, Calluna vulgaris is called dog heather, and Erica cinerea, carlin heather—she heather.

"Heath," says "Norden Surveiors, Dialogue 1601," "is the general or common name, whereof there is owne kind called hather, the other Ling."

Shakespeare makes Gonzalo declaim, in The Tempest, Act I., Scene 1: "Now would I give a

thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground; long heath, brown furze, anything."

Ellacombe, in "Plant Lore of Shakespeare," remarks as follows: "Lyte says, 'There is in this country two kinds of heath, one of which beareth the flowers alongst the stemmes, and is called Long Heath;' but it is supposed by some that the correct reading is 'Ling, Heath,' etc. And in that case, heath would be a generic word."

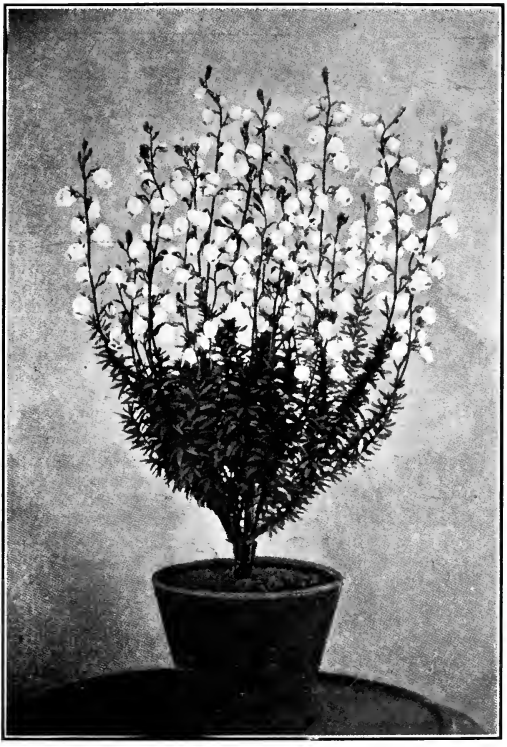
Ling, according to a writer in "Notes and Queries," is considered a synonym of backyard, a word common in East Sussex; a hairdresser there once remarking to a friend that he had been "watering his plants in his ling."

In Hampshire, Ling is a local term for a small backyard or garden, the chief use to which it was devoted being the washing and drying of linen. The word, says another writer in the same periodical, might be derived from the French Lingerie.

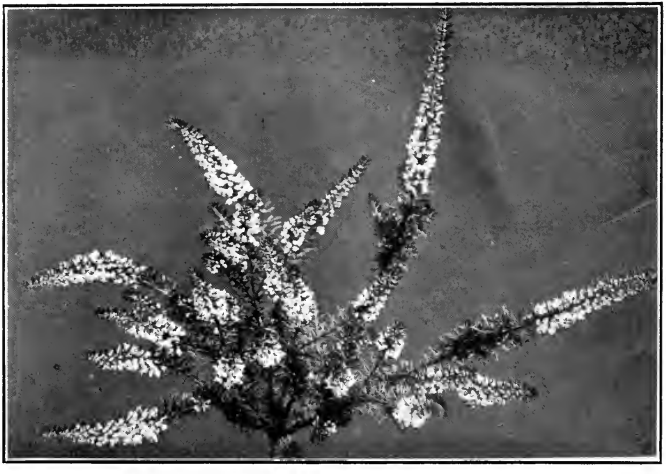
The word Calluna is derived from the Greek (Kalluno), signifying to adorn, and having reference to both the beauty of the Heather and to its use as a scrubbing brush or broom.

Distribution of the Heather

Watson, in his Cybele Britannica, gives three distinct zones of altitude for the distribution of the Alpine plants. The Super-Arctic Zone, bounded below by the limit of the common Heather at an elevation of about 3,000 feet; lower down, the Mid-Arctic Zone,



St. Dabcoc's Heath,
Popularly Known as Irish Heather.
From "Möller's Deutsche Gärtner-Zeitung."



Erica vagans, the Cornish Heath.

lying between the Heather line and that of the cross-leaved heath at about 2,000 feet, characterized by the Heather without the heath. This comprehends the highest mountains of England, Wales and Ireland, and all the great ranges of Scotland, and contains by far the largest proportion of rare and beautiful Alpine plants, being especially rich in Arctic forms. Lastly, the Infer-Arctic Zone, bounded above by the Erica and below by the bracken and the limits of cultivation at about 1,400 feet. This distribution cannot, of course, be accepted as a fixed one.

Rev. Hugh Macmillan, than whom the Heather has no sweeter singer, thus writes in his "Holidays on High Lands:"

"The vegetation of the moorlands is exceedingly varied and interesting. Its character is intermediate between Arctic and Germanic type, reminding one, in the prevalence of evergreen, thick, glossy-leaved plants of the flora of Italy, which seems, from the evidence of ancient records, to have undergone a remarkable change in modern times, and now approximates in its general physiognomy to the flora of dry mountain regions. The plant which, above all others, is characteristic of the moor is, of course, the common Heather, or Ling. It is one of the most social of all plants, covering immense tracts with a uniform dusky robe, and claiming, like an absolute autocrat, exclusive possession of the soil.

"And yet, though capable of growing in the bleakest spots, and enduring the utmost extremes of temperature, its distribution in altitude and latitude is singularly limited. It ascends only to a certain height

on the mountains on which it grows; for, although it covers the summits of most of the hills in England, many of the loftiest Highland hills rise high above it, green with grass, or gray with moss and lichens. The upper line runs from two to three thousand feet in the counties of Perth, Aberdeen and Inverness, varying according as it grows on an elevated mountain range or on isolated peaks. On the west coast of Scotland it is very often found on a level with the seashore, almost mingling with the dulse and bladder-wrack. In Norway, strange to say, although the general surface of the country is composed of high and barren plateaux, it is so scarce and local that one may travel hundreds of miles without finding a single specimen. It is replaced in such localities by the bearberry and crowberry, which form immense continuous patches, and look, at a distance, especially when withered, in spring or autumn, somewhat like Heather. Although abundant on the European side of the Ural Mountains, it disappears very suddenly and decidedly on the eastern declivity of the range; and it is entirely absent from the whole of northern Asia to the shores of the Pacific. Its northern limit seems to be in Iceland, its southern in the Azores. In Europe it covers large tracts of ground in France, Germany and Denmark, particularly in the lands of Bordeaux and the moors of Bretagne, Angou and Maine; while in Great Britain it exists in every county, with the exception of Berks, Bucks, Northampton, Radnor, Montgomery, Flint, Lincoln, Ayr, Haddington, Linlithgow.

"The range of the heath tribe is eminently Atlantic, or western. It is found along a line drawn from the north of Norway along the west coast of Europe and Africa, down to the Cape of Good Hope, in the vicinity of which the family culminates in point of luxuriance and growth, beauty of flowers and foliage, and variety of species, some even attaining the arborescent form. Along this line, which is comparatively narrow, seldom running far from the coast, about four hundred distinct kinds, excluding varieties, are scattered, of which England and Scotland possess only four and Ireland no less than six.

"On the barren moors of Cornwall a very interesting kind of Heather called the Cornish heath (Erica vagans) grows abundantly, distinguished by the crowded bell-shaped flowers. On the north coast of the same county another species occurs, called Erica ciliaris, with very large and gaily-colored flowers, and leaves elegantly fringed with hairs. It is frequent near Truro and Penrhyn, and in one or two places near Dorset. These two Cornish heaths are also found in Ireland; the one on a little island off the coast of Waterford, and the other near Clifton, in Galway. In the Emerald Isle, Mackay's Heather, which has large glabrous foliage, with an unusual proportion of white under-surface, grows in one or two spots in Connemara. It was discovered the same year on the Sierra del Peral in Spain. In mountain bogs in the west of Mayo and Galway the Mediterranean Heather is sparingly distributed, sometimes obtaining a height of five feet, with numerous upright rigid branches, and flowers in leafy racemes. The Scot-

tish Menziesia (M. cœrulea), the most abundant kind of heath in Norway, is, as I have already said, almost extinct on Dalnaspidal moor in Perthshire, its only locality in this country (Scotland).

"Every visitor in Ireland must be familiar with St. Dabeoc's Heath (Menziesia pollifolia), which the guides and peasants frequently sell to tourists at exorbitant rates as a memorial plant. This lovely Heather occurs in great profusion on the low granite hills to the westward of Galway, all the way to the lower end of Loch Corrib. It grows on heathy moors by the roadsides, and although it is found a considerable way up the mountain, it is there much less abundant, smaller in size, and rarely flowers. The common bell heather of our Highland moorlands (Erica cinerea) produces the finest effect of all our native heaths, growing as it does in great masses in bare places, especially where the burning of the common ling has enriched the soil with its ashes, and removed a formidable competitor in the struggle of existence. It frequently purples a whole hillside, and nothing finer, as regards effect of color, can be seen even in the tropics.

"The cross-leaved heath (Erica tetralix) is much less abundant, growing in boggy places among the yellow spikes of the aphrodel and the snowy plumes of the cotton grass. It is more like a hothouse heath, with the rich clustered head of pale rosy blossoms. But growing sparingly, and its color being more delicate, its effect in the moss, and at a distance, is not equal to its beauty close at hand.

"That Australia and America have no true heaths is a botanical aphorism. In Australia the tribe is

replaced by the Epacridæ, which are often as beautiful as any of the Cape heaths. In North America the Scottish Menziesia is more abundant than it is in Scotland, or even in Norway.

"Hudsonia ericoides, which covers the white sandy wastes in many parts of New Jersey, is so like the common heath that it is not infrequently mistaken for it when out of flower.

"It is recorded of the first Highland emigrants to Canada that they wept because the Heather, a few plants of which they had brought with them from their native moors, would not grow in their newly adopted soil. It is understood, however, that an English surveyor, nearly thirty years ago, found the common Ling in the interior of Newfoundland; while in one spot in Massachusetts it occurs very sparingly over about half an acre of boggy ground in the strange company of andromedas, kalmias and azaleas, peculiar to the country.

"It was first observed by a Scottish farmer residing in the vicinity, who was no less surprised by its unexpected appearance than delighted to set his foot once more on his native heath. None of the plants seems to be older than six years, and may, therefore, have been introduced by someone who found relief from homesickness in forming the simple floral link between the new and the old country."

A fuller account of this discovery, and the discussion upon it which ensued, is given in the chapter entitled "The Heather Abroad."

In Koerner and Oliver's "Natural History of Plants" occurs the following passage relative to the

distribution, hardiness and other characteristics of the Heather, which, it will be observed, is here dealt with under the name of Ling:

"The common Ling may be traced in an unbroken range from the plains up to a height of 2,450 meters on the slopes of the Alps. Strange to say, these plants do not blossom much earlier on the lowlands than on the high Alpine regions, and it has actually been shown that Calluna blooms rather sooner at a height of 2,000 meters than in the northern portion of the Baltic lowlands. How is this? The winter snow has long disappeared from the lowlands, while the hillsides above are yet concealed under their cold, white covering. The winter snow has gone, to be sure, but not the winter. While everything around is already in blossom, while the ear is already visible on the stalks of rye, the neighboring moor is still a dismal waste, and lifeless a month or so later; there is a stir on the dry soil of the cold moor, and the absorbent roots of the plants, which have evergreen rolled leaves, commence their activity. When the warm days of midsummer arrive, and the sun sends down its powerful rays, the temperature of the soil quickly increases, and, indeed, rises far more than would be thought possible. A thermometer placed three cms. below the surface in the uppermost mossy layer of a moor, on a cloudless summer day (June 22) showed a temperature of 31, while the temperature of the air in the shade was 13 degrees. An unpleasant vapor arises from the damp earth, which settles on the surface, and makes a walk over the moor particularly disagreeable. Scarcely has the sun set in glowing

red on the horizon when this vapor condenses into 'baths' of mist, which settles over the dark expanse; stems, branches and leaves are covered with drops of water, and next morning everything is as thoroughly soaked as if it had rained all throughout the night. This process, which is regularly repeated during the fine weather, is only interrupted when a damp wind from the sea blows, driving masses of clouds over the heath, or when copious rains saturate the soil. It needs no further showing that under such conditions an abundant and continuous transpiration from the plants is impossible, and that in the short intervals which are allowed to the leaves for transpiration the outlets from the woody meshed, spongy parenchyma must not be obstructed, and it does not need further proof that the evergreen rolled leaf is the form most suited and adapted to these conditions."

In the Gothic translation of the Gospel, by Ulfilas, he renders Matthew VI., 28, not by "consider the lilies of the field," but by "consider the blooms of the Heath."

In Jeremiah XVII., 6, occurs the passage, "For he shall be like the Heath in the desert." This reference bears out the sense of the parched and fruitless existence of the Heath as it existed to the ancient Greek; but the plant named in the Bible is given in the Septuagint as the wild tamarisk. Relative to this matter, McClintock & Strong's Encyclopedia states:

"Heath; arar, has been variously translated, as Myrica, tamarisk; tamarin, which is an Indian tree, the tamarind; retama, that is, the broom; and also, as in the French and English versions, bruyère, heath, which

is, perhaps, the most incorrect of all, though Hasselquist mentions finding heath near Jericho in Syria."

In the Fagn-Kinsman Dictionary of the Bible, G. E. Post says: "One species of Heath, Erica verticillata Forsk, grows on sandstone and chalky rocks, at an altitude of from 300 to 3,500 feet, on the w. face of Lebanon and the chains to the northward. This cannot be the plant intended. There are no heaths in the desert."

A Bed of Heather Growing at "Greystone," Yonkers, N. Y.

Erica cinerea, with a Background of Calluna vulgaris alba,
in Edinburgh (Scotland) Botanic Gardens.

THE HEATHER ABROAD

In America

LIKE the proverbial Scot, the Heather, as has been seen, is found "far frae its native hame," or what is generally considered as such, and in some out of the way corners of the globe. Heather has been discovered in different localities in the United States, but in most instances it is thought to be adventive rather than indigenous. For its appearance here the Scotsman is in great measure responsible. The latest botanical work in America (Britton and Brown's "Illustrated Flora") thus describes it: "Calluna vulgaris, sandy or rocky soil: Newfoundland to New Jersey. Naturalized or adventive from Europe."

Meehan tells us that when the poet Percival first referred to the Heather as a native of Vermont, in his "Ode to a Dried-up Lake," his inclusion of the heath among the flowers that suffered was criticised by botanists, and considered allowable only under "the poet's license," though still with the reservation that Shakespeare would not have blundered so:

There the dark fern flings on the night wind's wings
Its leaves like the dancing feather,
And the whip-poor-will's note seemed gently to float
From the deep purple brown of the heather.

But the desire to feel that America, as well as the land of Burns, had a vested right to the famous plant, was very strong, and there sprang up an unusual interest in the subject. Whittier's pretty lines were felt to be real both in body as well as spirit:

No more these simple flowers belong
To Scottish name and lover,
Sown in the common soil of song,
They bloom the wide world over.

In smiles and tears, in sun and showers,
The minstrel and the Heather,
The deathless singer, and the flowers
He sang of—live forever.

Wild heather bells and Robert Burns!
The moorland flower and peasant!
How, at their mention, memory turns
Her pages old and pleasant.

Quite a stir was created in the botanical world when a plant of Calluna vulgaris, in a pot, was exhibited by Mr. Jackson Dawson, then a young gardener for Hovey, of Cambridge, Mass., and now superintendent of the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, at a show of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in Boston, on Saturday, July 13, 1861. Mr. Dawson had discovered the Heather growing wild near Tewksbury, Mass. So great was the enthusiasm in the matter that the Society at once instituted an investigation, and on August 5 of the same year its

Flower Committee were dispatched on an errand of discovery. The Heather was then in full bloom. The chairman of the committee, Mr. E. S. Rand, reported that plants were found half a mile from the State House of Tewksbury, and were spread over an extent of perhaps half an acre.

In the locality where the plants were growing the surface of the ground was buried by small hummocks and covered with a short close grass, interspersed with numerous plants of Kalmia angustifolia, Spiræa tomentosa, Cassandra calyculata, Azalea viscosa and Myrica Gale. In several cases the Heather was found overgrown and shaded by these shrubs. The common cranberry (Vaccinium macrocarpon) occurred somewhat abundantly in the immediate vicinity of the Heather, usually on the depressions, while the Heather was found on the hummocks. The soil was sandy peat, just that which the gardeners would choose for heaths.

The first supposition was that the Heather had been planted, or the seed sown by a Scotchman, Mr. Strachan, who lived near by, but in an interview he denied all knowledge of the plant until within a few years, said he had never had any Heather in his possession, had never received any seeds from Scotland, or done anything in any way by which the plants might have been introduced; that he was as much astonished as delighted when, about ten years before, he discovered the plant, which he at once recognized as the Scotch Heather, and each year since he had gathered it when in blossom to adorn his house. On being further pressed by one of the committee as to

the feasibility of its being introduced by him, he indignantly and characteristically replied: "Wadna I hae been a fule, mon, to sow it on another man's land, when my ain as guid wad hae grown it as weel?"

The former owner of the land remembered the plants in 1810, and from deductions the committee believed that the plants existed about 1700.

In concluding his report, Chairman Rand remarked: "May not the Heather once have existed in profusion on this continent, and have gradually died out owing to some inexplicable, yet perhaps only slight, climatic changes? May not this be the last vestige, or one of the last, of what was once an American heath? And if the Heather exists in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, may we not expect that some intermediate stations may yet be discovered?"

An abridgment of Mr. Rand's report appeared in Silliman's Journal, the editors of which periodical in a foot note state: "That Calluna also inhabits Nova Scotia, is stated by Loudon, in his Arboretum, we know not upon what authority, but should be glad to be informed. If the claim for Calluna to be regarded as an American plant rests mainly or wholly upon this Tewksbury locality, it would not gain acceptance; but its existence in Newfoundland, and still more in Nova Scotia (if verified), does away with all antecedent improbability of its indigenous occurrence in New England."

In the same periodical the discussion of the subject was continued for a considerable time, and I

think it of sufficient interest and value, both to scientists and laymen, to warrant its insertion in full here. It follows:

That "America has no heaths" is a botanical aphorism. It is understood, however, that an English surveyor, nearly thirty years ago, found Calluna vulgaris in the interior of Newfoundland. Also that De la Pylaie, still earlier, enumerates it as an inhabitant of that island. But this summer (1861) Mr. Jackson Dawson, a young gardener, has brought us specimens and living plants (both flowering stocks and young seedlings) from Tewksbury, Mass., where the plant occurs abundantly over about half an acre of rather boggy ground, along with Andromeda calyculata, Azalea viscosa, Kalmia angustifolia, Gratiola aurea, etc., apparently as much at home as any of these. The station is about half a mile from the State Almshouse. Certainly this is as unlikely a plant, and as unlikely a place for it to have been introduced by man, either designedly or accidentally, as can well be imagined. From the age of the plants it must have been there at least a dozen years; indeed, it has been noticed and recognized two years ago by a Scotch farmer in the vicinity, well pleased to place his foot once more on his native Heather. So that even in New England he may say, if he will—as a friend of ours botanically renders the lines—

"Calluna vulgaris this night shall be my bed,
And Pteris aquilina the curtain round my head."

It may have been introduced, unlikely as it seems, or we may have to rank this heath with Scolopendrium officinarum, Subularia aquatica and Marsilea quadrifolia, as species of the Old World so sparingly represented in the New that they are known only at single stations—perhaps late lingerers rather than newcomers.

A further comment is as follows: The earliest published announcement that we have been able to find of Calluna vulgaris as an American plant is that by Sir Wm. Hooker, in the index to his Flora Boreali-Americana (2p. 280), issued in 1840. Here it is stated that: "This should have been inserted at p. 89, as an inhabitant of Newfoundland, on the authority of De la Pylaie. Accordingly, in the seventh volume of De Candolle's Prodromus, to the European habitat is added 'Etiam in Islandia, et in Terra Nova Americæ Borealis.'" But it does not appear that Mr. Bentham had ever seen an American specimen. He also overlooked the fact (to which Dr. Seemann has recently called attention) that Gisecke, in Brewster's Encyclopædia, records it as a native of Greenland. No mention is made of it by Dr. Lang in his enumeration of the known plants of Greenland, appended to Rink's Geographical and Statistical account of Greenland, published in 1857, from which we may infer that the plant is, perhaps, as rare and local in Greenland as in Newfoundland, or even in Massachusetts.

In this journal for September, 1861, the present writer announced the unexpected discovery by Mr. Jackson Dawson of a patch of heath in Tewksbury,

Mass., adding the remark that "It may have been introduced, unlikely as it seems, or we have to rank this heath with Scolopendrium officinarum, Subularia aquatica, and Marsilea quadrifolia, as species of the Old World so sparingly represented in the New that they are known only at single stations—perhaps late lingerers rather than newcomers." And when, in a subsequent volume of this journal, Mr. Rand, after exploring the locality, gave a detailed account of the case, and of the probabilities that the plant may be truly native, we added a note to say that the probability very much depended upon the confirmation of the Newfoundland habitat. As to that, we had been verbally informed, in January, 1839, by the late David Don, that he possessed specimens of Calluna collected in Newfoundland by an explorer of that island. Our friend, Mr. C. J. Sprague, however, after having in vain endeavored to find in any publication of Pylaie's any mention of this heath in Newfoundland, and having ascertained that no specimen was extant in Pylaie's herbarium or elsewhere, that he could trace, naturally took a skeptical view, and in the proceedings of the Boston Natural History Society for February and for May, 1862, he argued plausibly, from negative evidence, against the idea that any native heath had ever been found in Newfoundland or on the American continent. It is with much interest, therefore, that we read the announcement of Dr. Hewett C. Watson (in the Natural History Review for April last) that:

"Specimens of Calluna vulgaris from Newfoundland have very recently come into my hands, under

circumstances which seem to warrant its reception henceforth as a true native of that island. At the late sale of the Linnæan Society's collections in London, in November, 1863, I bought a parcel of specimens, which was endorsed outside: 'A collection of dried plants from Newfoundland, collected by ——— McCormack, Esq., and presented to Mr. David Don.' The specimens were old, and greatly damaged by insects. Apparently they had been left in the rough, as originally received from the collector; being in mingled layers between a scanty supply of paper, and almost all of them unlabeled. Among these specimens were two flowerless branches of the true Calluna vulgaris, about six inches long, quite identical with the common heath of our British moors. Fortunately, a label did accompany these two specimens, which runs thus: 'Head of St. Mary's Bay—Trepassey Bay, also very abundant—S. E. of Newfoundland, considerable tracts of it.' The name 'Erica vulgaris' has been added on the label in a different handwriting. All the other species in the parcel (or nearly all) have been recorded from Newfoundland, so that there appeared no cause for doubt respecting the Calluna itself. And, moreover, the collector had seemingly some idea that a special interest would attach to the Calluna, since in this instance he gave its special locality, and also added two other localities on the label. But there is very likely some mistake in the name of the donor to Mr. Don. It is believed by Sir William Hooker that he was the same Mr. W. E. Cormack whose name is frequently cited

for Newfoundland plants in the 'Flora Boreali-Americana.' This gentleman was a merchant in Newfoundland, to which he made several voyages."

We should recollect that the Calluna advances to the extreme western limits (or out-liers) of Europe, in Iceland, Ireland and the Azores. The step thence to Newfoundland and Massachusetts, though wide, is not an incredible one.

Without doubt these are the very specimens referred to by Mr. Don, then curator of the Linnæan Society. And now that the stations where they were collected are made known, we may expect that the plant will soon be rediscovered and its indigenous character ascertained.

We notice that an earlier announcement of Dr. Watson's discovery is contained in Dr. Seemann's Journal of Botany for February last, where the record of Gisecke's discovery of Calluna in Greenland is referred to. In view of this, and of its common occurrence in Ireland, Iceland and the Azores, Dr. Seemann opines that "its extension to Newfoundland and the American continent is, therefore, not so much a paradox as a fact at which we might almost have arrived by induction." It seems to us that the *induction* was all the other way until the plant was actually discovered on American soil.

In Vol. 38, p. 428, 1864, of Silliman's Journal, occurs the following:

The Newfoundland habitat of Calluna having been confirmed (vide this journal, 38-123), we have now pleasure to announce that Professor Lawson—late of King's College, Kingston, now of Dalhousie College,

Halifax—has had the good fortune to bring to light a new locality from the Island of Cape Breton. The flowering specimen which Professor Lawson sent us was collected on the 30th of August last, "in a wet, spongy place, among spruce stumps, in a peaty soil, overlying clay, on the farm of Mr. Robertson, St. Ann's, Inverness Co., Cape Breton Island." He states that "it has been known there for ten years, having been noticed by a Highlander when mowing, who immediately ran to his master, Mr. Robertson, exclaiming, 'I have found Heather.' Full inquiry into the whole circumstance leads me to the belief that the Calluna has not been planted at St. Ann's, but is a genuine native. There is only a small patch of it, not much more than a yard across. Its surroundings at St. Ann's are most appropriate. Both in scenery and vegetation there is a striking resemblance to the Scotch Highlands. Gaelic is the common language, and all the genuine manners and customs of the Highlands are there."

It is interesting to note that the Heather appears to be even more restricted in this new station than that at Tewksbury, Mass., the indigenous character of which it helps to establish. We may now fairly infer that the Heather once flourished throughout our Eastern borders, from Massachusetts to Newfoundland, but it is verging to extinction, not being able to compete here with the rival claimants of the boggy soil.

Other contributions on the subject appearing in the journal named are:

Calluna Vulgaris in Newfoundland

Mr. Murray, late of the Geographical Survey of Canada, and now engaged in a survey of Newfoundland, has brought to Montreal specimens of this plant, which were collected by Judge Robinson on the east coast of Newfoundland (near Ferryland, lat. 47°, long. 52° 50′), and which are stated to be from a small patch of the plant not more than three yards square.

The question whether Calluna is or is not indigenous to the New World, which during several years past has been repeatedly referred to in this journal, as additional facts come to our notice, has now taken a new turn, Dr. Seemann in his Journal of Botany for October last having published and neatly figured "the Newfoundland Heather as a distinct species Calluna atlantica." He founds it upon specimens originally from Newfoundland which have been for some years cultivated by Dr. Moore in the Glasnevin Gardens, Dublin, side by side with the common European Heather. The diagnosis attempted Dr. Seemann admits to be as yet far from satisfactory, except as to a biological distinction observed by Dr. Moore, viz.: "that whilst the Newfoundland one always suffered from frost and turned brown during the mild Irish winter, the common British form growing by its side was unaffected by cold, and retained its usual green color." Although "no argument can possibly set aside" this fact, yet its value as a character has to be considered. Probably in the station from which these specimens were lately transferred, as well as in Iceland and the higher Alps, whence Dr. Seemann has the same form,

the plant was accustomed to complete protection by snow from changes of temperature the whole winter through. Unfortunately, we have no specimens from Newfoundland, and Dr. Seemann does not speak of the Cape Breton, Nova Scotian, or New England plants. Upon examination of these, we do not find that the indicated differences in structure (mainly the naked pedicels, broader sepals, and tip of flowering branches not continued into a leaf shoot while the flowering lasts) coincide or hold out. So that as yet a second species can hardly be said to be established.

There is a story told that the plant was introduced into the maritime provinces by some Scottish emigrants who on the voyage thither used the Heather as a bed, as they were wont to do in their native country; brought the material on shore; the seeds got scattered and finding an agreeable soil, took lodgment, rooted and flourished.

Heather is also found introduced at Halifax, but is said to have been brought over from Scotland by some soldiers of a Highland regiment once stationed there. It was planted near one of the forts, and has thriven well. There is now a quarter of an acre of Heather at Point Pleasant Park, Halifax.

S. S. Bain, a prominent florist of Montreal, and a Scotsman, writes me that two friends of his, also from Scotland, prospecting for the yellow metal on the Yukon, found themselves on a mountain overtaken by the darkness. They made their bed as best they could, and when morning light came they discovered they had been sleeping on a bed of Heather. The

location was above the snow levels, and the plants were beautifully in flower at the time. A sprig in the possession of Mr. Bain confirms this little story.

The latest deductions from a scientific standpoint regarding the indigenous character, or otherwise, of the Heather in the United States, appears in the March, 1900, issue of Rhodora, the journal of the New England Botanical Club, from the pen of Mr. William Penn Rich, now Secretary of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society at Boston, Mass. Mr. Rich writes:

"On the twenty-fourth of September, 1899, the writer, happening to be in Tewksbury, Mass., visited the location of the Heather (Calluna vulgaris, Salisb.), and it may be desirable to put on record the present condition of this interesting plant as well as some observations on the vexed question of its origin.

"Contrary to our usual experience in such matters, no difficulty was met with in finding the place where it grew, so well was the plant known in the town.

"It grows upon a hillside pasture sloping gradually down to boggy ground through which a deep channel has been cut by a brook. In the higher part of this pasture a few scattered patches of the plant were noticed, possibly transplanted from the main body of the Heather, and from their feeble appearance seemingly doomed to early extinction. The principal growth was in the lower part of the pasture, on the borders of the brook, where the plants were growing quite thickly in a space about thirty feet square, which was inclosed by a wire fence. At the time of our visit a cow was standing in the midst of the precious shrubs, an invasion not likely to be soon repeated, for visit-

ing the place a second time, some weeks later, we found the fence had been repaired, showing the watchful care of some interested person over this rare plant. The shrubs were mostly in advanced fruit, although a few of their pretty rose-colored flowers still lingered as a sample of their beauty a few months before.

"In the thirty-eight years which have elapsed since public attention was first called to the Heather in this locality, the area of its growth has been much reduced, judging from the description published at the time, and that it is still in existence is doubtless due to the protection which has been afforded it. Since its discovery here several other stations have been found for the Heather in New England. It has been reported from Cape Elizabeth, Maine, from West Andover, Townsend, and Nantucket, Massachusetts, and also from Rhode Island.

"In most of these locations careful investigation has failed to prove its introduction by human agency, and this has led numerous writers on the subject to claim for it an indigenous origin. Although its early history in New England is shrouded in obscurity, and desirable as it would be to place the Heather on our list of native plants, it might be said, after a careful reading of the literature of the subject, that no satisfactory evidence has accumulated during the years that have passed since its discovery on this continent to substantiate its claim as a plant native to America.

"The circumstances that in some instances, as at Townsend, Mass., it has been traced to the planting of seed, and especially the fact that although many wild regions in America seem favorable for its de-

velopment, it has never been found at points remote from human habitation, are much against the theory of its indigenous character.

"The occurrence of the Heather in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Greenland, has been adduced as strong evidence in favor of believing the plant native in America. But Nova Scotia was settled in part by Scotch, who would have been particularly likely to introduce the Heather accidentally, if not purposely; while in Newfoundland—a region of great stretches of open moorland, and seemingly an ideal habitat for the Heather—the plant has only been found in a few patches about the settlements on the southeastern coast, the most thickly populated part of the island. Finally, the occurrence in Greenland, although reported, could not be confirmed by Lange, the author of the most complete flora of that region. It will thus be seen that these northern occurrences add little to the evidence that the Heather is an indigenous American plant."

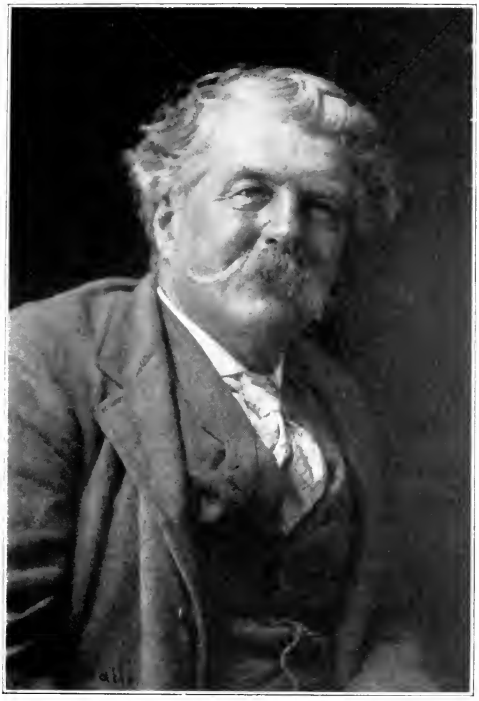
This is also the view held by Dr. Goodale, of Harvard University, who has given considerable study to the subject.

In the first week of August, 1902, the author visited the spot near Tewksbury, Mass., where the Heather is growing, and found the conditions much as described by Mr. Rich. Patches of the plant were seen scattered among the dense vegetation surrounding them, and in one or more instances bushes had succumbed from some cause or other, probably our trying variable spring weather, and seemed to be "stricken in days." Those remaining were of comparatively low

growth, and among them there was observed a tendency to spread. Through this cause, and the watchful care of the horticulturist at the State House, who is fully cognizant of the value of the gem in his charge, the Heather may be long preserved in this locality; for whether native or introduced, we are thankful, as Superintendent Dr. John Nichols, of the State Institution, cordially and appreciatively remarked to the author, "to have so near us this small but pretty reminder of the Highland hills of far-away Scotland."

And now I desire to bring to a close this entertaining and much discussed subject of "Heather in America," with a sketchy narrative of the facts relative to the discovery of the plant, that led to its finally being brought to public notice, as they were given me by the lady whose artless story certainly adds a picturesque, if homely, dramatic aspect to the lively discussion.

That the existence of the Heather at Tewksbury, Mass., had been known for over a century is conceded by those who have given the matter any study. The credit of bringing the plant before the horticultural world must be ascribed to Mr. Jackson Dawson. But a romantic incident, which has heretofore remained in obscurity, is that the finding of the Heather at that time, and the bringing of it to the attention of Mr. Dawson indirectly, is due to Mrs. Margaret Murray, née Strachan, or "Stratton, as we girls changed it" (to quote the old lady's quaint remark), a daughter of the Scotch farmer whose land adjoined that upon which the plant was discovered growing, as previously mentioned in this chapter. Mrs. Murray,



Mr. Jackson Dawson,
Who Brought the Wild Heather in Massachusetts to the Attention of the Horticultural World.
(Photo by Birchall, Boston.)

Mr. John Strachan and Wife

Mrs. Margaret Strachan Murray

Scotch Folk Connected with the Finding of the Heather Near Tewksbury, Mass.

a sweet-faced old lady, now verging on the allotted span, resides at Ballardvale, Mass. Here is her story as she told it: "My attention was attracted to the Heather by its pretty little purple bells. I pulled a sprig and brought it to my father, who, being a Scotchman (he is a native of Auchinblae, Kincardineshire), said: 'Why, that looks like Scotch Heather!' But to make sure of the matter he took it to a Scotch friend of his, Alexander Skene, a gardener, then at Andover, Mass. A few days later we all went down to the field together, and as soon as Mr. Skene saw the plant he said: 'Of course, that's the real Scotch Heather.' I gave a few sprigs to a girl friend of mine, who Jack Dawson, then a young fellow, was comin' round to see; and when he noticed the sprigs of Heather on her table he wanted to know where she got them. She told him, and the first thing we knew the public was makin' a big time over it, and the committee came down to see it. After that the man who owned the land, who told father that for twenty years he had been plowing the Heather up to keep it from spreading over the cow pasture, thinking he could make something out of it, forbade us girls to go near that spot. It's now many years since I've seen the Heather. I wonder if it's as pretty as it was then!"

Under the title of "Heather and Weather," Vanity Fair, in its issue of February 22, 1862, caricatures the committee of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, searching for the Heather, as shown in the accompanying cartoon illustration, and comments as follows:

"A few days ago, as the sun was busily employed in gilding a very pretty landscape, the passers along a quiet lane at Tewksbury, near Boston, were arrested by a novel and curious sight. Several elderly men, some of them stoutish, others scraggyish, but all of solid and respectable appearance, were seen scattered over an area of an acre or so in extent, apparently occupied in the process of grazing, or pasturing themselves upon the scanty herbage, their postures being of the fashion known as 'all-fours,' and their heads close to the ground. It was some time before any person had sufficient presence of mind to address himself to any of the strangers, as, if not grazing, they might have been praying, and it is not Boston manners to disturb decent-looking citizens either from their prayers or their provender. At last, however, a smart shower of rain came down, upon which the mysterious grubbers arose precipitately to their feet and toddled off to a neighboring farmhouse for shelter. Here it transpired, upon inquiry, that the strangers were certain Wise Men of Boston, forming in the aggregate what is called the 'Flower Committee' of that city, and that they had been occupied in investigating the subject of a 'native heather,' said to have been discovered in the field just deserted by them. They had secured several fine specimens of the plant, and might have been now in fine spirits about it had not the farmer, a Scotchman, informed them that it was not Heather, but good, old-fashioned, rough-and-ragged Scotch thistle, upon which they feed donkeys in his country. This, combined with the shower, was rather a damper, and the sages made

their way back to Boston with all speed, wetter if not wiser men."

Cultivation in America

The Heather is not difficult to grow in the United States. It likes moisture at all times, but not at all a wet soil, and it prefers partial shade from warm sunshine, and shelter from sweeping winds. In the northern and mountainous parts of the country it behaves very well; but it is a question if it can be grown here with European luxuriance.

While not hardy in all situations, the plants do fairly well in New England. At Forest Hill Cemetery, Mass., there is a number of groups that receive no protection whatever. Around New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia they should need no protection. They all do well with a slight covering of leaves or meadow hay, and well repay the trouble, as they bloom nearly all summer.

All ericaceous plants have fine, hair-like roots, and, in common with all plants with roots of similar character, delight in light soil. They are well suited in soil containing many small stones, and of a sandy nature. The stones keep the soil open, which is what the roots desire. Such roots are often poor. Because of this it is inferred by many that the plants referred to do not care for better soil; but this is a mistake. The roots are suited in such situations, but the plants will show a marked improvement in growth if a mulching of good soil be given them. It has been found that the Heather grows most luxuriantly

in a soil that contains a more than usual store of oxide of iron.

Raising Scotch Heather from seed requires as careful treatment as does the multiplication of any of the plants belonging to the heath family, by a similar method of propagation. The soil most suitable in which to sow seeds of Scotch Heather is one composed of good peat loam and sharp, clean sand, in equal parts. The soil should be made fine by passing it through a small-meshed sieve. Shallow earthen pans, or shallow boxes, are the most desirable receptacles for sowing the seed in, although preference should be given to the earthen pans, as there is less danger of fungous attacks by their use than in the case of the wooden boxes. The pans should be well drained with broken crocks, and a layer of sphagnum moss should be placed over the crocks, so as to prevent the soil washing into the drainage. After the pans, or boxes, are thoroughly drained, put into them two or three inches of the above compost, pressing it down firmly and evenly. When this is done give the soil a watering with a fine rose, and after the soil has absorbed all the water the seeds may then be sown.

As the seeds are small, they have to be sown carefully and evenly over the surface of the material used, and very slightly covered with soil. The pans, or boxes, may now be placed in a temperature ranging from 50 to 60 degrees, and they must be carefully watched so that they may not get dry. When the seeds germinate, if there is any sign of fungus, the young plants should at once be transplanted into fresh soil, which is one of the best remedies to check damp-

ing off. If the seeds are sown in January, or February, the young plants will require to be transplanted several times during the first summer. This tends to make them vigorous for the future; and during the first winter it will be well to keep them in a cold frame. The following spring the plants may be set out in their permanent positions.

The Calluna is easily propagated by cuttings, under glass, during winter and spring, and by hillock layering; that is, sifting in sandy loam among the branches and keeping same moist for two or three months, when the plants so treated can be taken up and divided.

Make the cuttings, under glass, during the latter half of September, earlier further north, of from two to three inches in length, putting them in a mixture of sandy peat in a close, cool frame, facing north. When rooted they can be placed close around the edge of a six-inch pot, using moss, peat and loam, mixed. A temperature of 40 to 45 degrees is suitable in which to grow them, and great care should be exercised as to watering, so as to avoid too much moisture at the roots.

There is a growing affection for the plant as a garden subject in America; not long ago a landed proprietor in Massachusetts expressed the desire to cover a hillside on his estate with the Heather.

On a recent visit this year to Biltmore, N. C., the author observed numerous plants of Heather, purple and white varieties, interspersed among the vegetation bordering the driveways leading to Biltmore House,

the Southern home of Mr. George W. Vanderbilt. The plants appear to thrive well, evidently finding congenial conditions in this lovely mountainous district of the sunny Southland.

It may be well to state, however, that attempts have been made to grow the Heather in gardens in several other parts of the United States, with varying degrees of success. At Glen Cove, Long Island, a variety of Calluna vulgaris (Alporti) succumbed to the hard winter, the stems splitting just above the surface of the ground.

In the Botanic Garden at Washington, the superintendent of which is a Scotsman, Mr. Wm. R. Smith, Heather has a hard struggle for existence. There it is grown in a cold frame, in pots, covered with a sash in winter, and with lath slats in summer. It has been tried there in the open border and in the rock garden, but all to no purpose. When a dry spell, with hot weather, came along, the plants could not withstand these conditions, and so perished.

When the statue was erected to the poet Burns in Washington Park, at Albany, N. Y., Mr. Peter Kinnear, a prominent Scotch citizen there, procured some plants of Heather from Mr. Smith at Washington to be placed around the base of the statue. The plants arrived in the fall, were put in a cold frame, and the following spring, as soon as the flower buds began to swell, were taken up and planted.

The statue faces south, is in the open, and receives the full strength of the sun for the greater part of the day. The soil was specially prepared for the plants, stiff, clayey loam being thrown out, good

drainage supplied, and friable, sandy loam, with some leaf mould, being substituted. The plants bloomed well, made some growth in May and June, and succumbed during the heat of July and August.

The Heather in the British Colonies

In order to make the information on the Heather contained herein as comprehensive in its character as possible, I communicated with gentlemen in the different British colonies concerning the plant in their respective localities, and have pleasure in subjoining their replies:

In Australia

Messrs. Searl & Sons, of Sydney, N. S. W., March 10, 1902, say: "We desire to say that the Scotch Heather does not succeed in Australia at all. The only heaths that are cultivated here are such as Erica ventricosa, and others of this class. These thrive remarkably well in Victoria, but do not succeed very well in our state. They thrive best, as a rule, in light, sandy soil."

The Messrs. Searl were also kind enough to obtain the views of Dr. Maiden, Director of the Botanic Gardens at Sydney, on the subject, who says: "I know of no cultivation of Calluna vulgaris in Australia. It requires much the same cultivation as Erica, and it is assumed that it would flourish in the spongy moorland plains of our Southern Ranges, e. g., the Snaury Mountains."

In New Zealand

Mr. George Cooper, of Wellington, N. Z., replies as follows:

"From inquiries which I have made I find that the common Scotch Heather (Erica cinerea) and also the tree Heather (Calluna vulgaris) have been grown here by a few persons in private gardens. There are several other species which grow satisfactorily, including E. vulgaris rubra, and E. vulgaris carnea. Of the cultivation of the latter I can speak from personal experience. They grow and flower freely in an ordinary light garden loam in a sunny position. Calluna vulgaris and Erica cinerea I have not grown myself, but one may take it for a certainty that they thrive in a similar soil and position to that of their native habitat."

In South Africa

Mr. R. W. Adlam, Curator of Joubert Park, Johannesburg, writes: "Erica spp. are very rare in the Transvaal, which is a grass country. It is only when we get near to the southwestern province of the Cape, within a hundred miles of Cape Town, where the winter and spring rains are heavy, and the soil sandy, that we find heaths plentiful. A few heaths are found on the coast, near Port Elizabeth and near Durban, such as Erica ceranthoides, but they are rare. Here, at an elevation of five thousand feet, the winter is too cold for heaths to survive in the open. Our winter is very dry and summer very wet, which seems

to suit the constitution of the Ericas very poorly. We have no Ericas in cultivation here, and Scotch Heather (Calluna vulgaris) is only seen as herbarium specimens.

"A wet, almost frostless winter and spring, and a dry summer, with a deep, sandy soil—white sand—and thorough drainage, evidently suit Cape heaths better than anything else."

In India

Mr. H. St. John Jackson, editor and proprietor of "Indian Gardening and Planting," in Calcutta, replies as follows: "The Scotch Heather is unknown in this country. Occasional attempts have been made to introduce it here, but these all proved failures. On the hills (Himalayas and Nilgiris) the plant is grown as an interesting exotic. So far back as 1854 the Erica speciosa was raised from seed and produced flowers; but at the present time the heaths are practically unknown out here."

VARIETIES OF THE HEATHER

THERE are quite a number of different varieties of the Heather cultivated in gardens, and when planted in suitable spots they provide in their season, in the beauty of their blossoming, a source of infinite delight. Beds may be so placed that they remain very beautiful for a long period. In the foreground of collections of large-growing Ericaceous plants, the Heather finds an ideal spot. The vigorous growing kinds furnish an added charm to woodland scenery, and all of them, the smaller growing forms especially, make excellent rockwork plants.

The variety alba, or common "White Heather," is a counterpart of the type, except in color. Another white variety is named Tenuis alba; it flowers early, and forms a freely-branched, slender specimen. Other kinds that bear white blossoms are: Searlei, which flowers till late in the season; this is a strong growing variety. Rigida alba has a spreading style of growth, and its spikes of flowers are unusually large. Pilosa, or pubescens, produces very fine spikes of blossoms, a marked feature of the variety being the pubescent character of the foliage. Pumila alba is a low-growing white variety, smaller than any of the foregoing.

A very pretty white variety is C. vulgaris alba var. Hammondii, of which a photograph is given herewith.

A comparatively new variety of white Heather, named Calluna vulgaris var. gracilis, was recently shown at the exhibition of the Caledonian Horticultural Society in Edinburgh. It remains in bloom considerably longer than the common C. vulgaris alba. His Majesty King Edward VII. was pleased to accept plants of this white Heather for his gardens at Sandringham.

A writer in a recent number of "The Gardeners' Chronicle" says: "There is a popular superstition that it is lucky to find a spray of white Heather. I have always supposed that a plant bearing white flowers was a true variety, and would always bear white flowers. My daughter, who has lately returned from the south of France, has brought me a branch of the purple Heather, Erica cinerea, which has on it two spikes of flowers—one entirely white, the other entirely purple. It appears, therefore, that both may grow on the same plant. She tells me that the French people believe that the Heather bears white flowers when it grows old."

Among the colored-flowered kinds are: Alporti, a strong grower, which bears rich purple blossoms till late in the autumn; Florepleno, which has blossoms of the normal color, but double, something uncommon among members of the Heath family; Coccinea, the blossoms of which are very bright, as are those of Dumosa rubra; Tenuis, the flowers of which are more of a scarlet tint, very bright and attractive. There are several the distinctive features of which lie in differences of foliage and habit rather than in blossom. Among these may be mentioned Aurea, with

foliage of a beautiful golden hue, and Cuprea, that in full sunshine deepens to a kind of coppery orange. Pygmæa forms a dense, dark green hemispherical tuft, suggesting almost relationship to the moss family. The variety Variegata has white leaves interspersed with the normal green ones.

SYMBIOSIS OF THE HEATHER

RECENTLY, in a publication named "The Quiver," the Rev. Dr. Hugh Macmillan, who, as will be already inferred, has given considerable study to the Heather plant, wrote as follows on the parasitical nature, or what scientists term "symbiosis," of the Calluna.

He says: "In the bright autumn days the Scottish moorlands are covered from end to end with crimson Heather in full bloom. The Heather is one of the hardiest of plants, and is so well adapted to its growing place that we cannot imagine the moorlands without it. It looks as if it belonged to the bleak, mist-drenched soil, and grew out of it of its own accord. We naturally suppose that each Heather bush of the myriads upon which we gaze supports itself by means of its own roots, taking out of the brown peat by its own vital powers, in the exercise of its own special functions, the nourishment which it needs. Of all plants, the Heather, we should suppose, would be the most independent and self-sustaining, growing as it does so luxuriantly in such desolate situations. But science tells us that this is not the case. The Heather is rooted, not in the dead peat, but in the living mycelial material in which its rootlets are wrapped up. It cannot nourish itself, but must be nourished by a foster-parent, so to speak,

which prepares its food for it, and reduces the peat on which it grows to a condition which it is able to absorb and circulate as food throughout its system. If you dig up carefully a Heather bush by the roots, and examine the finer fibers at the end of these roots, you will find that they are covered with a thin, whitish mantle or cobweb of delicate threads. This is not a part of the roots; it does not belong to the Heather at all. It is a separate living plant growing on the Heather roots—the spawn of a minute fungus. It is found upon every Heather bush, and spreads from root to root, causing all the wide acres of bright moorland vegetation to flourish from year to year by its living action. The connection between these two organisms is not only of the closest character; it is also lifelong. When once the partnership is formed it continues uninterruptedly as long as they both exist. As the roots grow and spread, the spawn of the fungus grows and spreads with them. Were this living fungous growth to be taken away from the roots of the Heather, the bush, even if supplied with every other requisite, growing in its own proper soil, and furnished with its own suitable food, would soon wither and die. The true secret of the failure which so often attends the transplanting of Heather is, that in the process this fungous growth is torn away from the roots, and it takes some time to form a new growth of it in the new soil, while in the meantime the Heather, bereft of its accustomed partner, languishes and dies. The first Scottish emigrants to Canada took with them some Heather bushes to plant in the new country in order to remind them of the

dear old Highland home. But they did not know that they had broken off the strange association of the Heather plants with their fungoid friends in their native peat mould, and therefore the experiment necessarily proved abortive, and the poor Highlanders had to weep over the sad failure, naturally attributing it to a sentimental cause."

I submitted the reverend gentleman's statement to the late Professor Thomas Meehan, of Germantown, Pa., who kindly made the following comment thereon:

"The Rev. Hugh Macmillan states that the roots of a fungus prepares food for the Heather, and that the Heather roots furnish dead material as food for the fungus. I am asked whether this view is sound. It has been found that many plants do live in companionship in this way, and the term symbiosis has been coined to represent the phenomena. But I have not heard that the Heather is one of this class. The article, on the whole, is written very intelligently, and seems to have been founded upon well-recorded facts. On my grounds the Heather thrives as in its native wilds, but I have never suspected it of this habit. When the frosts of winter have passed I shall have pleasure in examining the roots."

(Both of these articles appeared in "The Florists' Exchange," a trade paper published in New York City.)

Subsequently Professor Meehan furnished other particulars concerning this matter, as follows:

"The foreman in charge of the department having oversight of these matters in the nursery of Thomas Meehan & Sons places the following note on my table. I have no doubt but that the doctrine of sym-

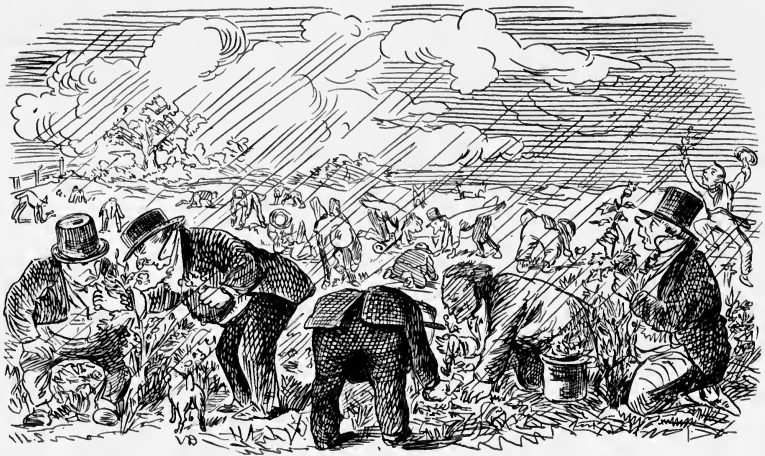
biosis, sound in some degree, is, like many other scientific discoveries, pushed to the verge of absurdity. I have little idea that it has a place in the economy of the Heather; but as we have it growing as if at home, I have given the writer the benefit of that little, by deciding to examine the roots for myself in the growing season.

"'Dear Sir: After reading your communication to "The Florists' Exchange," regarding symbiosis of the Heather, I thought, perhaps, you would like me to call your attention to the fact that, in your lower greenhouses, there is a batch of C. vulgaris cuttings that were put in last October in pure sand. Over 90 per cent. have struck and are growing.

"'The Rev. Hugh Macmillan's fungus is evidently not necessary to the Heather in the young state, or else it is a constitutional matter without which the Heather would not be in existence.'"

The lamented death of the eminent gentleman unfortunately precluded further light being thrown on this most interesting phase of Heather Lore.

The Heather Growing Wild Near Tewksbury, Mass.



"Vanity Fair's" Cartoon of the Flower Committee of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society Searching for the Heather at Tewksbury, Mass.

ECONOMICS OF THE HEATHER

PROBABLY no plant has been put or is better adapted to so many utilitarian purposes as the Heather. It has been correctly stated that to the inmates of the Scottish shieling Heather stands in much the same relation for its economic uses as does the bamboo to the Gond or Mandalay. Force of circumstances led to the discovery of most of these uses. The hardy Highlanders covered their cabins with Heather instead of thatch, or else twisted it into ropes, and bound down the thatch with these ropes in a kind of latticework. They also made the walls of their dwellings with alternate layers of Heather and a sort of cement made of black earth and straw.

Pennant remarks of the houses in Iona: "Houses are mostly very mean, thatched with straw of bear pulled up by the roots, and bound tight on the roof by ropes made of heath."

Boswell thus describes such houses in "Johnson's Journey of a Tour to the Hebrides": "They (the houses) are thatched, sometimes with straw, sometimes with heath, sometimes with fern. The thatch is secured by ropes of heath; and to fix the ropes there is a stone tied to the end of each. These stones hang around the bottom of the roof, and make it look like a lady's hair in papers; but I should think that, when

there is wind, they would come down and knock people on the head."

Johnson himself, in his "Journey to the Western Isles," remarks as follows: "Such rafters as can be procured are then raised for a roof, and covered with heath, which makes a strong and warm thatch, kept from flying off by ropes of twisted heath, of which the ends, reaching from the center of the thatch to the top of the wall, are held firm by the weight of a large stone."

Conditions of building in the Highlands have not materially changed since Johnson's days. In the 1901 edition of Professor Geikie's admirable work on "The Scenery of Scotland," dealing with the influences of topography on man, he says: "The houses, built of boulders gathered from the soil, and held together with mere clay or earth, are covered with frail roofs of ferns, straw, or Heather, kept down by stone-weighted ropes of the same material."

This method of construction applied equally to church and cabin. Dunbar, the poet, who was also a traveling friar, centered his ambition in a house of worship so covered. He says:

> Grait abbais graith I will to gather
> But ane kirk scant covert with hadder;
> For I of lytil wad be fane,
> Quilk to consider is ane pane.

Dunbar was led to utter this modest plaint because "in Papist times the cathedrals absorbed the money and the genius of the day, and the parish

churches, especially in Scotland, were too often barely thatched with heath."

Chalmers says that even as late as the sixteenth century the churches were generally covered with thatch. The cathedrals and abbeys, however, were structures of great labor and expense, of magnificence and taste, as the judicious eye may perceive in their ruins.

Logan tells us that many churches were formerly covered with Heather, some within his own memory, the services from lands being often a certain quantity of it for this purpose. Its only disadvantage was in being heavier than straw or rushes. Heather-covered churches were to be found in Carlyle's days, who fondly refers to one as "the poor temple of my childhood thatched with heath."

It is recorded in McIan's history of Clan Drummond that on one occasion the Heather covering of a church proved disastrous during an engagement with another clan. The story goes: In the beginning of the sixteenth century a feud arose with the Murrays, who had intercepted the rents payable by the tenants of Monievaird, on which William, then chief, and Duncan Campbell, of Dunstaffnage, went against them to compel restitution and punish them for their aggression. Not daring to meet this force, the Murrays retired to the church, and Drummond, respecting the sanctuary, gave orders to retire; but as they commenced their march a shot was unhappily fired by which one of the Campbells was killed, when so enraged were they at this cowardly act, that they immediately returned, and, not taking the trouble of

storming the sacred edifice, they set fire to its Heather roof and burned to death the miserable inmates. This was more particularly the crime of the Campbells, but Drummond was brought to trial for it, and being pronounced guilty, he was executed in 1511.

A story is told that in ancient days a woman was fined so many marks by her kirk session for a misdemeanor of which she had been convicted. One of the stern old pillars of the church did not agree with the sentence, giving vent to his views as follows: "The jade'll never pay ye; she's nae guilty o' payin' ony ane; gar (make) her pu' a few birns o' fine swack Heather to make the kirk water-ticht."

A Heather thatch is most durable; in fact, it is reckoned to last a lifetime.

Heather Beds

Of this, auld Scotia's hardy mountaineers,
Their rustic couches form; and there enjoy
Sleep, which, beneath his velvet canopy,
Luxurious idleness implores in vain.

—*Charlotte Smith*

A Highland practice, that of sleeping on Heather nicely put together on the ground with the green tops uppermost, was reckoned very conducive to health.

In thus using the Heather as a bed, the Highlander was following the custom of the ancient Greek. Ruskin tells us in his "Prosperina" that "neither the Ericæ nor Auroræ bear useful fruits. The Ericæ

are named for their consequent worthlessness, in the eyes of the Greek farmer; they were the plants he 'tore up' for his bed or signal fire, his word for them including a farther sense of crushing or bruising into a heap."

Buchanan, describing the Western Isles, says of the inhabitants: "In their houses they also lie on the ground; only they lay under them Fern or Heath, which they place with their Roots downward, and their Brush upward, so prettily that their Beds are almost as soft as a Feather-bed, but far more wholesome. For Heath being naturally a very great Drier, doth exhaust superfluous Humours, and restores Vigor to the Nerves, after it hath freed them from such noxious Guests; so that they who lie down in the Evening weary and faint, in the Morning rise up nimble and sprightly."

Cordiner, in his "Antiquities and Scenery of the North of Scotland," writing to Pennant from Mossdale, Sutherlandshire, in June, 1780, subsequent to the latter's "Tour," gives his experience with the Heath bed as follows: "The inn where we are to sleep is supplied with all necessary articles of refreshment; they are soon to have even a feather bed for the accommodation of travelers; but I must sleep on heath, and the good woman tells me 'my sleep shall be sweet,' for the rushes that form the pillow were pulled with her own hand at sunset, fresh from the bog."

Smollett supports Buchanan's idea of comfort afforded by a Heather bed. In the "Expedition of Humphrey Clinker," in a letter written from Argyll-

shire, occurs the following passage: "Our landlord's housekeeping is equally rough and hospitable, and savours much of the simplicity of ancient times. The great hall, paved with flat stones, is about four to five feet by twenty-two, and serves not only for a dining-room, but also for a bedchamber to gentlemen, dependents and hangers-on of the family. At night half a dozen occasional beds are ranged on each side along the wall. These are made of fresh heath, pulled up by the roots, and disposed in such a manner as to make a very agreeable couch, where they lie, without any other covering than the plaid.

"My uncle and I were indulged with separate chambers and down beds, which we begged to exchange for a layer of heath; and indeed I never slept so much to my satisfaction. It was not only soft and elastic, but the plant being in flower, diffused an agreeable fragrance which is wonderfully refreshing and restorative."

To these indorsements Cordiner replies, and then narrates his own rather unusual and by no means comfortable repose on a bed of Heather. He says: "There is reason to suspect the validity of these remarks. Fatigue will lead to sound repose; fortunate hardiness of constitution, improved by exercise and toil, reconciles one to any place of rest; but the Heather is far from pleasant or easy. I felt, however, last night an additional inconvenience; the bed prepared for me was near the fireplace, consequently almost under that opening in the roof which answers both for the window and the chimney; it rained and

the drift was blown plentifully in upon it; and I was surprised in the morning to find the mountains white with a new fall of snow; it was a midsummer treat I little looked for. The wind coming down from the hills, still bearing the sleet along, made the air intensely cold and piercing as in the dead of winter."

The Gaels traveling to any country rejected the feather beds and bedding of their hosts, wrapped themselves in their own garments and slept on the ground, careful indeed lest that barbarous effeminacy, as they termed it, should corrupt their native and inbred hardiness. The Heather bed was certainly well adapted for the camp both from the expedition with which it could be prepared and the excellent materials. Sir John Dalrymple remarks that this mode of preparing the beds was "an art which, as the beds were both soft and dry, preserved their health in the field, when other soldiers lost theirs."

In the novel of "Rob Roy" (Chap. 20) is given a description of the Heath bed. * * * "I remarked that Rob Roy's attention had extended itself to providing us a better bed than we had enjoyed the night before. Two of the least fragile of the bedsteads which stood by the wall of the hut had been stuffed with heath, then in full flower, so artfully arranged that the flowers being uppermost afforded a mattress at once elastic and fragrant. Cloaks and such bedding as could be collected stretched over the vegetable couch made it both soft and warm."

Scott also refers to this kind of bed in "The Lady of the Lake":

. . . The stranger's bed
Was there of mountain heather spread,
Where oft a hundred guests had lain
And dreamed their forest sports again.
But vainly did the heath-flower shed
Its moorland fragrance around his head.

Allan Cunningham remarks: "A lover's plaid and a bed of heath are favorite topics with the Northern muse; when the Heather is in bloom it is worthy of becoming the couch of beauty. A sea of brown blossoms undulating as far as the eye can reach and swarming with bees is a fine sight"; a statement which Leigh Hunt said he could well believe, although never having enjoyed the scene.

The Heather on the open moorland and hills has often proved an acceptable couch to the clansman, the shepherd, the hunter, the botanist and tourist. The literature of Scotland teems with references to the wearied warrior who wrapped himself in his Highland plaid, and sought the soothing embrace of Morpheus amid the fragrance of the Heather bells. Ossian makes one of his characters in Fingal say: "We moved to the chase together, and one was our bed on the heath."

Macmillan, journeying in the Highlands, thus describes the advantages of the Heather bed on the mountains: "A Heather bed in the full beauty of its purple flowers, newly gathered, and skillfully packed close together, is as fragrant and luxurious a couch as any Sybarite could desire." He also tells us that Don, the botanist, that great enthusiast in Alpine

plants, spent several months collecting these among the gloomy solitudes of the Grampians, his only food a little meal, or a bit of crust moistened in the mountain burn, and his only couch a bed of Heather or moss in the shelter of a rock.

Burt tells us that when a young couple were married, for the first night the company kept possession of the dwelling house or hut, and sent the bridegroom and bride to a barn or outhouse, giving them straw, heath, or fern for a bed, and blankets for their covering, and then they made merry and danced to the piper all the night long.

In describing how a party of poachers sleep out on the hillside, St. John, in his "Wild Sports and Natural History of the Highlands," thus remarks: "If snow is on the ground they just scrape off a small space; they then collect a quantity of the driest Heather they can find. The next step is for all the party except one to lie down close to each other, with room between one couple for the remaining man to get into the rank when his duty is done, which is to lay all the plaids on the top of his companions, and on the plaids a quantity of long Heather; when he has sufficiently thatched them in, he creeps into the vacant place, and they are made up for the night. The coldest frost has no effect on them when bivouacking in this manner. Their guns are laid dry between them, and their dogs share their masters' couch."

The Heather was the couch upon which reposed Scotia's ancient bards. Thus pleads Ossian: "Sit thou on the heath, O Bard, and let us hear thy voice; it is pleasant as the gale of the Spring that sighs on

the hunter's ear when he wakes from dreams of joy, and has heard the music of the spirits of the hill."

And Hogg, in his "Queen's Wake," in the narrative of that never-to-be-forgotten bardic contest, draws a comparison between the primitive and more hardy methods of the nation's bards and those existing during the period of Queen Mary's reign, in this manner:

> Unlike the bards, whose milky lays
> Delight in these degenerate days;
> Their crystal spring and heather brown
> Is changed to wine and couch of down.
> Effeminate as lady gay—
> Such is the bard, so is his lay.

We are reminded, says Geikie, that poetry was born among the mountains; that the bards were hunters and cragsmen, familiar with the corries where the red deer pasture, and with the precipices where eagles build.

The Bed of Heath

"Soldier, awake, the night is past.
Hear'st thou not the bugle's blast?
Feel'st thou not the day-spring's breath?
Rouse thee from thy bed of heath;
Arm thou, bold and strong.

"Soldier, what deep spell hath bound thee?
Fiery steeds are neighing round thee;
Banners to the fresh wind play—
Rise and arm—'tis day, 'tis day!
And thou hast slumbered long."

"Brother, on the heathery lea
Longer yet my sleep must be;
Though the morn of battle rise,
Darkly night rolls o'er my eyes.
Brother, this is death.

"Call me not when bugles sound,
Name me not when wine flows round;
Name me but amidst the brave;
Give me but a soldier's grave—
But my bed of heath."

—Mrs. Hemans.

Besoms and Scrubbing Brushes

As has already been stated, the Heather derives its botanical appellation from the Greek Kalluno, to adorn, to sweep. This designation was given to the Calluna on account of its usefulness in the manufacture of besoms and other kitchen utensils.

The Heather harvest occurs in the early weeks of autumn. Then the Heather cutter and thatcher appear armed with thin-bladed knives and tarred string. The Heather is cut and tied in bundles; that for thatching being about two feet in length, and as much as one can grasp in the hand, while for besoms the sheaves are longer and thicker. Sometimes it is sent distances, and the railroad station is then beautified by trucks of brilliant blossoms, the bundles being packed stems inmost. Tiny sprays of Heather litter the iron way, and the bees not fortunate enough to have been sent to the hills hum their appreciation of

the feast afforded them as they circle round the purple flowers.

But even the tramp, and the gypsy, "the heathen of the heath," have reason to bless the Heather, as it helps them to a livelihood by making of brooms, if only they can obtain or take the right of common wherever the Heather grows. In his "History of the Gypsies," William Simson tells us that among the chief occupations of the gypsies "a few of the colony employ themselves occasionally in making besoms, peat basses, etc., from heath, broom and bent, and sell them at Kelso and neighboring towns."

That their industry was not such as to put them in the millionaire class may be gleaned from one of the street cries of old Edinburgh as follows:

Fine heather reenges, better never grew;
Fine heather reenges, wha'll buy them noo?
Besoms for a penny, reenges for a plack;
If ye winna buy them, help them on my back.

Burns also gives us an idea of the profits of the business of besom making, which he evidently considered about the last extremity to which one in hard luck could reach. He thus tells Dr. Blacklock:

I hae a wife and twa wee laddies,
They maun hae brose and brats o' duddies,
Ye ken yersel my heart right proud is—
I need na vaunt,
But I'll sned besoms—thraw saugh woodies,
Before they want.

(The word "sned" signifies to cut brooms, to render "snod," or put in order. Sned is also Anglo-Saxon for a handle or shaft.)

It has been said that Heather stems have been imported into America, but very little of this material is received here.

In the southern counties of England the gypsies who vend the Heather besoms are named "broom squires." A story is narrated, and is referred to by Kingsley, to the following effect: At a county fair one "squire" demanded how the other could afford to undersell him by offering Heather brooms at one penny each, adding: "I steals the Heather and I steals the stales (handles) and I steals the withs, but yet I can't sell mine under three ha'pence." "Ah!" says the other, "but I steals mine ready made."

In the Irish legend of "Smallhead and the King's Son," these two worthies metamorphosed themselves in the village on a market day into two Heather brooms, and set to work to brush up the road. The crowd acclaimed them as "the mercy of God," and as "a blessing from heaven sent to sweep the road for us." They then changed into two doves and took their flight.

Uses in Dyeing

The wives and daughters of the Highlanders found in Heather a magnificent substitute for the dyes of our modern times. In most of the Western Islands of Scotland they dyed their yarn of a yellow color by boiling it in water with the green tops and flowers

of the plant, and woollen cloth boiled in alum water and afterward in a strong decoction of the tops gave it a fine orange color. In the latter case the Heather was pulled before flowering and from a dark, shady place.

For use in dyeing the plant should be mown or cut when in flower, carefully dried and stacked until required.

The process of dyeing with vegetable home dyes, says a writer in "Northern Notes and Queries," was to wash the thread thoroughly in urine (long kept, and called in Gaelic "Fual"), then rinsed and washed in pure water, then put into the boiling pot of dye, which is kept hard aboil on the fire The thread is now and again lifted out of the pot on the point of a stick and plunged back again until thoroughly dyed. If blue the thread is washed in salt water and other colors in fresh. The yarn is then hung out to dry and when dry is gathered into balls, or clews, and is then ready for the weaver's loom. "Tartan dyed in the Highlands 130 years ago, and used ever since, exists, the green being purely from the Heather."

An old chronicler writing in 1603 on "Certayne matters concerning Scotland," says that the inhabitants of the Western Isles delighted "to wear marled cloathes especially that have long stripes of sundry colours. Their predecessors used short mantles, or plaids of divers colors, sundry ways divided, and amongst some the same custom is observed to this day, but for the most part now they are brown most near to the color of the hadder, to the effect when they lie among the

hadder, the bright colors of their plaids shall not bewray them."

Scott beautifully pictures a scene of this nature in "The Lady of the Lake:"

A various scene the clansmen made:
Some sat, some stood, some slowly strayed;
But most with mantles folded round,
Were couched to rest upon the ground,
Scarce to be known by curious eye
From the deep heather where they lie,
So well was matched the tartan screen
With heath-bell dark and brackens green.

One or two writers state that in some of the Western Islands of Scotland the inhabitants tanned their leather in a strong decoction of Heather. Sowerby in his "Useful Plants of Great Britain" says (with regard to this tanning process): "The shoots are employed for tanning leather, and though certainly inferior to many articles of the kind, when properly prepared they form a good substitute for oak bark and other astringents. In the year 1776 the Irish Parliament valued this application of the plant so highly that a grant of seven hundred pounds was made to a person who invented a new mode of using heath in the preparation of leather."

Medicinal Virtues

The old English herbals contain several references to the medicinal properties of Heather. "The tender tops and flowers, saith Dioscorides, are goode

to be laide upon the bitings or stingings of any venomous beast;" and Gerarde adds, "The barke and leaves of Heath may be used for and in the same causes that Tamarisk is used."

In Parkinson's "Theatrum Botanicum" (The Theatre of Plants), published in 1640, occurs the following: "Heath is somewhat drying and a little bitter withall, except the berryed sorts, as Clusius hath related by the taste of most of them. Galen saith it hath a digesting quality, resolving the malignity of humors, by transpiration or sweating, which a decoction of the flowers being drunke, doth perform, and thereby giveth much ease to the paines within the body, and expelleth the worms therein also; the leaves and flowers made into a decoction is good against the stings or bitings of serpents and other venomous creatures; and the same being drunke warm, saith Mathiolus, for thirty days together, morning and evening, doth absolutely breake the stone and drive it forth; the same, also, or the destilled water of the whole plant, being drunke easeth the chollicke; the said water or the juyce of the herbe dropped into the eyes helpeth the weaknesse of the sight: Clusius saith that Rondeletius at Montpelier used the oyle made of the flowers of Heath with good successe against the Wolfe in the face or any other foule or fretting and eating canker spreading over the whole face; the same also doth dissolve tumours: a bathe made by decoction of the herbe and flowers is good for them to sit in that are troubled with the stone, or with the gout, for it giveth much ease to their bath: the white berryes of the Heath, saith Clusius, are brought to the markets in Spaine and

A Heather-thatched Highland Hut in the Eighteenth Century.

Scottish Fishermen's Huts Thatched with Heather.

there sold to give to those that have hot agues, to coole the heate and quench their thirst; and besides are much desired saith hee, of women and children, to please their pallate; the honey that the Bees take from the flowers of Heath is called Mel improbum, but we have not found any ill quality therein in our Land; only it will be higher coloured than in those places where no Heath groweth."

Doedens, in his "Historie of Plants," relates as follows of the value of the Heath in lithotrity: "The learned Mathiolus in his commentaries upon Dioscorides lib. j. doubteth not of this plant but that it is the Erica of Dioscorides whereunto he hath set two other figures of strange heath sent unto him by one Gabriel Fallopius, a learned physician. Moreover, he commendeth much the decoction of our common heath made with faire water to be drunken warm both morning and evening, in the quantity of five ounces, three houres before meat, against the stone in the bladder, so that it be used by the space of thirtie dayes; but at the last the patient must enter into a bath made of the decoction of Heath and whiles he is in the said bath, he must sit upon some of the Heath that made the foresaid bath, the which bath must be oftentimes repeated and used. For by the use of the said bath and dyet or decoction, hee hath knowne many to be holpen, so that the stone hath come from them in very small pieces. Also Turner saith that for the diseases of the Milt (spleen) it were better to use the barkes of Heath (in steed of tamarisk) than the barke of Quickbene."

Lightfoot tells us that Bilberries or a decoction of Heather roots in milk were given for diarrhœa and dysentery. A spirituous extract of Heather roots was given for sea scurvy.

As a Forage Plant

The tops of the Heather afford a considerable part of the winter foods of the hill flocks, and are popularly supposed to communicate the fine flavor to the Highland mutton; but sheep seldom crop Heather while the mountain grasses and rushes are sweet and accessible. It has been said that cows not accustomed to browse on the Heath give bloody milk, but are soon cured by drinking plentifully of water. Pennant, writing of Iona, tells us: "There is no heath in the island; cattle unused to that plant give bloody milk, which is the case with the cattle of Iona transported to Mull where that vegetable abounds, but the cure is soon effected by giving them plenty of water." A writer in the "London Magazine" in 1826, speaking of a tour of the Western Highlands, remarks as follows: "In the articles of milk, cream and butter, they (the Highlanders) surpass the choicest productions of English dairies; the reason of which was once given me by a Highlander: 'O, it's a' the Heather flowers and the natural grass.'"

How the plants save themselves, so to speak, from total destruction at the hands or rather the appetites of grazing animals, is thus interestingly described in the Natural History of Plants (Kœrner and Oliver):

"If the young bushes of ling (Calluna vulgaris) are accessible to goats, sheep and oxen, these bite off the ends of the fresh shoots, together with the leaves attached to them. The remaining portion of the mutilated shoot in the neighborhood of the wound dries up, but the part behind keeps alive, and the buds on it develop even more vigorously than would have been the case if the mutilation had not occurred. The shoots which in the following year arise from these buds may suffer the same misfortune. . . . The branches of the small mutilated bushes become so thick and the dry hard periphery of the crown are so crowded together that even the greedy goats are prevented from breaking through the armour, and abstain from pulling out the green shoots from behind the dry stumps. Then at length the unprotected plants obtain a defensive armour which is capable of saving them entirely from the further attacks of grazing animals."

Bees and Heather

Oh! the wafts o' heather honey and the music on the brae,
As I watch the great harts feeding nearer, nearer, a' the day;
Oh! to hark the eagle screaming, sweeping, ringing round the sky,
That's a bonnier life. . . . —*Kingsley.*

The Heather flower is a favorite of the honey bee, and the honey gathered from the Heather, though of a darker color, is much preferable to that which is extracted from the garden flowers. (See under Medicinal Virtues for the ancients' idea of Heather honey.)

Burt, in his "Letters from a Gentleman in the North of Scotland," thus characterizes the quality of the Heather honey: "And as I have mentioned the honey above, I shall here give that its one commendation. I think, then, that it is in every respect as good as that of Minorca, so much esteemed, and both, I suppose, are in a great measure produced from the bloom of the heath." Ruskin tells us that this utilitarian side appealed more to the ancient heathen writers than the beauty of the plant itself. He says, in Modern Painters, "They loved the Hybla Heather more for its sweet hives than its purple hues."

Rev. Hugh Macmillan, in his "Holidays on High Lands," has also a good word for the Heather honey preed from the skeps of Donald Macrae, afar amid the wild moors of Bohespick. He says, "Mount Hybla itself could not boast of more luscious honey than the liquid amber gathered from the heather-bells, by the three bee-hives in the sunny corner."

It was and is still a custom of the bee keepers in the lowland districts of Scotland to transport their bee-hives to the Highland hills about the middle of August, so that the bees could have full advantage of sipping the nectar from the great sea of Heather bloom then available. The presence of the bees there is beautifully pictured by Leyden in the following verse:

The tiny heath flowers then begin to bloom,
The russet moor assumes its richest glow;
The powdry bells that glance in purple bloom,
Fling from their scented cups a sweet perfume;

While from their cells, still moist with morning dew,
The winged wanderers sip the honied glue;
In wilder circle wakes the liquid hum,
And far remote the winged murmurs come.

Another poet, Charlotte Smith, sings:

The Erica here,
That o'er the Caledonia hills sublime
Spreads its dark mantle, (where the bees delight
To seek their purest honey) flourishes,
Sometimes with bells like amethysts, and then
Paler and shaded like the maiden's cheek
With gradual blushes—other while as white
As rime that hangs upon the frozen spray.

This custom of transporting bees from one place to another, says a writer, appears to be of a very ancient origin. Niebuhr states he met upon the Nile, between Cairo and Damietta, a convoy of four thousand hives, being transported from one region where the flowers had passed to one where the spring was later. Columella says that the Greeks in like manner sent their beehives from Achaia to Attica. A similar practice prevails in Persia, Asia Minor, Italy and on the Rhone.

An authority on apiculture thus explains the advantage of locating the beehives among the Heather when it is in flower:

"It is always a good plan to send late swarms of the hive into the Heather-bearing countries; for the bees being young, and having every inducement to

work for the approaching winter, will store better their hives which have been 'swarmed' and deprived of honey, the colonies of which are worn or fatigued with a long-continued gathering of a summer in more southern countries. It must likewise be remembered that bees cannot gather, or rather will not do so, late in the autumn, when the cold prevents them from sealing over with wax the top of the cell."

With Scotland's natural advantages in large areas of Heather available, it has been a matter of wonder to some as to why apiculture was not carried on to a greater extent by the Scottish Highlanders than it is. The custom of conveying the skeps to the hills in vogue among lowlanders is gradually dying out, having been found somewhat expensive, it being necessary to maintain one or more men to look after the hives; besides, the charge for transport to and from the hills is a considerable item. Sugar is being substituted for the Heather nectar, though the honey secured has not the flavor for which the Heather honey is famed.

Miscellaneous Uses

One of the other uses to which Heather was put is described by the translator of Ossian: "The ancient manner of preparing feasts after hunting is handed down by tradition. A pit lined with smooth stones was made; and near it stood a heap of stones of the flint kind. The stones as well as the pit were properly heated with heath. Then they laid some venison in the bottom, and a stratum of the stones above it;

and this they did alternately till the pit was full. The whole was covered over with heath to confine the steam. Whether this is probable, I cannot say, but some pits are shown which the vulgar say were used in that manner."

In Fingal occurs the following passage: "It was on Cromla's shaggy side that Dorglas placed the deer; the early fortune of the chase before the herdes left the hill. A hundred youths collect the heath; then the heroes blow the fires; three hundred chuse the polished stone. The feast is smoking wide."

In the Hebrides the fisherman strips the Heather of its leaves and flowers and ties the stems into large bundles which he lays across the stream and holds down by stones, the tops of the Heather being always turned toward the current.

Peat Making

Before railroad transportation brought coal (and its price) within the reach of the average Highlander he depended upon peat for his supply of fuel. Peat is obtained from bogs or mosses, in which for numberless generations have decayed those plants that live in cool climates and moist soils. Chalmers, in his "Caledonia," published in 1807, says: "It will scarcely be credited that many bleak moors which now disfigure the face of the country, and produce only barren heath, were formerly clothed with woods that furnished useful timber and excellent pasturage; yet is the fact clearly proved by the positive evidence of record."

In his admirable work, "The Scenery of Scotland Viewed in Connection with Its Physical Geology," Sir Archibald Geikie says: "It is a common opinion that the peat mosses of Scotland are of a comparatively modern date—not older indeed than the Roman invasion, because 'all the coins, axes, arms and other utensils found in them are Roman.' But these relics are better understood now than they formerly were; and though in some cases their Roman date may be beyond doubt, they are admitted to belong generally to the earlier time, known to the antiquary as the Bronze Period." Sir Archibald adds: "There can be little doubt that peat-bogs would begin to accumulate as soon as aquatic vegetation commenced to grow in the hollows from which the ice and snow of the Glacial Period had retired. The lower part of many of our mosses probably date back to that ancient time when the vegetation of the country was still Arctic in character, and consisted largely of dwarf willows and birches, though the higher portions may belong to much more recent periods, when the flora had become that of a temperate climate." The eminent geologist believes that "it may not be too much to hope that from Scottish peat mosses further relics may yet be obtained of the animals that preceded, or were contemporary with, the earliest human population of the country—the mammoth, rhinoceros, reindeer, musk-ox, bear, Irish elk, the progenitors of our present races of cattle, and other denizens of forest and glade." Sir Archibald corroborates the statement of Chalmers before quoted. He says: "That some mosses in Scotland have sprung up after the destruction of forests

which once grew there, is shown by the trunks and branches of trees which are found among the lower parts of the peat. It was indeed the destruction of forests that gave rise to such mosses." Several agencies are explained as causes which have contributed to the formation of peat mosses, among them that "man armed with axe and hatchet may come and fell oak and beech and pine, taking, it may be, little or none of the wood away, but leaving it there to rot, and to gather around and cover it, a mantle of peat-forming plants.

"So long as the conditions of growth remain favorable for the marshy vegetation, peat continues to be found, and the bogs become gradually thicker. But where these conditions change in such measure as to kill off the peat producing mosses, the peat ceases to accumulate. Its surface as it dries becomes a fit soil for other plants, notably for heather, which extends completely over it and sends its roots far down into the black spongy substance. The matted roots of the heath form an upper fibrous layer of peat. In the end, firs and other trees may take root upon the tract."

It is a custom among gardeners in localities where Heather abounds to skin off the heath with a sharp spade to get the fibrous soil in which the plants were growing. For this the Heather on upland or dry land is always chosen, never from mucky or mossy ground. In thickness the soil runs from one to three inches. It is not rich, but it is a solid network of fiber and as fresh and sweet as soil can possibly be, or as the elements can season it. It never gets waterlogged or sour. Orchids grow well in such a soil,

and some rhododendrons, particularly the arboreum and Himalayan, simply revel in it. For the latter it is better to add some brown sod loam or rotted couch grass, some rotted leaf mould and old cow manure that has been thrown up rough and thin and frozen solid all winter.

The preparation of peat for fuel begins in the early part of June. The bogs are generally parcelled out by the proprietors to the tenants nearest the peat mosses, and are for the most part free of rent, the only expense then being the labor of cutting, drying and carriage. Six cartloads of peat are understood to last as long as a ton of coal.

The method of digging is as follows: With a peculiarly shaped spade a man cuts the peats and throws them to the edge of the bog, where a woman receives them and places them on a wheelbarrow, another woman wheeling away the load and spreading out the peat carefully on some elevation to be sun dried and hardened.

Peat digging is hard work; but like the time of harvesting cereal and other crops in Scotland, it is much enjoyed by the workers. Good nature prevails on every hand, and often the mysteries of rustic courtship here first exchanged "ends in hochmagandy some ither day."

Scotch farmers and gardeners cut what are termed Heather divots for covering potato and turnip pits in winter. These divots are clean and warm, and at the same time less air-tight than grass sods, and with drain tiles enough stuck like chimneys into the pits for ventilation there is no danger of the crops sweating

and rotting. As cold weather sets in earth is piled over the sods. In laying these they are put on like slates or shingles, Heather side down, and thus are water-tight without being air-tight. The most dangerous time with stored roots, or fruits, is the first month or six weeks; those who store lots of potatoes, carrots, beets, or apples, know this; and for this period Heather sods make a most excellent storage pit, giving good ventilation and protection from rain and frost.

Good Heather sods are used in some places to cover byre and stable roofs, and not infrequently workmen's cottages.

Peats were largely used in olden times as fuel in distilleries in Scotland. The famous Ferntosh whiskey owed its celebrity to the peaty flavor which characterized it. This flavor was secured from the smoke of the peat with which the malt, of which the whiskey was made, was dried. This smoky flavor was considered one of the marks of the liquor being genuine.

Martin, speaking of Skye, says: "The natives are very much disposed to observe the influence of the moon on human bodies, and for that cause they never dig their peats but in the decrease; for they observe that if they are cut in the increase they continue still moist and never burn clear, nor are they without smoak, but the contrary is daily observed of peats cut in the decrease."

A fiery peat was sent round by the Borderers to alarm in times of danger, as the fiery cross was by the Highlanders.

HEATHER ALE

Though unobtrusive all thy beauties shine,
Yet boast thou, rival of the purple vine!
For once thy mantling juice was seen to laugh
In pearly cups, which monarchs loved to quaff;
And frequent waked the wild inspired lay
On Teviot's hills beneath the Pictish sway.

—*Leyden.*

PROBABLY nothing in Heather history has created more discussion, or given rise to more traditionary lore concerning the plant, than Heather ale. There is abundant evidence in the literature concerning Scotland to convince us that a potable liquor of some kind, and a very agreeable one, was obtained from the Heather plant, and that up to very recent times.

The statement of Hector Boethius, one of the earliest Scottish historians, regarding this phase of the Heather, as it appears in a volume published in 1526, and entitled "Scotorum Regni, Fol. XIII.," Linea LXX et seq., is as follows: "Per loca inculta & sterilitate infœcũda sponte sua enascitur, cũ ouibus, capris & omni pecudum generi utilissima, ut Columella inqt Cytisus, tum apibus in primis gratissima. Florem enim fert mense Iulio purpurei coloris mellitissimũ: unde Picti olim potus genus cõficiere solebãt, ut ex literarũ monimentis accepim^{s}, no min^{s} salubre quam

delectabile. Cæterũ quia eius faciendi artem (ne ea vulgata aut potus ipse minoris fieret, aut materia eius pluris) celauerũt, ipsis postea à Scotis deletis, usus eius potus idem qui & gentis finis extitit." (Columella was a Roman writer on husbandry, and the name cytisus, according to old Latin dictionaries, signifies a shrubby kind of clover; in modern botanies Cytisus scoparius is known as Scotch broom. The old Latin Erice signifies heath, broom, ling.)

Hector Boethius, or Boece, was a Canon of Aberdeen, and his "Latin Cosmography and History of Scotland" was translated by his contemporary, John Bellenden, Archdeacon of Moray and Canon of Ross. Bellenden thus gives the passage relative to the Heather in his chapter on "A Description of Albion:"

"Attoure in all the desertis and muris of this realme growis ane herbe, namit hadder, but ony seid, richt nutritive baith to beistis and fowlis; specialie to beis. This herbe, in the moneth of July has ane floure of purpure hew, als sweit as huny. The Pichtis maid of this herbe, sum time, ane richt delicius and hailsum drink. Noctheless, the maner of the making of it is perist, be exterminioun of the said Pichtis out of Scotland; for they schew nevir the craft of the making of this drink bot to thair awin blud."

Hollinshed, in 1571, thus translates Bellenden into the English of that period:

"In like sorte in the deserted and wilde places of this realm there groweth an hearbe of itself called hadder or hather, very delicate, as Columella sayeth, for goats and all kind of cattle to feed upon, and likewise for divers foules, but Bees especially. This herbe

in June yieldeth a purple flower sweete as hony whereof the Pictes in time paste did make a pleasaunt drinke, and very wholesome for the body; but forasmuche as the maner of making hereof is perished in the hauocke made of the Pictes, when the Scottes subdued their countrey, it lieth not in me to set downe the order of it, neither shewed they ever the learning hereof to any but to their own nation."

Pennant, in his "Tour," tells us that in the Island of Islay, "ale is frequently made of the young tops of heath, mixing two-thirds of that plant with one of the malt, sometimes adding hops. Boethius relates that this liquor was much used among the Picts; but when that nation was extirpated by the Scots the secret of making it perished with them." This information by Pennant has been often repeated, and is found to-day in most encyclopedias and similar works which treat on the subject of Heather.

"Picts Kilns," as they are called, are of frequent occurrence in Wigton and Kirkcudbright shires, as well as in parts of the neighboring counties. They consist of elliptical or pear-shaped enclosures, measuring generally about sixteen feet in length and seven or eight feet in breadth. Externally the walls appear to be of earth, sometimes standing nearly three feet high. On removing the surface they are found to be constructed internally of small stones, frequently bearing marks of fire. They are popularly believed to be ancient breweries reared by the Picts for the manufacture of Heather ale. Sir Walter Scott suggests, with not much greater probability, that they are primitive lime kilns. They are said to be invariably constructed on

the south side of a hill close to the margin of a brook and with the door or narrow passage facing the stream.

Relative to this matter the editor of "Poetical Remains of John Leyden" remarks: "From Heather, perhaps, with an intermixture of Bog-gall they might prepare a weak, exhilarating and intoxicating liquor. It is a common tradition among the peasantry through almost all parts of Scotland that the Pechts brewed from Heather a liquor greatly superior to our common ale. They point out tracts of level or nearly level heath from which the stones appear to have been carefully gathered away, as fields from which the Pechts moved and carried the crop of heath to prepare ale from it by decoction. The Gaelic words, too, for drinking are ol, elmi and lusadh, the latter of a derivation which certainly implies the liquor drunk to have been a decoction of herbs. It might be worth while for some curious antiquarian to make a brewst of heather ale."

Logan, in "The Scottish Gael," says: "Many extensive tracts of Muir are observable that are level and free from stones, and they are believed to have been the fields cleared by the Picts for the cultivation of the Heath, which they mowed down when in bloom. This shrub, I have been told, made by a certain process produced a good spirit, and a pleasant liquor is often made in the Highlands from its flowers; but it differs from the ancient beverage in having an addition of honey or sugar with other ingredients, whereas the Heather ale of the Picts, it is thought, required nothing extraneous to bring it to perfection.

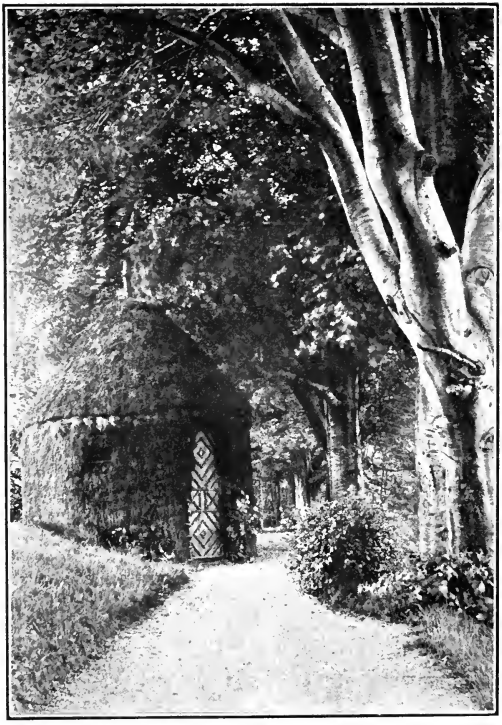
In the Highlands, it is an almost invariable practice when brewing to put a quantity of the green tops of heath in the wash tub, and when the plant is in bloom it adds much to the strength and flavor of the beer. The roots also will improve its qualities, for they are of a licorice sweetness, but their astringency requires them to be used with caution.

"Herb ale was a favorite 'brewst' with the women of olden time. An ancient matron whose grandmother had often made it has often descanted to me on its excellence, also that those who drank heartily of it became speckled in the face like a salmon. Though only a child when this was observed, she could not say what were the ingredients, but as her ancestors were natives of Buchan, where the descendants of the ancient Picts, according to Pinkerton, are to be found, the secret was not perhaps entirely lost."

Sowerby is of opinion that perhaps the tales of their Heath ale may have originated in some poetical allusion of the Celtic or Saxon bards to the mead fermented from the Heath-gathered honey, which gave its peculiar flavor to the beverage, which may have, likewise, the tops of the plant infused in it.

Mr. Martin, a native of Skye, and a staunch advocate of Highland virtues, says a writer in "Cornhill," made a tour through the Hebrides and out as far as St. Kilda shortly after the Revolution. He found various kinds of whiskey. There was the ordinary usquebaugh, which the well seasoned Hebrideans could drink in large quantities without much apparent harm; there was a very fiery spirit called freslerig, or whiskey three times distilled, and much stronger than

A Heather-thatched Cottage.



A Garden Hut, Entirely Composed of Heather.

either; there was a third, known as usquebaugh baul, of which two spoonfuls would stagger the most creditable toper. To an ordinary tippler a glass of this spirit meant instant death. In those days whiskey was made from potatoes and Heather, as well as from barley. A great deal of it was manufactured at home, it was hot, coarse and raw, and all who could afford it, drank deeply.

Heather ale was, no doubt, what Burns had reference to when he penned the famous transcript to "The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer:"

> Scotland, my auld respected mither!
> Though whyles ye moistify your leather
> Till whare ye sit, on craps o' heather,
> Ye tine your dam;
> Freedom and whiskey gang thegither!
> Tak' aff your dram.

The beverage was sometimes called "heather crop," the word crop meaning top, from which the drink was made.

Sir Walter Scott, in the "Monastery" (1820), has the following passage: "Halbert Glendenning expressed himself unwilling to take any liquor stronger than the Heather ale, which was at that time frequently used at meals."

Some modern writers testify to having drank Heather ale within the past half century. Mr. Weld, in his "Two Months in the Highlands" (page 83), says: "Although the art of brewing the Pictish Heather ale is lost, old grouse shooters have tasted a

beverage prepared by shepherds on the moor brewed from Heather flowers, though honey or sugar to produce fermentation was added." On the other hand, McCullough, in his "Highlands and Western Isles" (Vol. III., p. 383), denies that there ever was such a beverage as Heather ale, though he says "the heath flowers may have been added to the malt to give it flavor." A writer in "Notes and Queries" adds to the foregoing: "Beoce's Pictish legend is therefore assumed to be a mythic narrative and we are not to believe

'The Picts were undone, cut off mother's son,
For not teaching the Scots to brew Heather ale.'"

Whether or not the secret of the Picts was lost, the belief that such a secret at one time existed has afforded a foundation for many interesting legends concerning it.

In Ireland a tradition exists that the Danish invaders brewed an inebriating liquor made from the Heath, the secret of which was lost at their expulsion after the battle of Clontarf. The brewing of ale or beer from Heather continued in Ireland until the commencement of the 19th century, when, owing to the low prices received for raw grains, these materials were employed for the purpose. A writer in "Notes and Queries" thus explains the Irish tradition: "The point about Heath beer there is explained as follows: When the little plant is in blossom, and a very pretty blossom it bears, it has a peculiarly attractive odor and taste. It was then gathered and carefully cleaned and

was then placed at the bottom of the vessels through which the warts were run off and acted as a strainer, at the same time imparting to the liquid a peculiar flavor most agreeable to the palate; hence the favorite tradition of the beer being made from the Heath itself."

A tradition is also prevalent in the north of England that the Romans "made a beverage somewhat like beer, of the bells of the Heather," and a large trough cut out of the solid rock at Kutchester is said to have been used in the making of such a drink.

Descriptions of the passing of the secret have also furnished interesting reading: A tradition prevalent in Wick, described in the "John O'Groat Journal," says: "The name of this place is Garrywhin and a tradition exists in connection with it. It says that here the last of the Picts existed. The story goes on to say that the race of Picts was reduced to three persons—an old blind man and his two sons. But before continuing the story it is necessary to mention that the opinion still exists that the Picts made ale from Heather, and that it can still be made, only we want the knowledge of any barm or yeast suited for it. Now the Picts were said to have guarded this secret with great care from the race that succeeded them; and it seems that these three poor Picts were much persecuted by their conquerors who wished to get possession of their secret. At last the old man, worried almost to death, by being so frequently urged to reveal what barm would suit 'heather crop,' consented to tell on condition that his two sons should first be put to death. To this proposal his cruel conquerors readily consented. The sons were slain, but the old

man, wishing some of his oppressors to shake hands after they had completed their bargain, they became suspicious of his intentions and held out to him the bone of a horse's leg, which with a firm grasp of his old withered hand he crushed to powder. Made aware by this, that it was not over safe to shake hands with the old fellow, they kept at a respectful distance, but insisted that he should now reveal his secret according to bargain; but they could get nothing from him but the doggerel couplet which we find still here repeated:

'Search Brochwhin well out and well in,
And barm for heather crop you'll find therein.'"

The place mentioned here as Brochwhin is a glen close by, and the tradition is still believed.

Various localities claim the distinction of having witnessed the extinction of the Picts and the loss of their Heather ale secret.

Leyden says: "The traditions of Teviotdale add that when the Pictish nations were exterminated, it was found that only two persons had survived the slaughter —a father and a son. They were brought before Kenneth the conqueror, and their life was offered them, on condition the father would discover the method of making the heath-liquor. 'Put this young man to death, then,' said the hoary warrior. The barbarous terms were complied with; and he was required to fulfill his engagement. 'Now put me to death, too,' replied he. 'You shall never know the secret. Your threats might have influenced my son, but they are lost

on me.' The king condemned the veteran savage to life; and tradition further relates, that his life, as the punishment of his crime, was prolonged far beyond the ordinary term of mortal existence. When some ages had passed, and the ancient Pict was blind and bed-rid, he overheard some young men vaunting of their feats of strength. He desired to feel the wrist of one of them, in order to compare the strength of modern men with those of the times which were only talked of as a fable. They reached to him a bar of iron, which he broke between his hands, saying, 'You are not feeble, but you cannot be compared to the men of ancient times.' "

In a series of articles on the "Chronicles of Scottish Counties," appearing in "All the Year Round," occurs the following: "The last stand of the Picts was made, so tradition says, at Cockburn Law, between Cranshaw Castle and Dunse, and here the remnants of an ancient race fought their last fight and were slaughtered, all but two, as old tradition says, an old man and his son, who were saved, it seems, for a purpose.

"Now, to turn the heather bells to good advantage must have seemed a grand invention to a Scot, seeing so noble a harvest was growing all round.

'.....A wide domain
And rich the soil, had purple heath been grain';

or, according to an older rhyme anent the possessions of Bold Buccleuch:

'Had heather bells been corn o' the best
Buccleuch had had a noble grist.'

And thus to utilize a natural product seemed to the conquerors of the Picts a consummation worth a little pains."

The story of the old man and his two sons, similar to that before given, is there recounted, and the writer goes on to say: "It has been whispered, indeed, that the secret of the wonderful drink of the Picts was not altogether lost, and its survival may be thus accounted for. The Picts when they first landed in Scotland consisted of men only; their womenkind they had been obliged to abandon to their conquerors. In this hard case they applied to the Britons as well as to the Scots to provide them with wives, but neither race would ally itself with the hated intruders. The Gaels, however, were not so particular, and bestowed their daughters on the strangers—ill-favored ones for choice, like mickle-mouthed Meg, for instance. In this way, the secret leaked out among the relatives of the Picts' wives, and thus the race became possessed of the art of making that ambrosial drink called usquebaugh, or, in modern language, whiskey. And it is a curious fact, when you come to think of it, that among no other races than the Gaels of Ireland, or of the Scotch Highlands, is this liquor made 'in perfection.'"

Neil Munro, in "The Lost Pibroch," introduces "The Secret of the Heather Ale" as one of his stories, when "Down Glenaora three score and ten of Diarmaid's stout fellows took the road on a fine day. They were men from Carnus, with more of Clan

Artair than Campbell in them; but they wore Gilleasbuig Gruamach's tartan, and if they were not on Gilleasbuig Gruamach's errand, it makes little difference on our story. It was about the time Antrim and his dirty Irishers came scouring through our glens with flambeaux, dirk and sword and other arms invasive, and the country was back at its old trade of fighting, with not a sheiling from end to end, except on the slopes of Shira Glen, where a clan kept free of battle and drank the finest of Heather ale that the world envied the secret of."

Headed by the famous Niall Mor a' Chamais—the same gentleman named in story for many an art and the slaughter of the strongest man in the world—they met the MacKellars, the possessors of the secret, at the Foal's Gap, past Maam.

"Ay!" said Calum Dubh, "but it's *my* secret. I had it from one who made me swear on the holy steel to keep it; but take me to Carnus and I'll make you the Heather ale. But there's this in it, I can look no clansmen nor kin in the face after telling it, so Art and Uileam must be out of the way first."

"Death, MacKellar?"

"That same."

Niall Mor intrusted the work to John-Without-Asking. "He put a hand on each son's back and pushed them over the edge to their death below. One cry came up to the listening Diarmaids, one cry and no more—the last gasp of a craven.

"Now we'll take you to Carnus and you'll make us the ale, the fine ale, the cream of rich Heather

ale," said Niall Mor, putting a knife to the thongs that tied MacKellar's arms to his side.

"With a laugh and a fast leap Calum Dubh stood back on the edge of the rock again.

"Crook-mouths, fools, pigs' sons, did ye think it?" he cried. "Come with me and my sons and ye'll get ale, aye, and death's black wine, at the foot of Scaurnoch." He caught fast and firm at John-Without-Asking and threw himself over the rock face. They fell as the scart dives, straight to the dim sea of mist and pine tip, and the Diarmaids threw themselves on their breasts to look over. There was nothing to see of life but the crows swinging on black feathers; there was nothing to hear but the crows scolding.

"Niall Mor put the bonnet on his head and said his first and last friendly thing of a foe.

"'Yon,' said he, 'had the heart of a man.'"

Robert Louis Stevenson has written the following poem on the subject of

Heather Ale—A Galloway Legend

From the bonny bells of heather
They brewed a drink lang-syne,
Was sweeter far than honey,
Was stronger far than wine.
They brewed it and they drank it,
And lay in blessed swound
For days and days together
In their dwellings underground.

There rose a king in Scotland,
A fell man to his foes,
He smote the Picts in battle,
He hunted them like roes.
Over miles of the red mountain
He hunted as they fled,
And strewed the dwarfish bodies
Of the dying and the dead.

Summer came in the country,
Red was the heather bell;
But the manner of the brewing
Was none alive to tell.
In graves that were like children's
On many a mountain head
The brewsters of the heather
Lay numbered with the dead.

The king in the red moorland
Rode on a summer's day;
And the bees hummed, and the curlews
Cried beside the way.
The king rode, and was angry,
Black was his brow and pale,
To rule in a land of heather
And lack the Heather Ale.

It fortuned that his vassals,
Riding free on the heath,
Came on a stone that was fallen
And vermin hid beneath.

Rudely plucked from their hiding,
Never a word they spoke:
A son and his aged father—
Last of the dwarfish folk.

The king sat high on his charger,
He looked on the little men;
And the dwarfish and swarthy couple
Looked at the king again.
Down by the shore he had them;
And there on the giddy brink—
"I give you life, ye vermin,
For the secret of the drink."

There stood the son and father
And they looked high and low;
The heather was red around them,
The sea rumbled below.
And up spoke the father,
Shrill was his voice to hear:
"I have a word in private,
A word for the royal ear.

"Life is dear to the aged,
And honour a little thing;
I would gladly sell the secret,"
Quoth the Pict to the king.
His voice was small as a sparrow's,
And shrill and wonderful clear:
"I would gladly sell my secret,
Only my son I fear.

"For life is a little matter,
And death is naught to the young;
And I dare not sell my honour
Under the eye of my son.
Take him, O king, and bind him,
And cast him far in the deep;
And it's I will tell the secret
That I have sworn to keep."

Then they took the son and bound him
Neck and heels in a thong,
And a lad took him and swung him,
And flung him far and strong.
And the sea swallowed his body,
Like that of a child of ten;—
And there on the cliff stood the father,
Last of the dwarfish men.

"True was the word I told you;
Only my son I feared;
For I doubt the sapling courage
That goes without the beard.
But now in vain is the torture
Fire shall never avail:
Here dies in my bosom
The secret of Heather Ale."

"Mr. Stevenson's ballad of the Heather Ale has a fairly accurate setting," says MacRitchie in "The Scottish Antiquary," "although there is no warrant for the leading incident of the last of the Picts and the lost recipe. As far back as 1443 a man of high

rank and scholarly breeding had put upon record as a thing quite credible the statement that Orkney had been formerly inhabited by Dwarfish 'Picts' famous as builders, and living in subterranean houses, of which houses many specimens are yet extant.

"Whether Tulloch was writing down an oral tradition or copying from an early historian does not appear. But at least he supplies us with 1443 as a date at which the above belief was firmly held. Even some seventy years before Tulloch wrote we have the compilers of the Book of Ballymote saying in effect that the Picts lived in artificial mounds. Here again the latest date is taken, and it is assumed that the companion reference 'in an ancient genealogy' belongs to about the same period. Now even if Bishop Tulloch knew anything of the Book of Ballymote or the language in which it was written, his own statement bears inherent evidence that it was made quite independently of the Irish chronicle, and that the Bishop was simply repeating what had been previously said by local tradition or by a Scandinavian writer with sole reference to the Orkney Islands. Add to this the great mass of inherited belief with respect to this subject held in common by the Gaelic-speaking people, by the once Norse-speaking inhabitants of Orkney and by the Scottish lowlanders generally, and the deduction is that Mr. Stevenson himself was in error in assuming that the historical Picts were not identical with the dwarfish earth dwellers of his ballad." Stevenson had characterized Boece's remarks as "the blundering guess of a dull chronicler."

HEATHER BURNING

When clover fields have lost their tints of green,
And beans are full, and leaves are blanch'd and lean,
And winter's piercing breath prepares to drain
The thin green blood from every poplar's vein,
How grand the scene yon russet down displays,
While far the withering heaths with moorburn blaze!

The pillar'd smoke ascends with ashen gleam,
Aloft in air the arching flashes stream
With rushing, crackling noise the flames aspire
And roll one deluge of devouring fire;
The timid flocks shrink from the smoky heat,
Their pastures leave, and in confusion bleat,
With curious look the flaming billows scan,
As whirling gales the red combustion fan.

But far remote, ye careful shepherds, lead
Your wanton flocks to pasture on the mead,
While from the flame the bladed grass is young,
Nor crop the slender spikes that scarce have sprung;
Else, your brown heaths to sterile wastes you doom,
While frisking lambs regret the heath-flower's bloom!

And ah! when smiles the day, and fields are fair,
Let the black smoke ne'er clog the burthened air!
Or soon, too soon, the transient smile shall fly,
And chilling mildews ripen in the sky,
The heartless flocks shrink from the cold,
Reject the fields and linger in the fold. —Leyden.

AT a certain season of the year the Heather, in Scotland, is burned in order to provide hill pasturage for sheep. And in spots thus cleared a thick, close carpet of green verdure springs up of which these animals are particularly fond.

Along about the commencement of the nineteenth century, when the agricultural condition of the Highlands was under its customary consideration, the subject of burning the Heather received a great deal of attention.

In the Transactions of the Highland Agricultural Society for 1804, a Mr. Somerville recommended the total eradication of the Heather where the soil and climate would admit of the culture of any more useful plant, and the burning of it in such a manner as to destroy the tough, hard parts and afford room and nourishment for the tender and juicy shoots, in every situation where no plants of greater value could be produced. In order to effect the former purpose he said the Heather ought to be burned in the autumn when it is in flower, as it may then be completely destroyed. But when the object is to preserve the root and to afford warmth and manure to the tender shoots, the operation ought to take place in the spring. The tender and juicy shoots which might then be

made to spring annually from the burned Heather ought to be used not only for pasture but also for hay. In Sweden this practice is commonly followed and found to answer.

The advantage to other vegetation of burning the Heather is thus explained by Sir Humphry Davy: "The alkalies produced from the combustion of plants tend very powerfully to promote the growth of new herbage and that the burning of such plants as heath, furze, tough grasses, rushes and moss is the cheapest and best means of reducing such substances to a state of minute carbonaceous particles at once capable of supplying food to the roots of the new plants."

The stumps of the Heather are usually left in the ground, for the fire consumes only the foliage and the smaller twigs; and these skeletons, closely matted together, bleached and sharpened by the elements, frequently crossing one's path, are very disagreeable to walk on, unless the feet are protected by very thick boots (fraochan). "The contrasts of shape and color," says Rev. Hugh Macmillan, "formed by these clearings in the aboriginal Heather, are very curious, and strikingly diversify the monotony of the landscape—here a uniform brown sea of Heather; there long stripes of gray coloring running in and out and crossing in all directions, like promontories and capes; and yonder bright green isles of verdure smiling amid the surrounding desolation."

The season of "Muirburn," as it is technically named, is regulated by Act of Parliament; the Scottish Acts of 1424, C. 20, and 1535, C. 11, being superseded

by the British Act 13 George III., C. 54, dated 1773 and entituled:

"An act for the more effectual preservation of game in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, and for repealing and amending several laws now in being related thereto."

This act forbids all persons to kill, sell, or buy muirfowl between December 10 and August 12; offenders forfeiting every bird so destroyed and to pay the sum of £5 sterling, and in case of not paying the sum decreed, within the space of ten days after conviction by a final sentence, shall suffer imprisonment for two months for each £5 sterling.

Section IV. sets forth: "And be it enacted that every person who shall make muirburn, or set fire to any heath, or muir, in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, from the 11th day of April to the 1st day of November in any year shall forfeit and pay the sum of forty shillings for the first offence, five pounds sterling for the second offence, and ten pounds sterling for the third and every other subsequent offence; and in case of not paying the sum decreed within the space of ten days after conviction by a final judgment, shall suffer imprisonment for six weeks for the first offence, two months for the second, and three months for the third and every other subsequent offence.

"Section VI.: Provided always, and be it enacted that the proprietor of high and wet moorlands, the heath upon which cannot be burned so early as the 11th day of April may, when such lands are in his own occupation, burn the heath upon the same at any

Loading Heather, to be Used for Making Besoms, on Railroad Trucks.

Carrying Peats in Creels from the Bog.

time between the 11th and 25th day of April in any year, without incurring any of the penalties before mentioned."

The Scottish Act of James I., Parliament I., Cap. 20, sets forth that "no man may make muirburn after the first of March till all the corns be shorn, under the pain of fourty shillings to the lord of the land of the manor, or fourty days' imprisonment."

In England muirburn is a felony and is punished by imprisonment for three years or less.

Heather burning is often a bone of contention between shepherds and gamekeepers; the former are sometimes reckless in setting fire to a hillside, not caring how far the flames may extend. The Heather continues burning at times for weeks, being only extinguished by a friendly deluge of rain. In this manner much damage is done, particularly to tracts of grouse moor, the destruction often extending to adjacent woods and cornfields.

William Black, in his "White Heather," touches on the relation existing between the shepherds and gamekeepers in this connection. He says: "She (Meenie Douglas) knew quite well—for often had she heard it spoken of—that no one could get on so well as Ronald with the shepherds at the time of the Heather burning; when on the other moors the shepherds and keepers were growling and quarreling like rival leashes of collies, on Lord Ainline's ground everything was peace and quietness and good humor."

He who at a distance has witnessed the weird yet beautiful spectacle resulting from muirburn can never forget it, particularly when viewed as the gloaming

is merging into the darkness of night. The mountain tops appear to be studded with miniature volcanoes, each one emitting its volume of flame, shooting heavenward and seeming to pierce the horizon with their fiery fangs, the luridness becoming intensified as the blackness of night increases. A closer view of the conflagration would reveal the picture charmingly portrayed by Macmillan: "Hares and deer careering before the flames; grouse whirring past, blinded and scorched; lizards and snakes running hither and thither in an agony of terror; volumes of dense smoke darken the air, and the dull red embers light up the darkness of the night, and reflect a volcanic glare upon the surrounding hills. It is one of the grandest sights to be seen in the Highlands." Or as Mr. Black puts it: "The gloom of the evening, by the way, was not decreased by a vast mass of smoke that came slowly rolling along between the black sky and the black lake; though this portentous thing—that looked as if the whole world was on fire—meant nothing further than the burning of the Heather down Strath-Ferry way."

A most delightful pen picture of Heather burning is given us in "The Tales of the Borders," by the ever-readable Christopher North, bringing back memories of boyhood and of the dare-devil spirit which is its accompaniment. The description is as follows: "That was a terrible conflagration at Mirawecbie. I think I hear it crashing, thundering, crackling on; before it the wild beasts, the serpents, the cattle—man, poor, houseless, helpless, smoke-enveloped, and perishing man. The reason why I can conceive so vividly

of this awful comparatively recent visitation is this —I was accustomed to set 'muirburn' when a boy of nine or ten.

"The primeval heath of our mountains was strong, bushy and, when dry in spring, exceedingly inflammable. I was a mountain child, for on one side of my dwelling the Heather withered and bloomed up to the door; and when one thinks of the 'bonny blooming Heather' it is quite refreshing; it blooms when all things around it are withering, during the later months of harvest, but then, oh then, it puts on such a russet robe of beauty—a dark evening cloud tipped and tinged with red—a mantle of black velvet spangled with gold; and its fragrance is honey steeped in myrrh. Yet when withered in March and April, it is an object of aversion to the sheep farmer, who prefers green grass and tender sward; and he issues to impatient boyhood the sentence of destruction. Peat follows peat, kindled at one end and held by the other the hillside or the level muir swarm with matches; carefully is the ignition communicated to the dry and widespread Heath; from spot to spot in lines and in circles —it extends and unites—the wind is up, and one continuous blaze is the almost immediate consequence. It is night, dark night—the clouds above catch and reflect the uncertain gleam. The Heathfowl wing their terrified flight—through, above, and beneath the rolling and outspreading smoke. The flame gathers into a point; and at the more advanced part of the curvature, the force and blaze is terrible. A thousand tongues of fire shoot up into the density, and immediately disappear. Who now so venturous as to dash

headlong through the hottest flame, and to recover from beneath the choking night in former position? There goes—a hat—a cap—a bonnet! They have taken up their positions in the pathway of the devouring flood of fire—and who so brave, so daring, as to extricate his own property from instant destruction? Hurrah! hurrah! from a score of throats, mixes with the thunder, the crackle, the roll—all is power, novelty, ecstasy; bare heads and bare feet dance and show conspicuously upon the still smoking turf. Here an adder is seen writhing and twisting in the agonies of death. There a half-burned hat evinces the fun and the folly of its owner. But, oh! horrible, what is that in the dim and hazy distance? It comes forward bounding, tearing and bellowing, fearful and paralysing; it is the bull himself escaped from his fold, and maddened by the smoke and blazing atmosphere. He comes down upon the charge, tail erect, and head down, tossing all that is solid under his feet, and looking through the scattered earth with eyes glaring as well as reflecting fire. Achilles, Hector, Agamemnon, Wallace, Wellington, never entered a field of battle with such a terrific presence. He seems as if he had just escaped from a human or Spanish arena. He is desperately infuriated, and woe is to him who shall be overtaken by this muscular tornado in his weakness and fears. We are off! *diffugimus.* We are nowhere to be found. One has made for a distant wall surounding the Heather park, and is in the act of climbing it. The bull is in full chase, armed with two ghast, but powerful horns. The fugitive has just laid hold of an upper stone to assist his ascent;

but faithless help has given way; stone and he are lying alongside of the dyke. The bull is in full scent. The noise has directed him. He nears—he nears. My God! the urchin's life is not worth two minutes' purchase.

> Now do thy speedy, Arnot Wull—
> 'Twill take it all to clear the bull.

Bravo; the summit is gained! the feet of the pursued are seen flying in mid-air; he has sprung from the summit as least twenty-two feet; but the whole weight of the pursuing brute is upon the crazy structure; it gives way with a crash, and down rush stones over stones, and the poor, maimed, bruised brute over all. What, Mr. Bull! are you satisfied? Why not continue the sport? But the game is up; Will has regained his mother's dwelling and now lives to record this wonderful, this all but miraculous escape. Catch me setting muirburn again."

And in "Noctes Ambrosianæ" Mr. North provides another description as follows:

Shepherd—Was you ever at the burning o' heather or whins, Mr. North?

North—I have, and enjoyed the illuminated heavens.

Tickler—Describe.

North—In half an hour from the first spark, the hills glowed with fire inextinguishable by waterspout. The crackle became a growl, as acre after acre joined the flames. Here and there a rock stood in the way, and the burning waves broke against it, till the birch-tree took fire, and its tresses, like a

shower of flaming diamonds, were in a minute consumed. Whirr, whirr, played the frequent gor-cock, gobbling in his fear; and, swift as shadows, the old hawks fled screaming from their young, all smothered in a nest of ashes.

Tickler—Good—excellent! go it again.

North—The great pine-forest on the mountain side, two miles off, frowned in ghastly light, as in a stormy sunset; and you could see the herd of red deer, a whirlwind of antlers, descending in their terror into the black glen, whose entrance gleamed once—twice—thrice—as if there had been lightning; and then, as the wind changed the direction of the flames, all the distance sunk in dark repose.

Tickler—Vivid coloring, indeed, sir. Paint away.

North—There was an eagle that shot between me and the moon.

Tickler—What an image!

North—Millions of millions of sparks of fire in Heather, but only some six or seven stars. How calm the large lustre of Hesperus!

Tickler—James, what do you think of that, eh?

Shepherd—Didna ye pity the taeds and paddocks, and beetles, and slaters and snails and spiders, and worms and ants, and caterpillars and bumbees, and a' the rest o' the insect world perishin' in the flaming nicht o' their last judgment?

North—In another season, James, what life, beauty and bliss over the verdant wilderness. There you see and hear the bees busy on the white clover—while the lark comes wavering down from heaven, to sit beside his mate on her nest! Here and there are

still seen the traces of fire, but they are nearly hidden by flowers—and—

Scott refers to Heather burning in the following lines from "The Lady of the Lake":

> Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
> Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze,
> Rushing in conflagration strong
> Thy deep ravines and dells along,
> Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
> And reddening the dark lakes below;
> Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
> As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.

Rolfe says this simile is not new to poetry. The charge of a warrior, in the fine ballad of Hardyknute is said to be "like fire to heather set." It may be of interest to state that Hardyknute was the first poem learned by Sir Walter Scott, and the last, he said, he should ever forget.

Mr. A. G. Reid, in "Notes and Queries" for 1896, presents the following interesting item associated with the burning of the Heather: "In the metrical version of the Psalms for use of the Kirk of Scotland, known as that of John Knox, although the greater number of the verses are those of Sternhold and Hopkins, there are, particularly in the latter part, a number of John Craig, William Kethe and other Scotsmen. They are marked by initials, but are easily distinguished from their English neighbors by their peculiar orthography and Scotch expression. Under Psalm LXXXIII., to which are prefaced the initials

R. P., the following is the rendering of the passage: 'Oh! my God, make them like unto a wheel, and as the stubble before the wind; as the fire burneth the forest, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire, so persecute them with Thy tempest, and make them afraid of Thy Storm':

'My God! make them to be
Like rolling wheeles or as the stubble blowen
Before the winde.
As fire the wuds, we see,
Doeth burne; and flame devoure on mountain hie,
The hather croppe,
So let Thy tempest chase them
And the whirlwinde,
With terror so deface them.' "

The same writer adds: "The burning of Heather is common in Scotland, although it is a question if the Royal Psalmist could have such in view in reference to the hills of Judea, where, it is presumed, Heather does not adorn the mountain sides. The burning of Heather on the Scottish hills at night, for the purpose of improving the growth of the pasture, has a very picturesque effect, and no doubt was impressed on the mind of the versifier."

As the Scottish classic scholar gazes upon these burning hills, they mirror to his mind the picture drawn by Æschylus of those ancient telegraphic beacon fires that flashed from afar to the wearied waiting watchman at Argos "a voice from Troy and tidings of a capture," as narrated by Clytæmnestra in

"Agamemnon": "Vulcan sending forth a brilliant gleam from Ida; and beacon despatched beacon of courier fire hitherward. Ida, first, to the Hermean promontory of Lemnos, and third, in order Athos, mount of Jove, received the great torch from the isle, and passing o'er so as to ridge the sea, the might of the lamp as it joyously traveled, the pine torch transmitting its gold gleaming splendor, like a sun, to the watch-towers of Macistus. And (the watchman) omitted not his share of the messenger's duty, either by any delay, or by being carelessly overcome by sleep; but the light of the beacon coming from afar to the streams of the Euripus gives signal to the watchmen of Messapius; and they lighted a flame in turn, and sent the tidings onward, having kindled with a fire a pile of withered heath."

Or as Browning translates it:

And far the beacon's light on Stream Euripos
Arriving, made aware Messapios' warders,
And up they lit in turn, played herald onwards,
Kindling with flame a heap of gray old heather.

Moorburn

"Far the withering heaths with moorburn blaze."
—*Leyden.*

Oh, heath upon the hills aflame,
Thy odor steals my spirit o'er
And stirs within the fancy deep
The shadowy dreams of yore.

Sweet incense of departed bloom
Afloat upon the moorland lea—
The memory of a summer gone
Thou bearest unto me.

Again I see the hills and know
The pleasant rush of waters near;
And far within the blue of heaven
Thy skylark singeth clear.

And plover lone and wild curlew
Weird choristers, to Nature call,
And sentinels of Silence seem
If human footstep fall.

But deeper than such music all,
And chiding earthly doubts and fears,
The peace of God descends, and lo!
The harpings of the spheres!

As Night, with trailing garment comes,
And enters at the western gate;
And round her throne the planets wheel,
Her chariots of state.

* * * *

Oh, Summer, tho' from tower and tree
Thy touch has faded in the past,
The radiance of thy sunbeams still
Within my life is cast.

Upon the hills the flames upleap—
    Upleap and fall within the night;
So in my heart thy vanished bloom
    Enkindles into light.

—John MacFarlane.

HEATHER BELLS IN SCOTTISH SCENERY

I can heedless look on the siller sea,
I may tentless muse on the flow'ry lea;
But my heart wi' a nameless rapture thrills,
When I gaze on the cliffs o' my heather hills.
—*John Ballantine.*

"The grass on the rock, the flower of the heath, the thistle with its beard are the chief adornments of his landscape."—*Ossian.*

THE romantic scenery of the Scottish mountains, their rugged wildness, their indescribable loveliness and charm when clothed with all the autumnal embellishment of their blossoming purple Heather, although existing throughout the ages, have only been known to travelers a little over a century and a half. It is generally believed that the beauties of the Highland scenery were first brought prominently before the world by the publication in the year 1760 of what the author, MacPherson, entitled "Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands." Geikie tells us that previous to the Jacobite rising the mountainous region was regarded as the bed of a half savage race into whose wilds few lowlanders would venture without the most urgent reasons.

The poet Gray, during his visit to Scotland in the year 1765, made a brief excursion into the Perthshire Highlands, and except for the discomforts of travel at that time, came away with a vivid impression of

the grandeur and beauty of the scenery. Writing to Mason, he says: "The lowlands are worth seeing once, but the mountains are ecstatic and ought to be visited in pilgrimage once a year. None but those monstrous creatures of God know how to join so much beauty with so much horror."

Burns seems to have felt keenly the necessity of bringing into greater prominence the majesty and loveliness of his native Scotland. He thus writes to William Simpson, at Ochiltree:

> We'll sing auld Coila's plains and fells,
> Her moors red-brown wi' heather bells,
> Her banks and braes, her dens and dells
> Where glorious Wallace
> Aft bure the gree, as story tells,
> Frae Southern billies.

Yet these fair mountains failed to appeal to or arouse the admiration of some writers and travelers who have viewed them.

To Dr. Johnson, for instance, they possessed but little charm. "Of the hills," he says, "many may be called with Homer's Ida abundant in springs; but few can describe the epithet which he bestows upon Pelion, by waving their leaves. They exhibit very little variety, being almost wholly covered with dark heath, and even that seems to be checked in its growth. What is not heath is nakedness a little diversified by now and then a stream rushing down a steep. It will readily occur that this uniformity of barrenness can afford little amusement to the traveler, that it is

easy to stay at home and conceive rocks and heaths and waterfalls, and that these journeys are useless labors which neither impregnate the imagination nor enlarge the understanding." Every Scot can read with amusement the doctor's characterization of what is conceded the country's greatest charm, when he remembers that for all things Scottish the great lexicographer had an utter contempt, unless it may have been Scotch broth.

Burt, in his "Letters from a Gentleman in the North of Scotland," says: "There is not much variety but gloomy spaces, different rocks, heath and high and low— * * * the wild and the dismal gloomy brown drawing upon the dirty purple, and most of all disagreeable when the Heather is in bloom."

Contrast the foregoing with some of Sir Walter Scott's unrivaled pen portraits of the majestic grandeur of Scottish scenery! Where the fire of the poetic genius is wanting, or where exists the lack of enthusiastic appreciation of Nature's most sublime handiwork, one can well conceive of a production so dull and uninteresting as Burt affords.

To her late Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria the mountains of Scotland, and their infinite charm, were a never-ending source of delight. Her Majesty's unique works, "Leaves From Our Journey in the Highlands" and "More Leaves," abound in passages portraying the impression made by the Scottish scenery upon the late Queen. Writing of the trip through the Clachan of Aberfoyle, she says: "Here the splendid scenery begins—high, rugged and green hills (reminding me again of Pilatus)—very fine large trees and

beautiful pink Heather, interspersed with bracken, rocks and underwood, in the most lovely profusion, and Ben Lomond towering up before us with its noble range." Again: "Altogether the whole drive along Loch Ard, and then by the very small Loch Dow and the fine Loch Chon, which is very long and lovely, the Heather was in full bloom, and of the richest kind, some almost of a crimson color and growing in rich tufts along the road."

And perhaps one of the grandest tributes ever paid to Scotland and her people has been penned by Queen Victoria in the following words which occur in her description of Loch Lomond and its enchanting environments: "This solitude, the romance and wild loveliness of everything here, the absence of hotels and beggars, independent simple people who all speak Gaelic here, all make beloved Scotland the proudest, finest country in the world. Then there is that beautiful Heather which you do not see elsewhere. I prefer it greatly to Switzerland, magnificent and glorious as the scenery of that country is."

Even when in the late autumn the beauty of the Highland landscape had begun to pass away, it still possessed delight for the Queen, who lovingly quotes the words of Arthur Hugh Clough, as expressive of her own feelings:

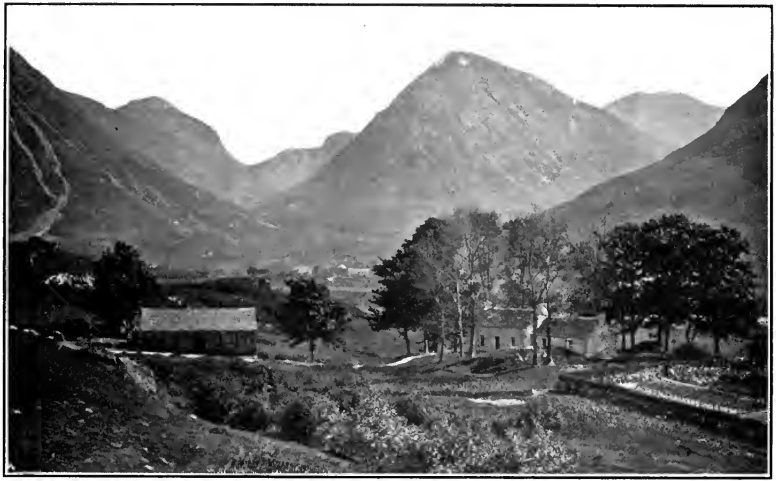
> The gorgeous bright October,
> Then when brackens are changed
> And heather blooms are faded,
> And amid russet of heather and fern,
> Green trees are bonnie.

Among the many tributes of tender sentiment cherished by the late Queen Victoria, stored away in her private album, was a spray of Heather, "which," says Helene Vacaresco, the Roumanian poetess and Maid of Honor to the Queen of Roumania, "was taken from the wedding bouquet presented by Prince Albert to his wife."

Other writers have beautifully sung the praises of Scotland's mountain grandeur. A most charming description of a Highland landscape appears in "Cornhill":

"But a Highland landscape is of itself sufficiently beautiful. It merely requires Heather to give it the predominant tone and to interest the beholder by means of many associations sure to suggest themselves when he sees the purple braes. Take, for instance, the valley of Garry in mid-July. It possesses a charm of its own, and yet Scotland owns a thousand more valleys which to a casual observer appear very similar when they are flooded with Heather bloom, such is the magic of this humble shrub. The prevailing colors in the open country on either side of the Garry are reds and purples, derived mainly from Heather, largely reinforced by clover and vetches. These tints are set off by the flaunting blossoms of the broom on every neglected corner, while the tender waxen Erica tetralix gathers round the head of each mimic burn that cleaves the moorland. Every here and there are batches of turnips, while above them on the crags and below toward the waste spots an ocean of Heather surges in like a flood tide swallowing up as it were one by one the numberless great black trap boulders which are piled up in

Balmoral Castle, the Late Queen Victoria's Favorite Highland Residence.



Glencoe, the Scene of the Massacre.

confusion, the gravestones of a long buried world, and among which tower foxgloves of great size and beauty. Above tower many huge spruce firs like giants with drooping robes of green that love to sweep the earth. Some of them have lost their lead, but another soon takes its place and the disfigurement is speedily unnoticed in the clouds of foliage high up, its light green tips all drenched in sunshine. Behind them the mountains break away into the skies, their shoulders covered with spires of young larch, while graceful birches come down the foreground intermixed with the heavy hanging sprays of beech like mountain nymphs which have left their stern seclusion to draw near to man. In the valley the bracken catches the sun's rays and midst its glitter the Garry may be discerned of the color of straw with boulders shining through its stream, like masses of cairngorm when seen in the shade. Rain has fallen amongst the mountains during the night, and now the trees shake their leaves over the stream as it roars underneath, and the foxgloves near it dance in the echoes, and a thousand little burns running into it trickle everywhere, through the lichen-spotted boulders. What more typical picture could be selected for a wild prospect of Highland Heather?"

The Rev. Hugh Macmillan affords us another picture: "How gorgeous is that miracle of blossoming when summer, with her blazing torch has kindled the dull brown Heather, and every twig and spray burst into blushing beauty, and spread wave after wave of rosy bloom over the moors, until the very heavens themselves catch the reflection and bend enamoured over it with double loveliness."

Mr. Macmillan also furnishes this delightful description of a sunset on Ben Lawers: "Never shall I forget that sublime spectacle; it brims with beauty even now in my soul. Between me and the west that glowed with unutterable radiance, rose a perfect chaos of wild, dark mountains, touched here and there with reluctant splendour by the slanting sunbeams. The glowing defiles were filled with a golden haze, revealing in flashing gleams of light the lonely lakes and streams hidden in their bosom; while far over to the north a fierce cataract that rushed down a rocky hillside into a sequestered glen, frozen by the distance into the gentlest of all gentle things, reflected from its snowy waters a perfect tumult of glory. I watched in awe-struck silence the going down of the sun, amid all this pomp, behind the most distant peaks—saw the fiery clouds that floated over the spot where he disappeared fade into the cold dead color of autumn leaves, and finally vanish into the mist of even—saw the purple mountains darkening into the Alpine twilight, and twilight glens and streams tremulously glimmering far below, clothed with the strangest lights and shadows by the newly risen summer moon."

In "Gray Days and Gold" we find that charming writer, William Winter, the impressionable and discerning poet-critic of the American theater, thus characteristically voicing his awe of these Scottish mountains: "Brown with bracken and purple with Heather, * * * still with a stillness that is awful in its pitiless sense of inhumanity and utter isolation. It would be presumption to undertake to describe the solemn austerity, the lofty and lonely magnificence, the bleak,

weird, haunted isolation, and the fairy-like fantasy of this poetic realm. * * * The mountain road, on its upward course, winds through treeless pastureland, and in every direction, as your vision ranges, you behold other mountains equally bleak save for the bracken and the Heather, among which the sheep wander and the grouse nestle in concealment, or whirr away on frightened wings."

And again, in "Brown Heath and Blue Bells:" "The Heather was pink on the sides of the hills and over their grim tops the white mist was drifting, and in the tender light of morning the Highlands looked their loveliest when I bade them farewell."

Scotland's loyal sons have sung their country's superiority over all other lands, and have especially emphasized her superlative scenic characteristics, through the medium of their much-loved mountain flower.

Among these pretty boastful eulogies to be found scattered throughout the songs of Scotland, the few following may claim unique interest:

Bonnie Auld Scotland

How grand are the mountains of bonnie auld Scotland,
Her torrents' wild waters, sun-jewel'd and gloaming;
How rosy the breath of each moorland and heath,
How lovely her lakes, and her valleys how blooming.
No foreign strand, no classic land,
Earth's fairest scenes together,
Can win our praise like yonder braes,
And fragrant hills of purple Heather.

—G. Bennett.

Our Ain Land

They boast o' lands wi' fairer skies,
  And fields o' brighter bloom;
But leeze me on our heather-land,
  Wi' a' its hamely gloom—
And, tent me weel, there's mony a blink
  Its darksome moods atween;
Sweet sunny blinks, that paint our hills
  Wi' tints o' gowd and green.

Hurrah, and hurrah,
And hurrah, my merry men!
I wadna gi'e our ain land
For a' the lands I ken.

—William Ferguson.

The Land o' Cakes

Fair flower the gowans in our glens,
  The heather on our mountains;
The blue-bells deck our wizard dens,
  An' kiss our sparkling fountains.
On knock an' knowe, the whin an' broom,
  An' on the braes the breckan;
Not even Eden's flowers in bloom
  Could sweeter blossoms reckon.

—John Imlah.

The Freedom of the Hills

Oh! what is Scotland's greatest pride?
  Is it her streams and fountains,
Lochs, isles, and dark woods spreading wide?
  Nay! 'tis her glorious mountains!
Where granite grey and shingly sheen
  Fling back the sun together
'Mong yellow whins and brackens green,
  Or fragrant purple heather.

—Robert Bird.

Know'st Thou the Land?

(In imitation of Goethe.)

Know'st thou the land of the hardy green thistle,
Where oft o'er the mountain the shepherd's shrill whistle
Is heard in the gloamin' so sweetly to sound,
Where the red blooming heather and hair-bell abound?

Hurrah for the Highlands

I have trod merry England and dwelt on its charms;
  I have wandered through Erin, the gem of the sea;
But the Highlands alone the true Scottish heart warms,
  Her heather is blooming, her eagles are free.

—Andrew Park.

That such wild grandeur should have an influence upon those whom it constantly surrounds is a natural sequence. This pervading influence is delightfully impressed by Ruskin in the following passage from "Two Paths:"

"You will find upon reflection that all the highest points of the Scottish character are connected with impressions derived straight from the natural scenery of their country. No nation has ever before shown, in the general tone of its language—in the general current of its literature—so constant a habit of hallowing its passions and confirming its principles by direct association with the charm or power of nature. The writings of Scott and Burns—and yet more, of far greater poets than Burns, who gave Scotland her traditional ballads—furnish you in almost every stanza—almost in every line—with examples of this association of natural scenery with the passions; but an instance of its farther connection with moral principle struck me forcibly just at the time when I was most lamenting the absence of art among the people. In one of the loveliest districts of Scotland, where the peat cottages are darkest, just at the western foot of that great mass of the Grampians which encircles the sources of the Spey and the Dee, the main road which traverses the chain winds round the foot of a broken rock called Crag or Craig Ellachie. There is nothing remarkable in either its height or form; it is darkened with a few scattered pines and touched along its summit with a flush of Heather; but it constitutes a kind of headland, or leading promontory, in the group of hills to which it belongs a sort of initial letter of the moun-

tains, and there stands in the minds of the inhabitants of the district the clan Grant, for a type of their country and of the influence of that country upon themselves. Their sense of this is beautifully indicated in the war cry of the clan, 'Stand fast, Craig Ellachie.' You may think long over those few words without exhausting the deep wells of feeling and thought contained in them—the love of the native land; the assurance of their faithfulness to it; the subdued and gentle assertion of indomitable courage—I may need to be told to stand, but if I do, Craig Ellachie does. You could not but have felt, had you passed beneath it at the time when so many of England's dearest children were being defended by the strength of heart of men born at its foot, how often among the delicate Indian palaces, whose marble was palled with horror, and whose vermilion was darkened with blood, the remembrance of its rough gray rocks and purple heaths must have risen before the sight of the Highland soldier; how often the hailing of the shot and the shriek of battle would pass away from his hearing, and leave only the whisper of the old pine branches—'Stand fast, Craig Ellachie.'"

THE MAGIC OF THE HEATHER

"I'll warrant that Aaron's rod bore no bonnier blossoms than these little stiff bushes—and none more magical. For every time I take up a handful of them they transport me to the Highlands, and send me tramping over the braes and down the burns."—*Van Dyke.*

WHAT potent charm have the gods bequeathed this mountain blossom, that the heart of a Scotsman, be his home amid the Lowland peacefulness of his native land or on its stormy Highland hills, clings to this moorland flower with a pathos of tender, reverent emotion which the foreign world gazes upon in pleased wonder and cannot interpret?

Is it only that the ragged spray of deep greenery and purple bells calls forth, to the exiled Scotsman, those sacred memories of early home ties the fond clinging love for which forms so strangely a refining element in the sturdy, harshly sterling Caledonian nature? Is it that within his heart the bonnie native bloom brightens anew, like a soft moonlight glow creeping over some lonely barren midnight solitude, the deserted waste of these fading recollections—lures from out the lurking shadows of his loneliness those cherished scenes and friendships and severed ties of "auld lang syne"—and brings back, like quiv-

ering echo-strains from a far-away distance, the music of those sweet hame-fireside hours that will "never come again?"

Or is it a power more mystic than this artless sympathy of brotherhood, which is the universal heritage of the human heart? Is it, rather, some spell of deep human feeling that, like a wailing ghost, haunts those bleak Scottish hills—the historic plaintiveness of Covenanter flight and persecution that wraps their crags in fascinating gloom and still leaves upon them spirit-prints of martyr bloodshed? Is it those unforgotten scenes of fraternal strife when the restless clansmen of early Caledonia, with the seething vigor of their untutored mountain life in their veins, stormy fire in their eyes and in their hearts stormy hatred, hunted each other through those Highland glens and over their rocky peaks, while the slogan rudely woke the low nature-music of the Highland calm and thrilled the succeeding silence with voiceless portents of evil fate? And is it that, to the sympathetic soul, come the dream-voices of those restless stern departed, who from out the shadows of the beyond lonesomely wander back to their loved Highland home, bringing again that grim ghostly message to the shrinking Hamlet, "I could a tale unfold?" Is it the patron spirit of poetic genius which has immortalized their rugged solitude—the atmosphere of romance and wild story that so entrancingly wanders amidst it? Or is it, perchance, the spiritual interflowing of all these crude human and poetic emotions, drifting throughout the quiet nature-enchantment like a fleecy scattering, eternally unfading silver mist?

Hogg tells us that when Lieut. Patrick Campbell took a voyage to North America with the view of ascertaining upon the spot what was the actual situation of those who had emigrated to that quarter, upon taking leave of a woman whom he had known in the Highlands, he asked her what he could do to oblige her.

"Nothing," she said, that she could at present think of, unless he could send her a few stalks of Heather, which she longed exceedingly for; it would do her heart so much good to see it once more. There was a bit of poor ground behind her house where she had always thought the Heather would grow if properly taken care of.

Not long ago a Scottish gardener died at Inwood-on-the-Hudson, N. Y. Around the bier were scattered many beautiful floral designs, made of the choicest of conservatory blossoms. A brother gardener, also a Scot, who attended the funeral, took with him a little spray of Heather which, by permission of the widow, he pinned on the lapel of the dead man's coat. The mourners, mostly Scotch folk, immediately forgot the costly flowers, and the tears that welled up in the eyes of the onlookers echoed more eloquently than spoken words the remark of a leal-hearted Scottish gardener's wife who stood on the opposite side of the casket: "That's just what he would have liked!" Sorrow for the dead was temporarily assuaged by the magic power of that token of fraternal and native friendship, "a wee sprig o' Highland Heather."

At one of the annual suppers of the St. Andrew's Society, held in Delmonico's, New York, and presided

over by the eminent scotsman, Dr. Andrew Carnegie, the favors were orchids (Cattleyas). A member of the Society, Dr. A. M. Stewart, editor of the Scottish American, of Manhattan, had brought with him to the banquet a plentiful supply of Heather, for boutonnières for those present. At sight of the enchanting little blossom, fingers began to itch, and elbows to crook, one hand reaching out for a sprig of blossoming Heather, the other gradually nearing the costly "button-hole," and the request to "throw away that weed," required no repetition, for as by magic there was a general dethronement of the "aristocrat of the vegetable kingdom," and the blossom that aye shall stand to every Scot as king of flowers supreme, adorned the manly breasts of the manly men to whom auld Scotland is ever dear, who never turn a deaf ear to the cry for help that stern misfortune wrings from Scotia's sons in the land of their adoption.

To satisfy the longing of the Scot abroad for a plant of his familiar and beloved Heather, a firm in Edinburgh, Scotland, has taken a great interest in the exportation of Heather roots to far-off countries. Consignments have been sent to Canada and to Australia, packed in Wardian cases. In each case is a plant of White Heather, symbol of "good luck."

Ah, how true it is that "Memory is a capricious and arbitrary creature. You can never tell what pebble she will pick up from the shore of life to keep among her treasures, or what inconspicuous flower of the field she will preserve as the symbol of 'Thoughts that often lie too deep for tears.'"

The Wee Sprig o' Heather

Oh, wae on the gowd wi' its glamour beguilin'
The bravest frae Scotia across the saut sea,
An' wae on Dame Fortune, sae fause wi' her smilin',
For cauld is the pleasure at best she can gie.
But aye tae the heart that is leal mair endearin'
A message o' love frae the land far awa,
When aften it comes like a sun-blink sae cheerin',
A wee sprig o' heather sae withered and sma'.

The emigrant dreams o' his hame in the gloamin'
An' wanders in fancy some wild glen sae green;
His thochts are the purest, wi' memory, when roamin'
The land where the bluebell and thistle are seen.
An' aften the gloom that enshrouds him brings beamin';
Affection's sweet token dispellin' it a'
As brichtly in darkness the starnie is gleamin';
A sprig o' his ain native heather sae sma'.

The burnie that's glidin' sae sweetly an' singin'
Awa' frae its hame in the mountain sae hie.
Ne'er kens in its mirth that the future is bringin'
The tempest an' roar o' the dark-tossin' sea;
An' sae wi' the lad owre the ocean careerin'
Like strains frae the harp are the win's when they blaw;
Till wearit—the bricht sun o' hope disappearin'
He langs for a tuft o' heather sae sma'.

—John MacFarlane, in "Heather and Harebell."

Heather Musings

Wee sprigs o' mountain heather,
What message bring ye me?
I know kind freends did gather
To send you owre the sea;
Their thoughts wi' love did wander,
Where mighty pine trees sway,
To one who oft meandered
'Mang heather on the brae.

This message it is written
Upon your petals rare;
Kind hearts are ever waitin'—
Kind hearts that miss ye sair;
They've sent ye as a token
Across Atlantic's sea,
O' friendship that's forever
O' love that ne'er will dee.

Again I climb the mountain
When simmer skies are blue,
Where heather bells are glintin'
Wi' gems o' morning dew;
I hear the linties singing,
Oot owre the broomy knowes,
While larks on high are soaring
Frae oot the grassy howes.

I see the straw thatch't shieling
Wi' garden 'fore the door,
An' folks wi' hearts aye kindly
Flit thro' it as of yore;
Wee sprigs o' hillside heather,
Wee ruby-tinted flower,
You've bound me wi' a tether—
A lasting unseen power.

I'll keep thee as a token
Frae loved ones owre the sea,
Whose message, tho' unspoken,
Engraved is on thee;
I'll prize thee as a treasure
Frae Scotia's bonnie braes—
Wee sprigs frae freenship's measure,
I'll keep thee a' my days.

—James Broomfield, in "Murmurings from Rugged Waters."

Scotch Heather

(Written on receiving a bunch of heather from a lady friend.)

This bunch of heather from my ain dear land,
In fragrant purple bloom held in my hand,
Recalls sic memories o' the hills sae grand,
Whereon it grew.
Again, as in the days o' yore, I stand
Wi' them in view.

A wee bit barefit boy again I rin,
Speilin' the braes, their heathery taps to win,
Far past the bonnie broom, the thorny whin,
Bluebells and gowans,
Blaeberries, hips and haws, and a' their kin,
E'en bluid-red rowans.

On moors whaur aft the "Fiery Cross" hath sped,
Whaur kilted chiefs their clans to battle led,
Whaur Roman, Dane and Southern foes lie dead,
In bluidy graves,
Whaur Scotia's martyrs prayed, and fought and bled,
The heather waves.

Up whaur the mountain-tap is wreathed in cloud,
Up whaur the eagle soars, serene and proud,
Up whaur the storm-king hauds his revels loud
'Mid winter's snows,
Far frae the busy, bustlin', babblin' crowd,
The heather grows.

Sweet heather bells! your message and command,
I read it thus—sae loving, strong and grand—
"Uphold the honor o' the hardy band
Frae whom ye sprung,
And love for aye the dear auld 'Fatherland,'
And Mither tongue."

—William Anderson, in "The Scottish American."

My Wee Bit Heather

(On receiving a sprig of heather from the late William Milne, of New York, with the remark:

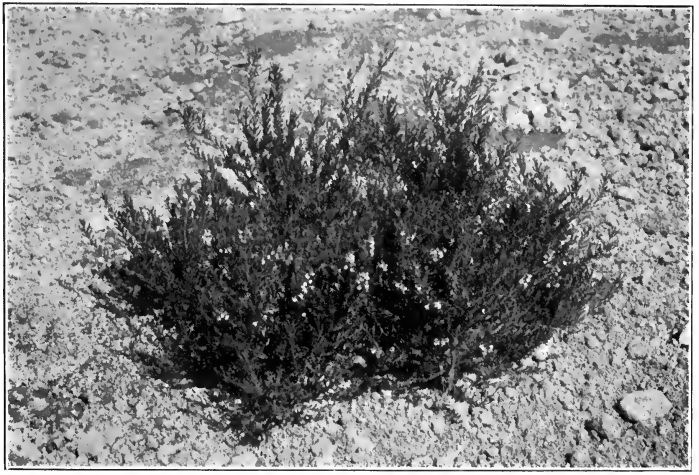
"Will ye to the Hielan's gang,
Wi' a rantin', rovin' Hielan' man?")

Oh! Willie mine, my heart is licht
Since I hae read the words ye wrote;
As sunny day will be the nicht,
Noo that I ken I'm nae forgot!
Fu' glad I am, this blessed day,
We're a' in a' to ane anither;
But oh! it filled my heart wi' wae
When first I saw yer wee bit heather.

As clouds will shade a simmer sky,
An' ower the day a shadow cast,
Sae auld lang syne cam' flittin' by,
An' lichtly touched me as it passed.
I min' me o' the blithe, blithe time,
Or ere I saw life's changefu' weather;
When a' I did was sit an' rhyme,
An' idly pu' a wee bit heather.

Beside a burnie, pure and cool,
Sae bonnie broon frae heathy screen;
Wi' here and there a deep, dark pool,
An' noo an' then a patch o' green.
And then it rushed adoon the glen,
As if to leave us a' thegither;
But soon we fan' the witch again,
And on her breast the wee bit heather.

Calluna vulgaris alba, var. Hammondi.
(See Page 58.)



Calluna vulgaris in Meehan's Nurseries, Germantown,
Philadelphia, Pa. (See Page 63.)

I min' me o' my mountain hame,
Whaur mony a happy day I've seen;
In memory's hall it's aye the same,
Tho' trackless ocean lies between.
Yet tho' life's flowery morn is gane,
Its joys are nae fled a'thegither;
Past wi' the moment was the pain
I fan', to see yer wee bit heather.

My beatin' heart was filled wi' joy
And happy lovin' thochts o' you.
I bless the hoor, my Hielan' boy
Has got my heart, an' been sae true.
An' when upon life's changefu' road
We, han' in han', will gae thegither;
When joys may cheer, or sorrows load,
I'll cherish aye, yer wee bit heather.

Aye, Willie, I am yours fu' fain;
An 'gledly I will be yer wife;
For my puir heart is a' yer ain,
An' every wish is yours, for life.
An' I will wear my silken snood,
An' trim it wi' nae royal feather;
But, laddie, I will aye be prood
To trig it wi' yer wee bit heather.

But, laddie, I maun say fareweel;
But haste ye, Willie, sen' anither;
For a' my thochts ye slyly steal,
Whene'er I see yer wee bit heather.

—Louise F. McDonald, in "The Scotsman," Edinburgh, 1881.

On a Spray of Heather

Far from its native moorland,
  Or crest of "wine-red" hill,
At sight or scent of heather
  The hearts of Scotsmen thrill.

Though crushed its purple blossoms,
  Its tender stems turned brown,
It brings romantic Highlands
  Into prosaic town.

The clans are on the border,
  The chiefs are in the fray;
We're keen upon their footsteps
  With Walter Scott to-day.

Peat smoke from Lowland cottage
  Floats curling up, and turns
Our dreams towards quiet hearthstones,
  And melodies of Burns.

And last our fancy lingers
  With fond regret and vain,
Where sleeps our Tusitala
  Beneath the tropic rain—

Far from the purple heather
  Or gleaming rowan bough,
Alone on mountain summit,
  "Our hearts remember how."

St. Andrew's Day.

HEATHER, THE MARTYR'S FRIEND

In a dream of the night I was wafted away
To the moorland of mist where the martyrs lay;
Where Cameron's sword and his Bible are seen,
Engraved on the stone where the heather grows green.

'Twas a dream of those ages of darkness and blood,
When the minister's home was the mountain and wood;
When in Wellwood's dark moorlands the standard of Zion,
All bloody and torn 'mang the heather was lying.

It was morning and summer's young sun from the east
Lay in loving repose on the green mountain's breast,
On Wardlaw and Cairn-Table, the clear shining dew,
Glistened sheen 'mang the heather-bells and mountain flowers blue.

—From "The Cameronian's Dream," by James Hislop.

IN the troubled times when Scotsmen sought the seclusion of their country's mountains to worship God in their own way; when the sword held in place the leaves of the Bible against the rushing of the mountain wind; when the evening prayer was followed by the crash of battle, and the moans of the wounded and dying mingled in the glen with the fading echo of the melody of the last psalm, the Heather often proved of greatest service, as furnishing a hiding place for the hunted worshippers. Such a one, "The Cave of Garrick Fell," is thus described in "The Traditions of

the Covenanters:" "This cave, the roof of which was the superincumbent mass of the mighty mountain, was capable of accommodating several persons at once. Its entrance, which was narrow, was concealed by a special provision of nature—a large bush of Heather growing from the turf on the upper part of the aperture, spreading downward like a thick veil, covered the upper half of the opening; and the lower part was screened by a green bracken bush, which, springing from the bottom, spread itself like a feathery fan till it met the pendent Heather, and then the two, like the folding doors of an inner chamber, closed the entrance in such a way that no individual in passing could possibly recognize the existence of any such place, however near he might approach it. What a slender barrier sometimes serves as a complete protection to those whom Providence would shield from harm."

Says Barbour, in his "Unique Traditions of Scotland," describing the persecutions and romantic refuge of these hunted Covenanters: "Often, in summer, on the edge of a lake, or by the banks of a beautiful stream, hath the Lord's Supper been dispensed in romantic Caledonia. But seldom has the Communion been dispensed under such peculiar circumstances as we now proceed to describe.

"There runs a small stream in the Parish of Kirkpatrick-Irongray, yet named the Auld Water. * * * Near one of the branches of this mossy stream, and on the side of a heathy hill, may yet be marked a large broad stone, with smaller ones set regularly, as diverging from it.

"And what was the use of this broad flat stone? And what were the uses of the smaller ones around it? When Grierson of Lag was hunting the Presbyterians from hill to hill this large stone served as a communion table, and the lesser ones around it served as seats for the communicants! * * *

"And often has the Communion been partaken of here. And sometimes, in summer, had the small birds joined the sacramental melody; and the lapwing, as if enamoured, had wheeled soothly around it; and the red-brown heath had smelled sweet beneath the communicants' feet. But in February, 1685, no birds were to sing around them, and the yet wintry heath was to be dyed with communicants' blood. * * *

"And shall not the sainted shades of these persecuted communicants—even the disembodied spirits of the martyrs—revisit, at times, this table in the wilderness?' And shall not they hover around these heaths, where their martyred dust reposes?"

The Covenanter's Tomb

Far inland, where the mountain's crest
O'erlooks the waters of the west,
And 'midst the moorland wilderness,
Dark moss-cleughs form a drear recess,
Curtain'd with ceaseless mists, which feed
The sources of the Clyde and Tweed;
There injured Scotland's patriot band,
For faith and freedom made their stand.

Their name shall nerve the patriot's hand,
Upraised to save a sinking land;
And piety shall learn to burn
With holiest transports o'er their urn!
Sequestered haunts!—so still—so fair,
That holy faith might worship there—
The shaggy gorse and brown heath wave
O'er many a nameless warrior's grave.

—James Hogg.

THE HEATHER AS A CLAN BADGE

Not safe were they who rashly met
Thy warriors stern and true,
When the proud heather-badge was set
In all their bonnets blue.

—*Ian Lom.*

WHEN we reflect upon the many unique characteristics of the Heather—its stern beauty of delicate purple bells nestling to a green-mantled burly growth of brushwood; its distinctive vitality and strength of endurance; the wild, rugged solitude of its native home in the Scottish Highlands, and the untamed spirit of independence which overbroods this hermit flower of the mountain crags—it is not to be wondered at that the Heather should have been adopted as a symbol, or badge, by several of the leading clans of Scotland. Indeed, in olden times such badges were superstitiously regarded, and the clans adopting specific subjects as their symbols were supposed to be descended from these subjects. And who more proud of their ancestors than the descendants of the Heather!

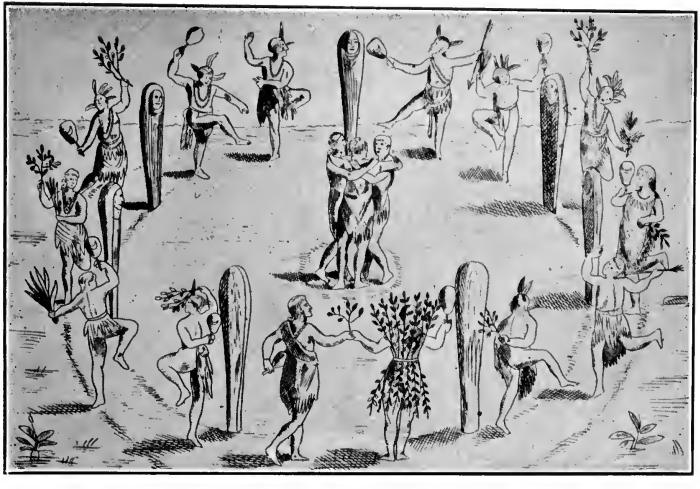
Grighair is croic,
Domnuil is freuc,
Macgregor as the rock,
Macdonald as the heather.

The origin of the selection of certain plants as clan badges appears to be shrouded in mystery, and mythology aids us but little in our research looking to the discovery of the inception of the custom.

Speaking of the Cativellauni, with which he says the Scots were identified, Dr. R. C. Maclagan, in "Scottish Myths" (1882), says: "Now what the peculiar ceremonies were which characterized this people, it is not easy to say, but it is curious to find among the natives of North America, as figured by Lafitau in his Mœurs des Sauvages Ameriquains, published in 1724, a dance which seems perhaps to point to what may have taken place among our ancestors. I annex a rough copy of the plate. Here we have a barbarous people dancing what might be a 'reel,' in a circle peculiarly like our stone circles. The total number of performers is eight couple and an odd man. This makes it, possibly, a sheer coincidence, much like an 'eightsome' reel, and, as in this latter, there is what is called a 'prisoner,' so here we have the center occupied by three of the performers, who may be performing what is allied to the 'jig,' a dance of three performers. The green branches which they carry, and with which one at least is dressed (?), make them Vecturiones, while if the belief that the bladder-shaped, crescent-ornamented things carried by some of the performers are inflated bladders or skins, used perhaps for causing sound, the bearers might be called Firbolg. The Americans figured may have been less advanced in the arts than the Cativellauni, but if the dance is a 'reel,' and was such as the Maiatai (Scots) danced, it still survives after seventeen centuries.

Macdonald, Lord of the Isles, Sitting in Judgment on the Tom Moïd, or Law Hill.

From "Costumes of the Highland Clans of Scotland."



A North American Indian Dance,
the Dancers Carrying Green Branches. May Have a Remote Connection
with the Origin of the Use of Sprigs as Clan Badges.

From "Scottish Myths,"

"Is it not possible that the sprigs carried as clan badges may hint at another survival, while its effect in tradition is clear in the story in which Macbeth is described as defeated by the followers of Malcolm (the servant of the dove) when they carried green boughs of the 'Byrnnane' wood to 'Dunsynane,' the hill of charms or enchantment?"

It is, however, more reasonable to infer that the custom had its origin in the practice of the primitive inhabitants of Scotland, of painting or dyeing their skins either with vegetable or mineral colors, depicting various figures of animals, shells, flowers, fishes, plants, birds, etc. It is recorded that the Highlanders of Druidal times always fought stripped to the kilt; and that they painted their crests on their bosoms, so that they might be recognized and distinguished in the conflict, as well as among the slain should that be their fate. As a sequence of civilization, would result the transition from this barbaric portraiture to the adoption of the natural object. Consequently we are also told that it was a custom of the clans to enter into battle each one bearing its own significant twig.

General Stewart, in his "Highlanders," says: "These marks of distinction were composed of a tuft of heath, pine or such plant as would not fade or cast the leaf. Thus the Macdonalds wore in their bonnets tufts of heath; the Macgregors and Grants a bunch of pine; the Drummonds and Mackenzies wore the holly—the former the plain, the latter the variegated; the Macintoshes the boxwood, and so on; always taking care, whatever the badge was, that it should be permanent and not affected by the change of season, and

thus be equally conspicuous in winter as in summer. This was the practice of all except the Stewarts, who generally wore the oak; which from losing the leaf and decaying, many regarded as ominous of the decline of the family and name, who also considered the oak emblematical, as the leaves, though withered and decayed, still hang by the branches till forced off by the new leaves in spring."

It appears, however, that the Heather badge was not at all times displayed in the bonnet; indeed, a bonnet was more often than not wanting in the garb of the fighting clansman. A letter in the Wodrow MS. in the Advocates' Library, dated February 1, 1678, gives an account of the Highland host, which was brought down to curb the Covenanters, and we find "among the ensigns, besides other singularities, the Glencow men were verie remarkable, who had for their ensigne a faire bush of heath, well spread and displayed on the head of a staff, such as might have affrighted a Roman Eagle."

As has been stated, the Heather, Fraoch gorm, is the badge of the Clan Macdonald; it is also that of the Macdonalds of Clanronald, of Keppoch, and Glengarry; and Fraoch-eilean, "heathy isle," is their slogan or war cry. The Heather is likewise the badge of Clans Macalister, Macintyre and Macnab. And the following clans wear Heather with another badge or badges: Duncan, or Robertson, Heather, Bracken; Lamont, Crab-tree, Heather; Macdougall, Heather, Pine, or Cypress; Macfarlane, Heather, Cranberry, Cloudberry; Maclaughlan, Heather, Rowan, Peri-

winkle; Macneil, Heather, Sea-ware, Trefoil, Dryas; Macnaughton, Heather, Trailing Azalea; Macpherson, Heather, Box, or Red Whortleberry.

The custom of wearing sprigs as badges seems to have fallen into desuetude for a time. Phillips, in his "Floral Emblems," says it was revived when His Majesty visited his northern capital in the year 1822. "His loyal Scottish subjects on that joyful event paid their homage to their sovereign at the Palace of Holyrood, each wearing the heraldic emblem of his clan." He then gives a list of the clan badges represented there.

Scott, in the "Pibroch of Donuil Dhu," pictures the gathering of the clan Macdonald and the mingling of the badges thus:

> Fast they come; fast they come;
> See how they gather;
> Wide waves the eagle plume
> Blended with heather.
> Cast your plaids; draw your blades;
> Forward each man set!
> Pibroch of Donuil Dhu
> Knell for the onset.

The Lowlanders had good cause to become familiar with those various badges; and a story is narrated, telling of a ruse by which Prince Charles Edward once hoped to impose upon the citizens of Glasgow, but which was defeated by means of that knowledge. He led several parties of Highlanders through the Trongate, made them pass down a by-

street, and, after a short detour, return through the Trongate, apparently a new reinforcement. But the pine and the Heather were only too well known to be mistaken by the sharp eyes of the citizens of St. Mungo, who did not find it necessary to leave the Saut Market to know a Macdonald from a Campbell.

Says a writer in Cornhill: "It is a matter of wonder why the thistle, with its defiant motto, has been adopted as the emblem of Scotland, rather than the Heather, which so regally mantles its hills. The rigid angularities of the national character live indeed in one; but the tender grace, the breadth of color, the fragility and yet the endurance of the Heather, point to the higher and finer aspects of the Scotch nature, and the deep affection and strength of will which underlie it. The fact seems to be that until the Union, the aggressive, prickly nature of the thistle naturally too aptly symbolized the rough and warlike disposition of Scotland. Few sentiments save patriotism found favor with its people before the middle of the eighteenth century. They took no thought of poetry or the refinements of life when the sword was at their throats and their ears rang with denunciation of Stuart or Hanoverian. When this question was definitely settled, and commerce took her place in peace upon her throne, border feud and national animosity alike faded into the emotional love of country and home, which finds its expression in so many beautiful ballads and songs, the slogan being exchanged for those pathetic love songs which are the glory of Scotch literature. The Heather was twisted in many a chaplet of song."

Despite the hold that the Heather has upon every

Scottish heart, it does not seem probable that it will ever supplant the thistle as the national emblem of Scotland. The Heather was, however, chosen by the Pan-Celtic Congress at its meeting in Glasgow in 1901, as a symbolic flower, which all claiming to be of Celtic descent could agree upon as their emblem.

HEATHER LORE

FRIEND says: "Even the Heather itself, although from its covering their moors and mosses it has a certain obscure connection with elves and pixies, is without any definite story in tradition."

Nevertheless, the Muses have been kinder and wiser than their promise; and the cherished little flower of the Scottish Highlands has not lost its own dowry of this poetic renown, which national sentiment almost universally accords the popular flowers and plants of a country, for we find scattered throughout romantic literature quaint superstitious fancies, and even a number of brief, crudely wrought traditions and legends, inscribed to the Heather.

In Germany the Heath is believed to owe its origin to the blood of the slain heathen; for in that country the inhabitants of the uncultivated fields where the Heath (heide) grew came in time to be known as heathen (heiden).

In Scotland on Halloween the witches are supposed to ride over the Heather mounted on black tabby cats.

And also in the folk-lore of this country, "the Cailleach was a beanshith, or fairy, that often appeared to the hunters in the gloaming of summer evenings, gathering and milking the hinds on a hillside, while

she sang some wild air, and her long gray locks waved over her shoulders. If any hunter saw the Cailleach he knew well it was useless for him to roam the heath that day."

Cailleach Bein-Y-Vreich

Weird wife of Bein-y-Vreich! horo! horo!
Aloft in the mist she dwells;
Vreich horo! Vreich horo! Vreich horo!
All alone by the lofty wells.

Weird, weird wife! with the long gray locks,
She follows her fleet-foot stags,
Noisily moving through splintered rocks,
And crashing the grisly crags.

"When hunter men round my dun deer prowl,
I will not let them nigh;
Through the rended cloud I cast one scowl,
They faint on the heath and die.

Then I mount the blast, and we ride full fast,
And we laugh as we stride the storm,
I, the witch of the Cruachan Ben,
And the scowling-eyed Seul-Gorm!"

—J. C. S. Shairp.

On receiving a present of a box of grouse, if the birds have been packed with a few sprays of Heather, it is stated that the receiver should wear in his hat one of the sprays, or he will never again receive a similar gift.

There was a superstition prevalent that if a sheep drag past a Heather bush and leave on it a portion of its wool, *that* bush must die with the year and day.

It was a common custom to present a nosegay of Heather to a bride and bridegroom as indicative of a wish for future happiness. The Queen tells of having greeted the Duchess of Connaught (Princess Louise Margaret of Prussia) on her arrival at Balmoral with the Duke in 1879, on their wedding trip, with "a nosegay of Heather. She had also received others."

In some localities the throwing of a bunch of Heather after a person is also understood to signify an expresston of good luck. "At Inversnaid," writes the Queen, "the people (quite a small crowd) threw bunches of Heather as we passed. Heather is everywhere the decoration, and there is indeed no lovelier, prettier ornament. It was in such full bloom."

Branches of the mountain ash, decorated with Heather and flowers which had been carried thrice around the fires kindled at Beltane, were reared above dwellings to remain until displaced by those of the succeeding season, or a portion of it cut and peeled and bound around with a thread, was put on the lintel of the byre, to avert the influence of the evil eye.

Beltane—means Baal's fire—an ancient British practice of lighting fires on the hill tops in honor of Baal, the sun god; hence the name Baaltein; in some districts celebrated on the third day of May.

In his Journey Through the Western Counties of Scotland, Heron tells the following story: "In the River of Fillan is a pool consecrated by the ancient superstition of the inhabitants. The pool is formed by

the eddying of the stream around a rock. Its water was many hundred years since consecrated by Fillan, one of the saints who converted the ancient inhabitants of Caledonia from Paganism to the belief of Christianity. It should seem that he had perhaps resided in the vicinity for some time.

"Whether he consecrated this pool in compliance with some superstitious notions of its virtues which he found already prevalent among the neighboring inhabitants, I know not. But it has ever since been distinguished by his name, and esteemed of sovereign virtue in curing madness. About two hundred persons afflicted in this way are annually brought to try the benefits of its salutary influence. These patients are conducted by their friends, who first perform the ceremony of passing with them thrice round a neighboring cairn; on this cairn they then deposit a simple offering of clothes, or, perhaps, of a small bunch of Heather. More precious offerings used once to be brought, but these never being left long in the unmolested possession of the saint, it has become customary to make him presents which afford no temptation to theft. After these, such as they are, have been deposited, the patient is then thrice immersed in the sacred pool. After the immersion he is bound hand and foot and left for the night in the chapel which stands near. If the maniac is found loose in the morning good hopes are conceived for his full recovery. If he is still bound the cure remains doubtful. It sometimes happens that death relieves him during his confinement from the troubles of life."

Heather is made the emblem of solitude in the language of flowers; and thus when the fond swain presents his mistress with a bouquet of heath and pansies, she understands his heart would be at ease if his solitude were blessed by her society. Other flowers carry the expresssion "Think of me in solitude," while a hundred other woeful speeches are thus silently told.

White Heather

"There is no more lovely plant than the White Heather."—*George Sand.*

But it is about the White Heather that sentiment most fondly lingers, and to which cling the most entrancing traditions and legends.

A writer in "All the Year Round" devotes the following sketch to the tender virtues of this charming little plant: "In the Highlands of Scotland, where the White Heather is found at exceedingly rare intervals, it is looked upon as a bringer of luck, and in some parts of Scotland she would be thought a rash bride who went to church without it. There is a saying, 'Happy is the married life of her who wears the White Heather at her wedding.' Amongst those who go out early upon the hills to look for White Heather the saying is common, 'Who finds, keeps.' The searchers are many, but few find it, even when it is wanted to grace a bridal bouquet. There is a health, though, in the pursuit, so that the search itself is lucky, and it is so good-natured as to be a deceptive plant. A pale sprig here and there constantly deceives tourists on the hunt for it into think-

ing that they have stumbled upon real specimens. A blending of purple and blue is the familiar color of the Heather flower, but it is to be found in plenty in delicate tints that deceive the unknowing searcher."

Except in color, the White Heather does not differ from that which covers all the Highland hills. It is an ordinary flower, but in its virgin whiteness it stands out amongst clumps of purple like a tint spray of snow. They say in the far north that when the sheep—hardy devourers of the tender stem of the Heather—come across it in grazing they avoid harming it; that the grouse have never been known to crush it with their wings. On great occasions the table of a Highland chief would be poor indeed without its sprig of White Heather. When the heir presumptive reaches man's estate he wears it for luck; and it is considered the height of hospitality to present it to the stranger guest. If he loses it he may look out for disaster. A bouquet formed of this rare flower was carried by the youngest daughter of England's late Queen on the occasion of her marriage.

At the marriage of Prince Leopold in 1882 the bridesmaids wore headdresses composed of clusters of violets, primroses and White Heather, the *tout ensemble* being extremely tasteful in design.

Her Majesty, in her "Journal of Our Life in the Highlands," gives the following interesting account with reference to the betrothal of the Princess Royal:

"September 29, 1855.

"Our dear Victoria was this day engaged to Prince Frederick William of Prussia, who had been on a visit to us since the 14th. He had already spoken to us, on

the 20th, of his wishes, but we were uncertain on account of her extreme youth, whether he should speak to her himself or wait till he came back again. However, we felt it was better he should do so, and during our ride up Craig-na-Ban this afternoon he picked a piece of White Heather (the emblem of 'good luck'), which he gave to her, and this enabled him to make an allusion to his hopes and wishes as they rode down Glen Girnoch, which led to this happy conclusion."

The Queen also makes the following reference to the plant in describing her journey through Dunrobin Glen, Sutherlandshire: "Half way up we stopped to take tea and coffee; and before that Brown (who has an extraordinary eye for it, when driving quite fast, which I have not) espied a piece of White Heather and jumped off to pick it. No Highlander would pass by it without picking it, for it is considered to bring good luck."

William Black's novel entitled "White Heather" has been referred to several times in these pages. The following passages from that work are quoted, because they demonstrate most forcibly and interestingly the potency of the influence exerted by a tiny spray of White Heather on a life that well nigh was doomed to destruction. They also convey an idea of the difficulty experienced in finding White Heather on the Scottish hills; and although the tale is pure fiction, yet it is so instructive and so pregnant with real pathos and meaning approaching so near to real life, that this brief summary offers its own apology for its intrusion.

Meenie Douglas, the former lover of Ronald Strang, had received word from her friend in Glasgow, whither the young Highlander had gone to pursue his studies, that he was "drinking himself to death in the lowest of low company." She is filled with anguish and solicitude for the young man who had thus fallen on evil ways, and desired to render him her friendly help.

"But what could she do? All the day she pondered; all the evening and through the long silent and wakeful night. And when, at last, the gray of the dawn showed in the small window, she had selected one of these hundred bewildered plans and schemes; it seemed a fantastic thing that she was about to do. She would send him a piece of White Heather. He would know it came from her—he would recognize the postmark and also her handwriting. And if he took it as a message and an appeal, as a token of good wishes and friendliness, and the hope of better fortune? Or if—and here she fell a-trembling, for it was a little cold in these early hours—if he should take it as a confession, as an unmaidenly declaration? Oh, she did not care. It was all she could think of doing; and do something she must. And she remembered with a timid and nervous joy her own acknowledged influence over him—had not Maggie talked of it a thousand times? And if he were to recognize this message in its true light, what then? Ronald! Ronald! her heart was still calling, with something of a tremulous hope amid all its grief and pity.

"She was out and abroad over the moorland long before any one was astir, searching with an anxious

diligence, and yet without success. White Heather is not so frequently met with in the North as in the West Highlands, and yet in Sutherlandshire it is not an absolute rarity; many a time had she come across a tuft of it in her wanderings over the moors. But now, search as she might, she could not find the smallest bit; and time began to press, for this was the morning for the mail to go south—if she missed it she would have to wait for two more days. And as half-hour after half-hour went by she became more anxious and nervous and agitated; she went rapidly from knoll to knoll, seeking the likeliest places; and all in vain.

"It was a question of minutes now. She could hear the mail cart on the road behind her; soon it would pass her and go on to the inn, where it would remain but a brief while before setting out again for Lairg. And, presently, when the mail cart did come along and go by, then she gave up the quest in despair, and in a kind of bewildered way set out for home. Her heart was heavy and full of its disappointment, and her face was paler a little than usual, but at least her eyes told no tales.

"And then, all of a sudden, as she was crossing the Mudal Bridge, she caught sight of a little tuft of gray away along the bank and not far from the edge of the stream. At first she thought it was merely a patch of withered Heather; and then a wild hope possessed her. She quickly left the bridge and made her way toward it; and the next moment she was joyfully down on her knees, selecting the whitest spray she could find. And the mail cart—it would still be at the inn—the inn was little more than half a mile off.

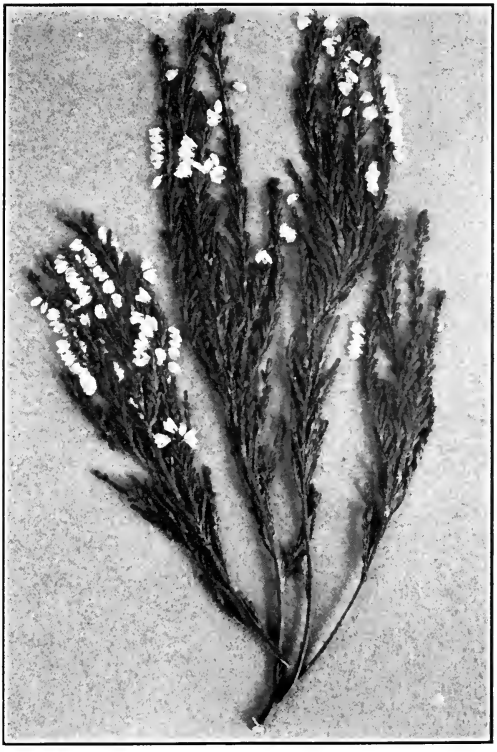
Could she run hard and intercept them after all, and send her white-dove message away to the south?"

The effect of the silent messenger on the recipient is thus pictured: "He opened the envelope and took out the bit of White Heather that Meenie had so hastily dispatched; there was no message, not the smallest scrap of writing. But was not this a message —and full of import, too—for surely Meenie would not have adopted the means of communicating with him at the mere instigation of an idle fancy? And why should she have sent it—and at this moment? Had she heard, then? Had any gossip about him reached Inver-Mudal? And how much had she heard? There was a kind of terror in his heart as he went slowly back to the window and sate down there, still staring absently at this token that had been sent him, and trying hard to make out the meaning of it. What was in Meenie's mind? What was her intention? Not merely to give him a sprig of White Heather, and wishes for good luck; there was more than that, as he easily guessed, but how much more? And at first there was little of joy or gladness in his thinking; there was rather fear, and a wondering as to what Meenie had heard of him, and a sickening sense of shame. The white gentleness of the message did not strike him; it was rather a reproach—a recalling of other days—Meenie's eyes were regarding him with proud indignation—this was all she had to say to him now."

The satisfactory result of the white-dove messenger's mission is thus told: "At the meeting she asked him to give up the drink. 'Well, it is easily promised, and easily done *now;* indeed, I've scarcely

touched a drop since ever I got the bit of Heather you sent me.'"

White Heather means "Sincere affection, and unselfish love, and tender wishes, as pure as prayers," says Van Dyke; and with the parting words of the Mistress of the Glen, as recounted by that same charming writer, we take leave of Scotland's mystic mountain wilding: "Carry this little flower with you. It's not the bonniest blossom in Scotland, but it's the dearest for the message that it brings. And you will remember that love is not getting, but giving; not a wild dream of pleasure and a madness of desire—oh, no, love is not that—it is goodness and honor, and peace and pure living—yes, love is that; and it is the best thing in the world, and the thing that lives longest. And that is what I am wishing for you and yours with this bit of White Heather."



A Spray of White Heather.

Loch Katrine, from Ben Venue.

SHADOW FOLK OF HEATHER HAUNTS

"Awake ye light fairies that trip o'er the Heather!"
—*Hogg.*

River Spirit.
Sleep'st thou, brother?

Mountain Spirit.
Brother, nay—
On my hills the moonbeams play.
From Craig-cross to Skelfhill-pen,
By every rill, in every glen,
Merry elves their morrice pacing,
To aerial minstrelsy,
Emerald rings on brown heath tracing,
Trip it deft and merrily.
Up, and mark their nimble feet;
Up, and list their music sweet.
—*Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

FAIRIES are generally believed to inhabit all campanulate flowers, and many references occur both in the prose and poetry of Scotland to the presence of these elfin folk in Heather bells.

Like the feld elfin of the Saxons, the usual dress of the fairies was said to be green, though on the moors they have sometimes been observed in heath-brown, or in weeds dyed with the stone-row or lichen. Their dwellings were the fairy hillocks or tomhans,

which Mrs. Grant of Laggan says were conical shaped, rising in dry gravelly ground and thickly covered with Heath.

Geikie thus describes their haunts: "The mounds rose so conspicuously from the ground, and whether in summer heat or winter frost, wore ever an aspect so smooth and green, where all around was rough with dark moss-hags and sombre moor, that they seemed to have been raised by no natural power, but to be in very truth the work of elfin hands, designed at once to mark and guard the entrance to the fairy world below. The hapless wight who, lured by their soft verdure, stretched himself to sleep on their slopes, sank gently into their depths, and after a seven years' servitude in fairyland awoke again on the self-same spot."

Mrs. Grant furnishes the following legend concerning one of these fairy hillocks, from which the Highlanders were accustomed in their solitude to hear issuing "the music of small sweet pipes";

"A little girl had been innocently loved by a fairy who dwelt in a tomhan near her mother's habitation. She had three brothers who were the favorites of her mother. She herself was treated harshly and taxed beyond her strength; her employment was to go every morning and cut a certain quantity of turf from dry, heathy ground for immediate fuel; and this with some uncouth and primitive implement. As she passed the hillock which contained her lover, he regularly put out his hand with a very sharp knife of such power that it quickly and readily cut through all impediments. She returned cheerfully and early with her load of turf, and as she passed by the hillock she struck on it twice

and the fairy stretched out his hand and received the knife.

"The mother, however, told the brothers that her daughter must certainly have had some aid to perform the allotted task. They watched her, saw her remove the enchanted knife and forced it from her. They returned, struck the hillock as she was wont to do, and when the fairy put out his hand, they cut it off with his own knife. He drew in the bleeding arm in despair; and supposing this cruelty was the result of treachery on the part of his beloved, never saw her more."

Professor John Wilson, in his "Lay of Fairy Land," accounts for the disappearance of the widow's daughter in this wise:

Some thought that Fhaum, the savage shape that on
the mountain dwells,
Had somewhere left her lying dead among the
heather bells.
And when at last she returned, though
The heather balm is fragrant—the heather bloom is fair,
But 'tis neither heather balm nor bloom that wreathes
round Mhairi's hair;

but the flowers that grew in the garden of Fairyland, where, evidently, Heather finds no place.

The Ettrick Shepherd, in his tale of the recapture of Anne of Raeburn from the fairies, says that when

The evening fell so sweetly still,
So mild on lonely moor and hill,
The little genii of the fell
Forsook the purple heather bell.

And the elves never returned; for, continues the poet:

E'er since, in Ettrick's glens so green,
Spirits, though there, are seldom seen;
And fears of elf and fairy raid,
Have like a morning dream decayed.
The barefoot maid of rosy hue,
Dares from the heath flower brush the dew,
To meet her lover in moonlight still,
By flowery den, or tinkling rill;
And well dares she till midnight stay
Among the coils of fragrant hay.

The favorite food of the fairies was said to be Scotch scones and Heather honey and a bowl of cream —a dainty morsel, forsooth!

Ossian tells us that "It was the opinion of the times that the souls of heroes went immediately after death to the hills of their country, and the scenes they frequented the most happy time of their life. It was thought, too, that dogs and horses saw the ghosts of the deceased."

"My ghost o'Connall is on my native hills, but my corse is on the sands of Ullin. Thou shalt never talk with Crugal, or find his lone steps in the heath."

This reference to tracing footsteps on the Heath may be explained by the following statement by Burt. He says: "By the way the Heath, or Heather, if pressed by the foot, retains the impresssion, or, at least, some of it, for a long while before the Heather rises again effectually. A single Highlander has been found by the track of his foot when he took to hills out of the common way for his greater safety in his flight."

An old superstition was prevalent in the North of Scotland that the fairies became incensed whenever Heather was taken from their hillocks, and in the dwellings where such Heather was stored the inmates had but little happiness.

From "Hardmore"

Traditional meeting place of Macbeth and Banquo with the Weird Sisters.

* * * * * Thin and black along
The shivering grass the heather holds its breath
For fear, and cannot burn and blossom when
Night after night such awful sights it sees.

—Cora Kennedy Aitken.

HEATHER JOCK

THERE scarcely exists a locality in Scotland without its "Heather Jock." The individual bearing this significant sobriquet whom I remember was a tough-looking tyke, who eked out a livelihood making Heather besoms and "reenges," acting as a whilom chiropodist, spearing eels in their season, and spending the few bawbees he earned on Scotch whiskey.

But Heather Jock finds a place in the literature and the songs of Scotland. R. B. Cunningham Grahame, in the "Saturday Review," thus pictures him as he was known to that writer in the person of William Brodie, bred a weaver at the Bridge of Weir, Renfrewshire, who turned peddler, and afterward transmigrated himself into a wandering singer and buffoon under the name of Heather Jock. "No one asked his reasons, but accepted him as he was, with headdress like an Inca of Peru, stuck all around with pheasants' and peacocks' feathers, bits of looking-glass, adorned with Heather, and fastened underneath his jaws with a black ribbon; with moleskin waistcoat, bee in his bonnet, humor in his brain; with short plaid trousers, duffel coat, and in his hand a rude Caduceus made of a hazel stick, in the centre a flat tin heart, set round with jingling bells, and terminating a tuft of Heather. In figure not unlike a stunted oak of the kind depicted in the arms of Glasgow, or such as those which grow in Cadzow Forest, and under which the

white wild cattle feed, as they have done since Malcolm Fleming slew one with his spear and saved the King.

"The minstrel's features of the western Scottish type, hard as flint, yet kindly; eyes like dullish marbles made of glass such as the children in Bridge of Weir called bools; his hair like wire; his mouth worn open, and his nose a trap for snuff; hands out of all proportion large, and feet like planks; his knees inclining to what the Scotch call 'shauchlin,' and imparting to his walk that skipping action which age sometimes bestows on those who in their youth have passed a sedentary life, the true faux bassu, although without the hump, having acquired the carriage of hunchback by diligence or sloth. In fact, he seemed a sort of cross between the low class Indian, such as one sees about a town in South Dakota, and an ourang outang, which had somehow got itself baptized. From Kilmalcolm to Mauchline, from Dalry to Ayr, at a Kilwinning papings; at races, meets, fairs, trysts; at country house or moorland farm, to each and all he wandered and was welcome. His repertory was composed of one song—Annie Laurie—sung with humorous effects at break-neck speed, jingling his bells and jumping about from side to side, just like a Texan cowboy in Sherman, Dallas, or some Pan Handle town, during the process of a barroom fight to dodge the bullets. At the end he signified his wish to lay him down to die for the object of his song, and did so, elevating, after the fashion of expiring folk, his feet into the air and wiggling to and fro his boots, adorned with what the Scotch call 'tackets.' He died at the age of eighty-two."

Of a different character was the Heather Jock depicted in the following old Scottish ballad, the authorship of which has been lost:

Heather Jock

Heather Jock was stark and grim,
Fought wi' a' would fecht wi' him;
Swank and supple, sharp and thin,
Fine for gaun against the win'.
Tawnie face and touzie hair,
In his cleadin' unco bare;
Curs'd and swore whene'er he spoke,
Nane could equal Heather Jock.

Jock kent ilka bore and bole,
Could creep through a wee bit hole;
Quietly pilfer eggs and cheese,
Dunts o' bacon, skeps o' bees;
Sip the kirn and steal the butter,
Nail the hens without a flutter;
Na! the watchfu' wily cock
Durstna craw for Heather Jock.

Eppie Blaikie lost her goun,
She coft sae dear at borough town;
Sandy Samson's Sunday wig
Left the house to rin the rig.
Jenny Baxter's blankets a',
Took a thought to gang awa';
And a' the weans' bit printed frocks—
Wha was thief but Heather Jock?

Jock was nae religious youth,
For at the priest he thraw'd his mouth;
He wadna say a grace nor pray,
But play'd his pipes on Sabbath day.
Robb'd the kirk o' bean and book,
Everything would lift he took;
He didna leave the weather-cock,
Sic a thief was Heather Jock.

Nane wi' Jock could draw a tricker,
'Mang the muirfowl he was sicker;
He watch'd the wild ducks at the springs,
And hang'd the hares in hempen strings;
Blaz'd the burns and spear'd the fish,
Jock had mony a dainty dish;
The best o' moorfowl and blackcock,
Aye grac'd the board of Heather Jock.

Nane wi' Jock had ony say,
At the neive or cudgel play;
Jock for bolt nor bar ne'er staid,
Till ance the jail his courage laid;
Then the judge, without delay,
Sent him aff to Botany Bay,
And bade him mind the laws he broke,
And never mair play Heather Jock.

Chorus.

Heather Jock's noo awa',
Heather Jock's noo awa',
The muircock noo may crousely craw,
Since Heather Jock's noo awa'.

THE COMRADE OF THE HEATHER

Let us go, lassie, go,
To the braes o' Balquither;
Where the blaeberries grow,
'Mang the bonnie blooming heather.
—*Tannahill.*

ANY attempt to tell the story of the Heather would fall short of its purpose without some modest reference to the constant companion that sympathetically shares its solitude on the bleak hillsides; nor is it urgent to enlighten the reader who has roamed the Scottish Highlands upon the nectarine beguilement of this alluring sweet-lipped comrade; for what mischievous enchantment dwells within the luscious heart of the blaeberry, let the merry gatherers tell those whom Fate has unkindly denied their own lordly rustic festivity!

Memory unfolds upon its unfading picture-screen a group of laughing lads and lasses, lustily swinging in sun-browned hands their pails or Scotch "flagons," stachering up the heathery braes in the early autumn forenoon, scanning with eager eyes each Heather bush for those protruding branches of green, leathery leaves under which lie hidden the coveted prizes of their search—the juicy blaeberries. Now the picture changes. The sun is disappearing behind the far-off Scottish hills, and along the dusty road is seen trudg-

ing a bevy of tired toddlers, lips and cheeks besmeared, fingers dyed and "slips" and aprons almost indelibly spotted with a color rivaling in brilliancy the Tyrian purple, but withal happy in the proud possession of "flagons" brimming over with toothsome wealth, and in the greedy anticipation of a treat fit for more appreciative banqueters than the gods—when by mother's cunning skill the berries are transformed into that unsurpassed of all delicacies, blaeberry jelly, or find brief repose in the seductive heart of a tart.

The blaeberry (blueberry) belongs to the genus Vaccinium, and is very often found in Scotland growing where the Heather occurs, especially on the mountain sides. Its fruits have at all times been valued for their utilitarian properties. Pliny says that the Gauls employed the blaeberry to produce a dye that rivaled the Tyrian purple. Doedens, Gerarde, and Parkinson state that the berries possess medicinal value, as "they be goode for a hot stomacke, they quench thirst, and allay the heat of burning agues." Parkinson adds, "With the juyce of the berries Painters doe color paper or cards, doe make a kind of purple blew colour, putting thereto some allome and Galles, whereby they can make it lighter or sadder as they please. And some poor folkes, as Tragus sheweth, doe take a potful of the juyce strained whereunto an ounce of Allome, four spoonfuls of good Wine vinegar, and a quarter of an ounce of the waste of the copper forgings, being put together, and boyled altogether, they put their cloth, wooll, thred, or yarne therein, letting it lye for a good while, which being taken out and hung up to dry and afterwards washed with cold water, will leave the

like Turkie blew colour, and if they would have it sadder they put thereto in the boyling an ounce of broken Galles."

In the Orkneys, it is said, a wine is made from the fruit, which there grows large. Lightfoot tells us the Scotch Highlanders eat the berries in milk and "make them into tarts and jellies, which last they mix with their whiskey to give it a relish to strangers."

It is not chiefly, however, on account of its economic value that we introduce the blaeberry here; but because of its close companionship with the Heather. Brave dwellers of the mountain side, nestling together, comrades in northland sunshine and storm, may you flourish for the sons and daughters of our beloved Scotland, twin symbols of perennial beauty—"a joy forever!"

GROUSE: THE HEATHER BIRD

To know the wind and weather will make the salmon spring;
To know the spot of heather that hides the strongest wing;
To tell the moon's compliance with hail, rain, wind and snow;
Ha! ha! this is the science of Roger Goodfellow.

—*Noctes Ambrosianae.*

THE close association of grouse with the Heather will afford, it is hoped, ample apology for the introduction of the present chapter.

The existence of grouse among the Heather, and the service rendered by the plant to the birds, attracted the attention of the early historians of Scotland. Bellenden, in his translation of Boece, writes: "In Scotland ar mony mure cokis and hennis quhilk etis nocht bot seid, or croppis of hadder."

This statement is reflected in the following:

Within the fabric rude
Or e'er the moon waxes to the full,
The assiduous dame the spotted spheroid sees
And feels beneath her heart, fluttering with joy.
Not long she sits, till with redoubled joy
Around her she beholds an active brood
Run to and fro, or through her covering wings
Their downy heads look out: and much she loves
To pluck the Heather crop, not for herself,
But for their little bills. Thus, by degrees,
She teaches them to find food which God
Has spread for them in desert wild.
And seeming barrenness.

Grouse were usually taken by hawking and netting until shooting flying was introduced, which is said by Fosbroke to have been in 1725.

Grouse, says St. John, generally make their nest in a high tuft of Heather. "The eggs are peculiarly beautiful and gamelike, of a rich brown color, spotted closely with black. Although in some peculiarly early seasons the young birds are full grown by the 12th of August, in general five birds out of six which are killed on that day are only half come to their strength and beauty. The 20th of the month would be a much better day on which to commence their legal persecution. In October there is not a more beautiful bird in our island; and in January, a cock grouse is one of the most superb fellows in the world, as he struts about fearlessly with his mate, his bright red comb erected above his eyes, and his rich dark brown plumage shining in the sun. Unluckily they are more easily killed at this time of the year than at any other; and I have been assured that a ready market is found for them, not only in January, but to the end of February, though in fine seasons they begin to nest very early in March. Hardy must the grouse be, and prolific beyond calculation, to supply the numbers that are killed legally and illegally."

Another writer gives the following description of the black grouse: "Although a forest-haunting bird, frequenting pine woods and the shrubby glens of mountain ranges, the black grouse does not confine itself to such locations, but visits the sides of the heath-clad hills, or the wide, open moorland, where the bilberry plant abounds, and also makes incursions

into cultivated tracts for the purpose of feeding upon the grain of oats, or rye, or often upon the blades of corn.

"During autumn and winter the males, having laid aside their mutual animosity, associate together in small flocks, apart from the females; but in the spring they separate, and each chooses and maintains his own exclusive territory. Here he calls the females around him, but these soon wander away in search of sites for incubation, where, unassisted, they rear their brood. The eggs vary from six to ten in number. The young males are clothed in the garb of the females till the autumnal months, when they acquire the glossy black plumage of their own sex, with whom they associate till the ensuing spring.

"During the winter, when the snow is deep, the black grouse feeds upon the tops and buds of the birch and alder, and also upon the young and tender shoots of the fir and pine, as well as of the tall heath.

"The red grouse, according to ornithologists, is confined exclusively to the British Isles. As a rule, it may be said that wherever in extensive hilly moorlands the Ling or Heather prevails, there, unless driven from its asylums, the red grouse will be found in more or less abundance.

"They pair in January and breed in March. The nest, if we may so call it, is composed of twigs of Heather, wiry moorland grass, often cotton grass intermixed with a few feathers or a little coarse sheep's wool. Sometimes the nest is placed under a deep covert of Heather; but we have seen it amid bilberry

bushes; in patches of cotton grass; and, occasionally, in depressions surrounded by low herbage, such as wild thyme, etc., midway on the mountain side."

The industry of the birds, if it can be so termed, is thus quaintly pictured by Wm. Black in "White Heather":

Ronald Strang, in conversation with Carry Hodson, remarks:

"There are six—seven—blackcocks; do ye see them?"

"Oh, yes. What handsome birds they are!" she said, with a curious sense of relief.

"Ay," said he, "the lads are very friendly amongst themselves just now; but soon there will be wars and rumors of wars when they begin to set up house each for himself. There will be many a pitched battle on those knolls there. Handsome? Ay, they're handsome enough; but handsome is as handsome does. The blackcock is not nearly as good a fellow as the grouse-cock, that stays with his family and protects them, and gives them the first warning if there's danger. These rascals there wander off by themselves and leave their wives and children to get on as they can. They're handsome, but they're ne'er-do-weels. There's one thing: the villain has a price put on his head; for a man would rather bring down one old cock thumping on the grass than fill his bag with gray hens."

Grouse shooting in Scotland and other parts of Great Britain has long been classed among the most enjoyable of sports. It commences on August 12, ending on the 10th of December, and so great is its hold on British lawgivers that it has been facetiously

Hunting Grouse Among the Heather.

Highland Cattle on a Heather Moor.

remarked that "the grouse season rules the Parliamentary recess," although Professor Blackie, with equal facetiousness, has told us: "A London brewer shoots the grouse. A lordling stalks the deer." And, as the poet sings:

Who treads on the heather will ne'er feel the gout,
Though to health he has been a wild sinner;
Nor die of a surfeit, though after a bout
With some chief at a true Highland dinner.

It has been recorded that the total sporting capital of Scotland is estimated at about £12,000,000 sterling. The sporting rental of the shire of Inverness alone is estimated at £50,000 a year, in calculating the rental of a moor, and this allows a guinea for every brace of grouse shot on it. Or, as another writer puts it: "'The Heather is cheap enough,' we are sometimes told; 'it ranges from about seven pence to eighteen pence an acre;' but the extras amount up to a tidy sum before the season closes. * * * No good shooting with a comfortable residence upon it can be obtained much under two hundred and fifty pounds for the season; but the expenses concomitant largely augment that sum."

The Rev. Hugh Macmillan thus pictures the associations of the sport: "The fresh, exhilarating air of the hills, laden with the all-pervading perfume of the heather bells; the magnificent prospect of hill and valley stretching around; the blue serenity of the autumnal sky; the carpet of flowering Heather glowing for miles on every side, and so elastic to the tread;

the vastness and profundity of the solitude; as well as the strange and unfamiliar sights and sounds of the scene—all these appeal to that poetical spiritual faculty which is latent even in the most prosaic statistician of St. Stephen's."

The diseases of the grouse and their causes have long given concern to the ardent sportsman; and the matter has been frequently discussed. About half a century ago several contributions on the subject appeared in "Chambers' Journal." One writer remarked: "It would seem from a series of articles that sheep are in excess, which is very naturally the case now in Scotland on many moors. The Heather must be burned to a great extent to make room for them and to produce fresh food, which is depriving grouse of shelter. In the next place, as sheep are perpetually in motion, they constantly disturb the ground, and in the breeding season unquestionably destroy the nests, and in the autumn they are dressed with an ointment composed of butter, tar and mercury. The question then arises as to whether the dressing so far affects the constitution of the sheep for a time that the soil and herbage are influenced thereby so as to be prejudicial to grouse."

Another writer, in the same journal, says: "Let Scotland return to its natural state, as I found it in 1832, and feed on its grouse portions the Highland black-faced sheep in place of its foreign usurper, the white-faced Cheviot. The black-faced requires less care, less burning of the Heather, less gathering and driving, less grease and tar, stains the ground less, travels less in bodies, and with its quick eye and light,

careful tread, respects the nest and eggs of its native companion."

Colonel Whyte, an authority, remarks: "The place the grouse loves to feed on is knolly ground, with the young, short Heather sprouting up; and this is precisely the spot which the sheep selects for his nightly resting place. Can we wonder, then, at the livers of grouse being diseased, feeding, as the birds do, on Heather besmeared with mercury?"

"The diseases of the grouse," says an authority, "a contagious epidemic like cholera, scarlet fever or measles; bad Heather; the consequences of overstocking unwholesome food; atmospheric influences; tape worms dropped from sheep in embryo form and taken up by the grouse in their food; and liver complaint. Disease proceeded from lead poisoning, caused by the grouse eating shot. Shot, by oxidation, becomes the color of whortleberries; it is thought that the grouse picked them up in mistake for these berries.

"The most wholesome food for the grouse are the young and tender shoots of the Heather. Old, rank Heather, and decayed fibers, lack the conditions requisite for a healthy condition of grouse, and are not duly assimilated in the system of the bird; disease of the liver, from the results of which they speedily die. When there is not a sufficiency of young Heather for the grouse to feed upon they will take other food which does not agree with them. Scottish Heather, again, is of great importance for the nests of the grouse. Grouse never hatch in long Heather if they can avoid it; nor do they lie in it. Nests are rarely found in Heather of more than a foot in length.

When amid close, rank heath, the young birds eat the decayed fibers and die of indigestion. They are also liable to disease from the damp, unhealthy position when they leave the nests."

Those who have eaten this feathered product of the Scottish mountains and moors will readily indorse Voltaire's following characterization: "L'oiseau du Phase et le coq de brujère de vingt ragôuts l' appret delicieau charment le nez, le palais, et les yeuz."

The following description of "How to Eat Grouse" is by the famous French chef, M. Soyer: "There is a wonderful gout in your bird of the Heather which baffles me; it is so subtle that I fail to analyze it. It is, of course, there, because of the food that it eats, the tender, young shoots of your beautiful heath; but it is curious, sir, that in some years these birds are better than in others. Once in about six seasons your grouse is surpassingly charming to the palate; the bitter of the backbone is heavenly, and the meat on the fleshy part of short and of exquisite flavor; but for common I feel no difference. In all other years the best is mediocre, and not any attentions of my art will improve it. In such years I leave it alone; but in the years of its perfection I do eat one bird daily, roasted, and with nothing—no bread sauce, no crumbs, no chips—no, nothing, except a crust of bread to occasionally change my palate. Ah, sir, grouse, to be well enjoyed, should be eaten in secret; and take my experience as your guide: Don't let the bird you eat be raw and bloody, but well roasted; and drink with it, at intervals, a little sweet champagne. Never mind your knife and fork; suck the bones,

and dwell upon them. Take plenty of time. That is the true way to enjoy a game bird."

The love of the Professor, as portrayed in Noctes, for the royal sport is well known, a love not wholly shared in by the more poetic and sensitive Shepherd, who thus addressed some unfortunate victims of the Professor's skill with the rifle: "The bonny gray hens. I could kneel down on the floor and kiss ye, and gather ye up in my airms and press ye to my heart till the feel o' your feathers filled my veins wi' love and pity, and I grat to think that never mair would the hill fairies welcome the gleam o' your plumage risin' up in the morning licht amang the green plots on the sloping sward that, dipping down into the valley, retains here and there, as though loth to lose them, a few small stray sprinklings of the Heather bells."

The Gaelic term for the male bird is Coileach-fraoch, i. e., heather cock; and for the female Cearc-fraoch, i. e., heather hen.

The cry of the grouse sounds like the words, "go, go, go, go back, go-o back!" But Mr. McGillwray (British Birds, I., p. 181) says "that the Celts, naturally imagining the moor-cock to speak Gaelic, interpret it as signifying, "co, co, co, co, mo-chlaidh, mo-chlaidh!" i. e., "Who, who, who, who (goes there?), my sword, my sword!"

Mr. Campbell, in his "West Highland Tales" (I., p. 227), explains it thus: "This is what the hen says: 'Faic thus—a'm la ud's'n la ud eile.' And the cock, with his deeper voice, replies: 'Faic thus— a'n cnoc ud s'n cnoc ud eile.' 'See thou yonder day, and

yon other day,' 'See thou yonder hill, and yon other hill.'"

The grouse occasionally furnished inspiration for Burns, as in the following:

Now westlin' winds and slaughtering guns
Bring autumn's pleasant weather;
The moorcock springs, on whirring wings
Among the blooming heather.

Again, in that feeling composition where he calls on his feathered friends to mourn the demise of Captain Matthew Henderson, "a gentleman who held the patent for his honors immediately from Almighty God,"

Mourn, ye wee songsters o' the wood;
Ye grouse that crap the heather bud,
Ye curlews calling thro' the clud;
Ye whistling plover;
And mourn ye whirring paitrick brood;
He's gane forever.

CHIMINGS OF THE HEATHER BELLS

A Little Song

(From the German of Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach.)

A little song—how can it be
That it should mean so much to me?
What is it then revealing?

It holds a breath of melody,
A touch of gentle harmony,
A soul of tender feeling.

—*A. M. von Blomberg.*

My Fiddle an' Me

When amang the crisp heather upon the hill-side,
Mine e'e fu' o' rapture, my soul fu' o' pride;
The wee heather-lintie an' wild hinny-bee
A' join in the strain wi' my fiddle an' me.

When daunderin' at e'en down the dark dowie dells,
To cheer the wee gowans, an' charm the wee bells—
The sweet purling rill wimples down to the sea,
Dancing light to the notes o' my fiddle an' me.

—*James Ballantine.*

POETRY, with its refined sentiment and musical utterance, has ever been universally esteemed as voicing the true interpretation of the language of flowers; and it is to the poets of Scotland

that we must turn for an expression of the pure, tender, devoted thoughts and feelings that cluster around and find their utterance through the medium of those "quaint, cloud-heavy flowers."

Like sweet incense diffusing its fragrance around the most hallowed associations of our homeland, the sentiment of the Heather pervades many of the most beautiful and tender Scottish songs, lays and poems. And strange or not as it may seem, the plant has its most ardent admirers and sweetest singers among those whose names are not generally found engraved on the world's scroll of fame. True it is that innumerable allusions are made to it throughout the poetry of Ossian, Leyden, Burns, Scott, Hogg, Tannahill, and others of the Scottish poets whose works shall remain imperishable; but among the major poets named, with the exception, perhaps, of Leyden, no extended or specific dedicatory effort to the Heather, descriptive of its beauty or utility, has been attempted.

The Rev. Hugh Macmillan has told us that in the county in which the greater part of Burns' life was spent—in Ayr—the Heather plant does not occur; and that may be the reason why we have not been charmed and inspired with the poet's tender, pathetic brooding upon the Heather, similar to that called forth within him by the "wee modest crimson-tipped flower."

It is on record that the Heather was the favorite flower of Sir Walter Scott, as dear to him as his own "land of brown heath and shaggy wood;" and his references to the plant occur often in those immortal pen portraits of Scotland's mountain scenery.

Scene in the Aberdeenshire Highlands.

The Gordon Highlanders, on Their Return from Dargai, Route Marching in the Aberdeenshire Highlands, Near Ballater.

But among those into whose activities of life the plant so largely enters have arisen the men and women who have entwined the bonnie blooming Heather in evergreen garlands of song, redolent of pathos and love.

Among the earliest references to the Heather in poetry is that of Scotland's first ballad singer, Thomas the Rhymer, who speaks of "Flodden's high and heathery side."

The ballad of "King Henrie" runs "Oh pu'd has he the green Heather, and made to her a bed."

The Heather has also entered largely into the martial songs of Scotland, and nothing could be more appropriate than the binding together of her military glory with the memory of her children, by figurative bands of purple Heather.

The Cameron Men

I hear the pibroch sounding, sounding,
Deep o'er the mountain and glen,
While light, springing footsteps are trampling the heath;
'Tis the march of the Cameron men.

Oh, proudly they walk, but each Cameron knows
He may tread on the heather no more;
But boldly he follows his chief to the field
Where his laurels were gathered before.

—Mary Maxwell Campbell.

Is Your War-Pipe Asleep?

Wilt thou shrink from the doom thou canst shun not,
McCrimman?
Wilt thou shrink from the doom thou canst shun not?
If thy course must be brief, let the proud Saxon know
That the soul of McCrimman ne'er quailed when a foe
Bared his blade in the land he had won not.
Where the light-footed roe leaves the wild breeze behind,
And the red heather bloom gives its sweets to the wind,
There our broad pennon flies, and the keen steeds are prancing,
'Mid the startling war cries and the war weapons glancing.
There raise your wild slogan cry—on to the foray!
Sons of the heather hill, pinewood and glen;
Shout for M'Pherson, M'Leod and the Moray,
Till the Lomonds re-echo the challenge again.

—George Allan.

The Jacobite singers, in their appeals to the clans to come to the succor of Prince Charlie, loved to mingle the Heather in their slogan:

The Yellow Locks o' Charlie

While banners wave aboon the brave,
Our foemen vainly gather,
And swear to claim, by deeds o' fame,
Our hills and glens o' heather.

The sky and stream reflect the gleam
Of broadswords gleaming rarely,
To guard till death the hills of heath
Against the foes o' Charlie.

Wha'll Be King but Charlie?

Come thro' the heather, around him gather,
Ye're a' the welcomer early;
Around him cling wi' a' your kin,
For wha'll be king but Charlie?

Come thro' the heather, around him gather,
Come Ronald, come Donald, come a' thegether,
And crown your rightfu', lawfu' king!
For wha'll be king but Charlie?
—Caroline Oliphant, Baroness Nairne.

And so forgetful of self, and so trustful toward their unfortunate exiled Prince were their loyal Highland hearts, that they were willing, when he did come, thankfully to share with him this common lot:

When Charlie to the Highlands Came

Our home is now the barren rock,
As if by Heaven forsaken;
Our shelter and our canopy
The Heather and the bracken.
—Robert Allan.

When the Scotsman bids adieu to his native land, the thought of parting wrings from him passionate tributes of affection and reverence for this lowly dweller on her mountain side. So pronounced is this sentiment, and so evident to the outside world, that in his early days it moved the sympathetic heart of the great Ruskin to dedicate one of his rare flights of poesy to this plaintive theme of "The Scotsman's Farewell."

Shagram's Farewell to Shetland

Farewell, my dear country, so savage and hoar;
I shall range on thy heath-covered Sumbrugh no more;
For lo! I am snatched to a far distant shore, . .
To wish for my country in vain.

They say it is savage, and covered with snow,
But still purple Heather and grass are below;
And I care not, though o'er it the cold breezes blow,
For still it is fertile to me.

—John Ruskin.

The Scotsman's Farewell

Let me gaze on those mountains, with heath overgrown,
Mid those wild flowers I sported, e'er sorrow I knew;
Let me leave them one tear, ere my bark shall be thrown
O'er the wave that may hide them forever from view!

—John Burns.

Torn away frae Scotia's mountains,
Far frae a' that's dear to dwall,
Mak's my e'en twa gushin fountains
Dings a dirk in my poor saul.
Braes o' bracken, hills o' Heather,
Howms whare rows the gowden wave,
Blissful scenes farewell forever!
I maun seek an unco grave.
—Thomas Mounsey Cunningham.

Farewell to the Land

Farewell to the land of the rock and the wildwood,
The hill and the forest, and proud swelling wave;
To the land where bliss smil'd on the days of my childhood,
Farewell to thee, Scotia, thou land of the brave.
Far dearer to me are thy heath-cover'd mountains
Than Gallia's rich valleys and gray fertile plains;
And dearer by far than the murmuring fountains
The roar of the torrent where liberty reigns.

Wherever I wander, sweet isle of the ocean,
My thoughts still shall turn to thy wild rocky shore;
Ah! still shall my heart beat with fondest emotion
While musing on scenes I may visit no more.
Adieu, then, dear land of romance and wild story,
Thy welfare and honor forever shall be
The pray'r of an exile, whose boast and whose glory
Is the tie that still binds him, lov'd country, to thee.
—Author Unknown.

Love Amang the Heather

Fly we to some desert isle,
    There we'll pass our days together,
Shun the world's derisive smile,
    Wandering tenants of the heather.

—J. Ross.

The Rose Among the Heather

Grew a baby rosebud rare,
    Lonely—'mong the heather;
Morning was not half so fair,
One looked long who, lingering there,
    Fain had looked forever.
Dainty, wayward, crimson rose;
    Rosebud 'mong the heather;
"Sweet, I'll steal thee, ay or no!"
    Quoth he, from the heather.
"Then I'll prick thee," laughed she low,
Heedless, heartless—even so,
    "Thou'll think on me ever."
Rosebud, rosebud; red, red rose;
    Rosebud 'mong the heather.
Willful wooers are not slow,
    Rosebud's o'er the heather.
Thorns can wound till life-drops flow:
In two hearts a weary woe
    Woke to slumber never.
Rosebud, rosebud; red, red rose;
    Rosebud 'mong the heather.

—Translation of Goethe's "Heiden-Roslein," Chambers' Journal, 1879.

In our casket of Scottish song gems, bonniest among its treasures we find the wee Heatherbell glistening in fragments of glowing love-rhyme.

The charming ditties of the Scottish wooer, so characteristic throughout Scotch lyrics, would be shorn of much of their magic were they robbed of their resourceful imagery, and comparison, and invocation of the friendly Heather. He vows that the steadfastness of his love shall abide as long as the purple bells clothe in all their gorgeous beauty his "everlasting hills;" he discovers a resemblance of the color of the blossoms to his sweetheart's blushing cheeks; he culls the bonnie blooms and weaves them into garlands to deck her brow; he tempts her with its fragrance, sighing poetic pleadings that in its intoxicating aroma together they plight their troth; and he delights to whisper to her lover's promises that their home shall be where the Heather grows, and proudly decks his castle in the air with buoyant hopes of how amid this Heather beauty shall their little ones be reared.

I'll Lo'e Thee, Annie

I'll lo'e thee, Annie, while the dew
In siller bells hings on the tree;
Or while the burnie's waves o' blue
Rin wimplin' to the rowin' sea.
I'll lo'e thee while the gowan mild
Its crimson fringe spreads on the lea;
While blooms the Heather in the wild—
Oh! Annie, I'll be true to thee.

—Robert Hamilton.

The Hills of the Highlands

Will ye go to the Highlan's, my Mary,
And visit our haughs and our glens?
There's beauty 'mang hills o' the Highlan's,
That lass i' th' Lowlands ne'er kens.

'Tis true we've few cowslips or roses,
Nae lilies grow wild on the lea;
But the Heather its sweet scent discloses,
And the daisy's as sweet to the ee.

See yon far heathy hills, whare they're risin',
Whose summits are shaded wi' blue;
There the fleet mountain roes they are lyin',
Or feedin' their fawns, love, for you.

Right sweet are the scenes i' the gloamin',
Whan the shepherds return frae the hill,
Aroun' by the banks o' Loch Lomon',
While the bagpipes are soundin' sae shrill.

Right sweet are the low-setting sunbeams,
That point owre the quivering stream;
But sweeter the smiles o' my Mary,
And kinder the blinks o' her een.

—William Nicholson.

(Known as the Galloway poet. Born 1782, died 1849.)

The Chieftain to His Bride

O come to fair Argyle, my love!
And be of Highland hearts the pride;
O come, and Ossian's land of song
Shall own thy gentle sway, my bride.

Thy home shall be our heath-clad hills,
Wash'd by the clear Atlantic wave,
Where mighty Fingal liv'd of yore,
Where sleep in death the warriors brave.

—W. Henderson.

Amang the Heather

Amang the braes aboon Dunoon,
In vernal May's delightfu' weather,
I met at e'en a bonnie lass
Alane amang the blooming heather.

* * * *

I spoke her fair, and speert her name,
To tell me true she didna swither,
But modestly she hung her head,
And blush'd as red's the blooming heather.

* * * *

The balmy air, the glowing sky,
The thymey sod, the blooming heather,
And sic an angel by my side—
I trow 'twas Heaven a' thegither!

The night grew late before we wist,
It took us hours to part wi' ither:
And now she's mine, the bonnie lass,
That staw my heart amang the heather.

—Wm. Cross.

Ca' the Yowes

This song was written by Isobel or Tibbie Pagan, who lived in a hovel near Muirkirk, in Ayrshire. It was a favorite of the gentlemen of the neighborhood, who, while they enjoyed her smuggled whiskey, made merry over her shafts of humor and wit, and took pleasure in hearing her sing:

Ca' the yowes to the knowes,
Ca' them where the Heather grows,
Ca' them where the burnie rows,
My bonnie dearie.

As I gaed down the water side,
There I met my shepherd lad;
He row'd me gently in his plaid,
An' he ca'd me his dearie.

O'er the Mountain

O'er the mountain, o'er the lea,
With my kilt and Saxon plaid,
And my tartan bonnet wee,
Will I seek my Highland lad.

Though the Heather be my bed,
Brightly pearl'd with silvery dew,
There's a tear more bright I'll shed,
Oh! my Highland lad, for you.

Far awa' from love and home,
O'er the heath with blossom clad;
While the night bird sings I'll roam,
Oh! for thee, my Highland lad.

The Plaid Amang the Heather

The wind blew high owre muir and lea,
And dark and stormy gaed the weather;
The rain rained sair; nae shelter near
But my love's plaid amang the Heather.

Close to his breast he held me fast,
Sae cosy warm we lay thegether;
Nae Simmer heat was half sae sweet
As my love's plaid amang the Heather.

'Mid wind and rain he tauld his tale;
My lightsome heart grew like a feather!
It lap sae quick I cou'dna speak,
But silent sighed amang the Heather.

The storm blew past; we kissed in haste;
I hameward ran and tauld my mither;
She gloomed at first, but soon confest
The bowls row'd right amang the Heather.

Now Hymen's beam gilds bank and stream,
Whar Will and I fresh flowers will gather;
Nae storms I fear, I've got my dear,
Kind-hearted lad amang the Heather.

—Hector MacNeill.

The Brackens Wi' Me

I'll sing of yon glen o' red Heather,
An' a dear thing that ca's it her hame,
Wha's a' made o' love life together,
Frae the tie o' the shoon to the kembe.

—James Hogg.

The Heather Bell

Oh! deck thy hair wi' the heather bell,
The heather bell alone;
Leave roses to the Lowland maid,
The Lowland maid alone.
I've seen thee wi' the gay, gay rose,
And wi' the heather bell;
I love you much with both, fair maid,
But wear the heather bell.
For the heather bell, the heather bell,
Which breathes the mountain air,
Is far more fit than roses gay
To deck thy flowing hair.

Away, away, ye roses gay!
The heather bell for me;
Fair maiden, let me hear thee say
The heather bell for me.
Then twine a wreath o' the heather bell
The heather bell alone;
Nor rose, nor lily, twine ye there;
The heather bell alone;
For the heather bell, the heather bell,
Which breathes the mountain air,
Is far more fit than roses gay
To deck thy flowing hair.

—D. R. Spittal.

My Ain Dear Nell

When I pued the crawpea's blossom, and the bloomin' Heather bell,
To twine them 'round your bonnie brow, my ain dear Nell.

—Alex. Hume.

The Crook and the Plaid

He pu's the bells o' Heather red, and the lily flowers
sae meek,
Ca's the lily like my bosom and the heath bell like
my cheek;
His words are sweet and tender, as the dew frae
Heaven shed,
And weel I lo'e to list the lad that wears the crook
and plaid. —Henry Scott Riddell.

I'll Twine a Wreath

The Heather bell, from cliff and fell,
I'll seek where zephyr blows;
At early morn, from off the thorn,
I'll cull the new-blown rose;
And lily, pale, from verdant vale,
That bends beneath the storm,
Emblem of you, all bathed in dew,
And spotless as thy form.
—Wm. Rennie.

The Heathy Hills

O! were I on the heathy hills
That rise aboon the Stanley lea,
And wand'ring by the crystal rills
Where, Mary, first I courted thee.
There mem'ry would recall the hours
I aft would spend at evening's fa',
To twine for thee a wreath o' flowers
The flowers o' Caledonia.
—Mitchell.

On yon bonnie heather knowes
We pledged our mutual vows,
And dear is the spot unto me;
Though pleasure I ha'e nane,
While I wander alane
And my Jamie is far ower the sea.
—William Chalmers.

Lass of Logie

Her lips were like the heather bloom
In meekest dewy morning;
Her cheeks were like the ruddy leaf
The bonnie brier adorning.
—Alexander Laing.

My Highland Cot

My humble Highland cot is a picture fair to view,
With clear and winding lake whose dear charms seem e'er anew;
Oh Scotland braw, my lov'd home, my country and my pride,
Thy heather bloom I love to see at quiet eventide.
When Maggie's by my side all is grandeur though 'tis poor,
No life to me so sweet with my weans beside the door.
Oh among the bonnie bluebells we dearly love to see,
In all their beauty sweet, when the sun sets o'er the lea;
Our Highland home they grace where no sorrow ever dwells,
For there our only love bloom alike the bonnie bells.
The bonnie, bonnie, bonnie, bonnie, bright, and bonnie bells.
—Chas. Blamphin.

At Rest, Where Heather Blooms

Then when life's long day is closing, and memories of old come thronging back upon his wistful fancy, with them not seldom creeps into the tired heart of the aged Scotsman the timid desire to die in some spot where in his last moments his eyes may be gladdened with the sight of the Heather, in the fresh beauty that his childhood fancy wrapped around it; and to be buried where the bonnie purple bell may bloom above his grave.

Scotland Dear

When I shall die, O I wad lie
Where life an' me first met thegither,
That my cauld clay, through its decay,
Might bloom again in the mountain heather.
Scotland dear!

—Alex. Hume.

Scotland's Hills

Oh! these are not my country's hills,
Though they look bright and fair;
Though flowers deck their verdant sides,
The heather blooms not there.
Let me behold the mountains steep,
And wild deer roaming free,
The heathy glen, the ravine deep:
Oh! Scotland's hills for me!

The Hills o' Gallawa'

And when auld Scotland's heathy hills,
  Her rural nymphs and joyous swains,
Her flowery wilds and wimpling rills
  Awake nae mair my canty strains;
Whare friendship dwells and freedom reigns
  Whare heather blooms and muircocks craw,
Oh! dig my grave and hide my banes
  Amang the hills o' Gallawa.

—Thomas Cunningham.

Hame

If I could see the gowan spread
  Its wee flowers on the lea,
An' the heather blume on the mountain bare,
  And the ivy climb the tree:

Then might I think that this was hame,
  And gladly live and dee,
Nor feel this want at my heart's core,
  My native land, for thee.

—John Dougal.

Nor absence, time, nor balmy rest,
  Nor grief, nor tears, can ease me;
I feel the time approaching fast
  When a clay-cold bed will please me.
Then rest my head upon yon hill,
  Where blows the blooming heather,
There first at Flora's feet I fell!
  There oft we sat together. —Hogg.

HEATHER LAYS

"My mother sang a plaintive song,
Which winter nights beguiled;
And as its echoes died along,
She wept, and yet she smiled.
'My child,' she said—I hear her yet,
Her kind eyes bent on mine;
'Thou'rt young, and dost perchance forget
That native land of thine;—
That land of heath and mountain gray,
So far from you and me.'"

A Sprig of Heath

Flower of the waste! the heathfowl shuns,
For thee, the brake and tangled wood,
To thy protecting shade she runs:
Thy tender buds supply her food;
Her young forsake her downy plumes,
To rest upon thy opening blooms.

Flower of the desert, though thou art,
The deer that range the mountain free,
The graceful doe, the stately hart
Their food and shelter seek from thee;
The bee thy earliest blossom greets,
And draws from thee her choicest sweets.

Gem of the heath! whose modest bloom
Sheds beauty o'er the lonely moor;
Though thou dispense no rich perfume,
Nor yet with splendid tints allure,
Both valour's crest and beauty's bower
Oft hast thou deck'd a favorite flower.

Flower of the wild! whose purple glow
Adorns the dusky mountain's side,
Not the gay hues of Iris' bow,
Nor garden's artful varied pride,
With all its wealth of sweets could cheer,
Like thee, the hardy mountaineer.

Flower of my heart! thy fragrance mild,
Of peace and freedom seem to breathe;
To pluck thy blossoms in the wild,
And deck my bonnet with the wreath,
Where dwelt of old my rustic sires,
Is all my simple wish requires.

Flower of my dear-loved native land!
Alas! when distant, far more dear,
When I, from some cold foreign strand,
Look homeward through the blinding tear,
How must my aching heart deplore
That home and thee, I see no more!

—Mrs. Grant, of Laggan.

The Flowers of Scotland

What are the flowers of Scotland,
All others that excel—
The lovely flowers of Scotland,
All others that excel?
The thistle's purple bonnet,
And bonny heather-bell,
O, they're the flowers of Scotland,
All others that excel!

Though England eyes her roses
With pride she'll ne'er forego,
The rose has oft been trodden
By foot of haughty foe;
But the thistle in her bonnet blue
Still nods outow'r the fell,
And dares the proudest foeman
To tread the heather-bell.

For the wee bit leaf o' Ireland,
Alack and well a-day!
For ilka hand is free to pu'
An' steal the gem away.
But the thistle in her bonnet blue
Still bobs aboon them a';
At her the bravest darena blink,
Or gi'e his mou' a thraw.

Up wi' the flowers o' Scotland,
The emblems o' the free,
Their guardians for a thousand years,
Their guardians still we'll be.
A fie had better brave the deil
Within his reeky cell,
Than our thistle's purple bonnet,
Or bonny heather-bell.

—James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd.

A Sprig of White Heather

A sprig of white heather I pluck'd on the brae;
To whom shall I give it?
To whom shall I give it?
Not to the sportive, the light, and the gay,
Not to Jessie with flashing display,
In the flush of June, when the roses are out,
Flinging her frolicsome fancies about;
But beautiful Phoebe, to thee, to thee,
Thou deep-thoughted Phoebe, to thee!

A sprig of white heather I pluck'd on the brae;
To whom shall I give it?
To whom shall I give it?
Not to the haughty, the high, and the proud,
Not to Clotilda, who sails through the crowd
With a lofty look and a fine disdain,
As if all were born to hold her train;
But beautiful Phoebe, to thee, to thee,
Thou mild-eyed Phoebe, to thee!

A sprig of white heather I pluck'd on the brae;
To whom shall I give it?
To whom shall I give it?
Not to the clever, the keen, and the knowing,
With eye never resting, and tongue ever going,
Not to Rebecca, who all has read
That goes, and goes not into hear head;
But beautiful Phoebe, to thee, to thee,
Thou silently-loving, to thee!

A sprig of white heather I pluck'd on the brae;
To whom shall I give it?
To whom shall I give it?
I'll give it to one, or I'll give it to none,
I'll give it to Phœbe, my beautiful one;
The rare white bloom that peeps from the brae
So chaste and so pure 'mid the purple display;
It grew, dear Phoebe, for thee, for thee,
Thou rarest and fairest, for thee!

—John Stuart Blackie.

The Heather

Though with the rose's flaring crimson dye
The heath flower's modest blossom ne'er can vie,
Nor to the bland caresses of the gale
Of morn, like her, expand the purple veil,
The swain, who 'mid her fragrance finds repose,
Prefers her tresses to the gaudy rose,
And bids the wild bee, her companion come
To soothe his slumbers with her airy hum.

Sweet, modest flower, in lonely deserts dun
Retiring still for converse with the sun,
Whose sweets invite the soaring lark to stoop
And from thy cells the buried dew-drop scoop
Though unobtrusive all thy beauties shine
Yet boast thou rival of the purple vine!
For once thy mantling juice was seen to laugh
In pearly cups, which monarchs loved to quaff;
And frequent waked the wild inspired lay
On Teviot's hills beneath the Pictish sway.

—Leyden.

Scotland

The glowing furze, the "bonny broom,"
The thistle, and the heather;
The blue-bell and the gowan fair,
Which childhood likes to gather.

—Robert Chambers.

The Faded Heather

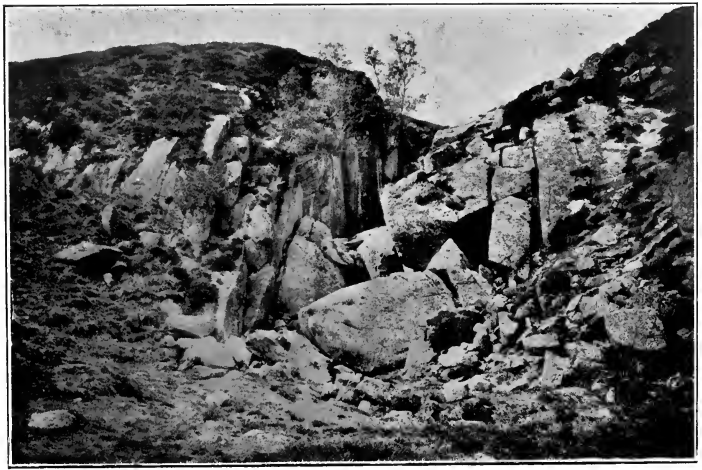
It is recorded of the Highland emigrants to Canada that they wept because the Heather would not grow in their newly adopted soil.

There may be some too brave to weep
O'er poverty or care or wrong
Within whose manly bosoms sleep
Emotions gentle, warm and strong;
Which wait the wakening of a tone,
Unmarked, unthought of by the crowd,
And seeming unto them alone
A voice both eloquent and loud;
And then the feelings, hid for years,
Burst forth at length in burning tears.

He wept, that hardy mountaineer,
When faded thus his loved heath flower.
Yet 'mid the ills of life, no tear
Had wet his cheek until that hour;
You might have deemed the mountain tree
Had sooner shrunk before the blast,
Or that his native rock should be
Bent by the winds which hurried past,
Rather than he a tear should shed
Because a wild flower drooped its head.

It would not grow—the heather flower
Far from its native land exiled,
Though breezes from the forest bower
Greeted the lonely mountain child.

Loch Muich, Among the Grampian Mountains.



Burn of Vat, Deeside.

It better loved the bleak wild wind
Which blew upon the Highland hill,
And for the rocky heath it pined
Though tended both with care and skill;
An exile on a stranger strand,
It languished for its native land.

O, if the heather had but grown,
And bloomed upon a foreign scene,
Its owner had not felt alone,
Though a sad exile he had been.
But when he marked its early death,
He thought that, like his mountain flower,
Withered beneath a foreign breath,
He soon might meet his final hour,
And die a stranger and alone,
Unwept, unpitied and unknown.

—Anne Pratt, in "Flowers and Their Associations."

Heath

Oft have I marked thee, Heather, blooming free,
When care and culture came not, on the wild,
And deemed thou wert too beautiful to be
Left in the desert like a thing exiled;
Then have I brought thee where the garden smiled
With many a blossom not more lovely graced;
But thou wert Freedom's own—her darling child,
And when in trim enclosure fondly placed
Wouldst languish soon, and die, mourning thy native waste.

So might of old some warrior captive pine
Amid the seven-hilled city's splendour—erst
His home was by the Danube or the Rhine,
Where Freedom's self his glowing spirit nursed.
Now the thick air, which, breathed by slaves is cursed,
Stifles his free-born soul—as men beneath
Close dungeon vaults for heaven's pure breezes thirst,
He suffocating pants for freer breath
And welcome's Misery's friend, the slave's soul refuge, Death.

Frazer's Magazine.

Flowers of the Moorland

Wild flowers of the moorland, ye are very dear to me;
Ye lure my dreaming memory as clover does the bee;
Ye bring back all my childhood loved, when freedom, joy and health
Had never thought of wearing chains to fetter fame and wealth.

Wild blossoms of the common land, brave tenants of the earth,
Your breathings were among the first that helped my spirit's birth;
For how my busy brain would dream and how my heart would burn,
Where gorse and heather flung their arms above the forest fern.

—Eliza Cook.

The Heather at My Door

If I were king of France, that noble fine land,
And the gold was elbow deep within my chests,
And my castles lay in scores along the wine-land
With towers as high as where the eagle nests;
If harpers sweet, and swordsmen stout and vaunting
My history sang, my stainless tartan wore,
Was not my fortune poor, with one thing wanting—
The heather at my door.

My galleys every ocean might be sailing,
Robbing the isles and sacking hold and keep,
My chevaliers with loyalty unfailing
Might bring me back of cattle, horse and sheep,
Soft arms be round my neck, the young heart's tether,
And true love-kisses all the night might fill,
But oh! Machree, if I had not the heather
Before me on the hill.

A hunter's fare is all I would be craving,
A shepherd's plaiding and a beggar's pay,
If I might earn them where the heather, waving,
Gave fragrance all the day.
The stars might see me, homeless one and weary,
Without a roof to fend me from the dew,
And still, content, I'd find a bedding cheery,
Where'er the heather grew.

—Neil Munro, in "Blackwood's Magazine," 1896.

To a Wild Heath Flower

Sweet floweret! from Nature's indulgence thou'rt cast,
Thy home's on the cold heath, thy nurse is the blast,
No shrub spreads its branches to shelter thy form,
Thou'rt shook by the winds, and thou'rt bent by the storm;
But the bird of the moor on thy substance is fed,
And thou giv'st to the hare of the mountain a bed;
In youth, from the cold winds thou'lt grant them a space,
And in age, when the fowler's at war with their race;
The winds may assail thee, the tempest may rage,
They nature is proof to the war which they wage;
Thou'lt smile in the conflict, and blossoms unfold,
Where the nurslings of favor would shrink from the cold;
Though rugged and sterile the seat of thy birth,
Simplicity formed thee of beauty and worth.
Remain, then, sweet blossom, the pride of the moor,
In loneliness flourish, unpamper'd and pure—
Expand in the tempest, and bloom on the brow,
An emblem of sweet independence art thou;
And the soul who beholds thee unhurt in the strife,
Shall learn to contend with the troubles of life;
And when the cold wind of adversity's felt,
And the shafts of affliction are ruthlessly dealt,
His spirit, unbroken, shall rise to the last,
And his virtues shall open and bloom in the blast,
And his joys shall be sweet when the storm is at rest,
And the sunbeam of glory shall play on his breast.

—John Jones.

On the Hills

I love the hills, the lonely hills,
Where never a sound is heard,
Save the soft, sad songs of the purling rills,
Or the cry of a wandering bird;
O! there; O! there;
In the silence rare,
My soul with sweet music is stirred.

I love the hills, the heathery hills,
Where the wild flowers sweetly blow,
And smile at the sun while their fragrance fills
The breath of the breezes low;
O! there; O! there;
I banish life's care,
And happiness only I know.

I love the hills! the sombre hills,
In silvery moonbeams drest,
Where the curlew calls in sorrowful trills,
From its lonely distant nest;
O! there; O! there;
In the night-hushed air,
I speak with the Spirit of Rest.

—Wm. Allan.

Heath

How oft, though grass and moss are seen
Tanned bright for want of showers,
Still keeps the ling its darksome green,
Thick set with little flowers.

—Moorland Blossoms.

Scotch Heather

Bright purple bloom of Scotland's hills,
Garb of her mountains, glens and rills,
At sight of thee my bosom fills
With memories proud,
Of tartans, thistles, snuff, meal-mills,
And mist-wet cloud.

Thy stem is like some fir-tree green
With twinkling bells hung thick between;
Pressed to the earth, thou low dost lean,
But scorns to break,
Up-springing quick as ne'er had been
Foot on thy neck.

Thou'rt like the man when Fortune's tread
Falls fell and crushing on his head
Who bows, but when the blow has sped
With dauntless will
He struggles up from sorrow's bed,
A soldier still.

On storm-crest crags of dusky white
Where brackens wave their fans of light,
And rowans drop their berries bright
The clefts between;
Thy breast of purple on the height
So richly seen.

Home of the moor-cock, snipe, and deer,
The gaudy pheasant crowing clear,
The partridge brown, that schemes her fear
With draggled wings;
And dappled grouse, when man draws near,
That whirring springs.

Oft have I climbed the steep hill's side
'Mong hairsts of heather, deep and wide,
When sweet dust flew at every stride
Like spendthrift's money,
And yellow bees could scarce abide
The smell of honey.

On thee has patriot Wallace trod,
Who bled to break the tyrant's rod;
And oft the Covenanter's banner broad
Has swept thy bloom,
Proclaiming at the pike's sharp shod
Oppression's doom.

But why should thy small purple flower
Be dyed with blood in peaceful hour,
On moors, where men who creep and cower,
With guns resort,
To pour on birds a leaden shower
And call it sport?

When dogs and guns are laid to sleep,
'Neath the cleft moon thy sweet bells weep
To hear the plaintive dying peep
From birds half killed,
As, from soft breasts, sore wounded deep,
Their life's distilled.

No more the dusky legs will spring,
No more will spread the speckled wing;
A bloody head does earthward hing,
No more to live—
'Tis sport to some who take the thing
They cannot give.

Badge of true manhood and the brave,
Long may thy purple glory wave
O'er moor and hill, when red guns rave,
And death's abroad;
To shield the weak thou canst not save,
Bright flower of God.

—From "Law Lyrics," by Robert Bird, 1887.

Solitude

Oh! beautiful those wastes of heath,
Stretching for miles to lure the bee,
Where the wild bird, on pinions strong,
Wheels round and pours his piping song,
And timid creatures wander free.

—Mary Howitt.

Linn of Dee, Braemar.

Glen Etive.

The Heather

O sweet is the breath of the heather
On braes of the Highlands that blows;
O rich is its bloom when at evening
The hills glow in purple and rose.

I sit on the slopes of Loch Etive,
The heather is up to my knee;
I look to the west where the islands
Arise from the far gloaming sea.

The peak of the mighty Ben Cruachan
Above me soars up in the mist;
Below, by the waters of Etive,
The feet of the proud one are kist.

I see the grey strength of Dunstaffnage
Keeping wars on the way of the seas,
And faintly the roaring of Connal
Is heard in the lull of the breeze.

Here, lapped in the stillness of Nature,
Afar from the dwellings of men,
My spirit is rapt by the magic
That breathes over mountain and glen.

Around are the footprints of Fingal,
And Ossian, the last of his race;
Here Dermid and Oscar and Fillan
Have wakened the storm of the chase.

O voices of heroes long vanished,
Ye live, overcoming the tomb;
While lingers the music of Ossian
Round hills where the heather doth bloom.

Where glances the light on the waters
That dash bewixt Mull and Lismore,
The long-ships of Hako went flashing
The raven to battle that bore.

O valiant offspring of Odin!
The drop of your blood that's in me
Still fires at the thought of the prowess
That made you the Kings of the Sea.

Beneath yonder slope good King Robert,
When the brooch from his shoulder was torn,
Cut his way through the pass, while he reddened
With the blood of the clansmen of Lorn.

O conquering sword of King Robert!
How good to have followed with thee
To strike a strong blow for old Scotland,
The day that she rose to be free.

The wind from the heights of Glen Etive
Comes laden with voices of woe—
'Tis the dirge that forever and ever
Is borne from the depths of Glencoe.

O ghosts of the brave Clan MacIan!
Still yours is that terrible glen,
Once blithe with the voices of children,
The gladness of women and men.

I think of the days of Prince Charlie,
When the North spent its valor in vain,
And the blood of the brave and the loyal
Was poured at Culloden like rain.

Now passed like the mist on the mountains
Are the days when such deeds could be done;
The clansmen are scattered forever,
The race of the chieftains is run.

And gone are green-coated fairies
That brightened the hillside of old,
The witches that rode on the tempest
The Gruagach* that haunted the fold.

And passed are the sights dread and solemn
Vouchsafed to the eye of the seer,
The lights, and the sounds, and the phantoms,
That filled every clachan with fear.

The life of the days that have fleeted
Comes back not with vision or spell;
So rest ye, dim shadows of cloudland—
Ye fairies, for ever farewell!

O thoughts of the past! ye bring sadness,
And vain is the wish that once more
The great grassy glens that are silent
Were homes of the braves as of yore.

Sleep, brave ones and bards that have perished,
And green be your places of rest
And light be the winds that go sighing
O'er the children whom Nature loved best.

The soft dewy steps of the gloaming
Are climbing the sides of the Ben,
The last flush of light crowns with glory
The Herdman† that watches the glen.

Here, wrapped in my plaid in the heather,
I envy no monarch his bed.
Come, dreams of the hills and the Highlands,
And visit in slumber my head.

—Sheriff Nicholson, in "Good Words."

*A long-haired friendly sprite, of the Brownie species, but female.

†Buchaill Etive, the principal mountain at the head of the glen.

Clover and Heather

There are greetings the wide world over,
And blossoms wherever we roam,
But none like the heather and clover
To welcome the wanderer home.

Warm-hearted with kindred devotion,
Twin sisters in sympathy true,
They whisper across the wide ocean,
Love-laden with memory's dew.

In purple tints woven together
The Hudson shakes hand with the Tweed,
Commingling with Abbotsford's heather
The clover of Sunnyside's mead.

A token of friendship immortal
With Washington Irving returns—
Scott's ivy entwined o'er his portal
By the "Blue-eyed Lassie" of Burns.

Their names by heather-bells wedded
With fondness Columbia retains;
In freedom's foundation imbedded
The lay of the minstrel remains.

Ay, this their commission and glory,
In redolent bloom to prolong
Love, liberty, legend, and story,
That blossom in ballad and song.

So here's to the clover and heather
Of riverside, mountain and glen,
As I stand wi' doffed bonnet and feather
At the yett of my forbears again.

—Wallace Bruce, in "Clover and Heather."—Copyright by the author.

The Heather

O heart of mine, the heather's out, the miles of purple heather,
And all the world's a-scent with it and dripping with the dew
There's just a little fragrant breeze as light as thrush's feather,
Come out, my love, where harebells dance, the sunbeams wait for you.

O, heart of mine, the heather's dead, the miles of purple heather,
The blue mist wreathes the mountain's side, the storm wind whistles free.
Ah! was it only yesterday we roamed the hills together?
My heart is dead as heather bells a-shiver on the lea.

—Pall Mall Gazette.

SONGS OF THE HEATHER

A song of the true old Scottish cut—a genuine bud of the Heather.—*Noctes.*

Songs of my native land,
To me how dear!
Songs of my infancy,
Sweet to mine ear!
Entwined with my youthful days,
Wi' the bonnie banks and braes,
Where the winding burnie strays,
Murmuring near.

—***Baroness Nairne.***

The Hills of the Heather

Give the swains of Italia
'Mong myrtles to rove,
Give the proud, sullen Spaniard
His bright orange grove;
Give gold-sanded streams
To the sons of Chili,
But, oh! give the hills of the heather to me.

The hills where the hunter
Oft soundeth his horn,
Where sweetest the skylark
Awakens the morn;
The grey cliff, the blue lake,
The stream's dashing glee,
Endear the red hills
Of the heather to me.

There Health, rosy virgin,
Forever doth dwell;
There Love fondly whispers
To beauty his tale;
There Freedom's own darling!
The Gael, lives free,
Then, oh! give the hills
Of the heather to me.

—Evan M'Coll.

Hielan' Heather

Hey for the Hielan' heather!
Hey for the Hielan' heather!
Dear to me, an' aye shall be,
The bonnie braes o' Hielan' heather!

The moss-muir black an' mountain blue,
Whare mists at morn an' gloamin' gather;
The craigs an' cairns o' hoary hue,
Whare blooms the bonnie Hielan' heather!
Hey for the Hielan' heather!

Whare mony a wild bird wags its wing,
Baith sweet o' sang an' fair o' feather;
While cavern's cliffs wi' echo ring
Amang the hills o' Hielan' heather!
Hey for the Hielan' heather!

Whare, light o' heart an' light o' heel,
Young lads an' lasses trip thegether
The native Norlan' rant and reel
Amang the halesome Hielan' heather!
Hey for the Hielan' heather!

The broom an' whin, by loch an' lin,
Are tipp'd wi' gowd in simmer weather;
How sweet an' fair; but meikle mair
The purple bells o' Hielan' heather!
Hey for the Hielan' heather!

Whare'er I rest, whare'er I range,
My fancy fondly travels thither;
Nae country charms, nae customs change
My feelings frae the Hielan' heather!
Hey for the Hielan' heather!
—John Imlah: 1799-1846.

The Hieland Heather

Some like the red rose, some the white
And some the shil-pit lily;
The dahlia an' forget-me-not
May please young maidens silly;
But Scotland's hills can boast a flow'r
Worth a' their flow'rs thegither;
Nae sickly hot-house plant, I trow,
But hardy Hieland heather.

Chorus.

The heather, queen o' mountain flow'rs,
Wha e'er saw sic anither?
Search round the warld, it dings them a',
There's nocht like Hieland heather.

I've wandered south, I've wandered north,
I've wandered late an' early;
An' mony an unco sight I've seen,
An' mony a foreign ferlie.
I've been in lands where a' the year
There's nocht but simmer weather;
But still my heart's fond wish was this:
Gi'e me the Hieland heather.

Chorus.

When Rome, great mistress of the warld,
Sent o'er her conq'ring champions,
Auld Scotland ga'e her lug a claw,
Then aff an' o'er the Grampians.
Syne yelloch's out in Norlan' wrath,
Come gather, lads, come gather;
Imperial Rome shall rue the day
She first smelt Hieland heather .

Chorus.

Since then, in mony a weel fought field,
An' mony a reivin' foray,
The heather wild has proudly wav'd
Frae Lennox to the Moray.
But now we're a' "John Tamson's bairns,"*
Let's a' shake hands thegither;
An' drink "Auld Scotland," "Auld Lang Syne,"
"The Thistle" and "The Heather."

Chorus.

—A. Hume.

*All friends together.

My Heather Hills

O gladsome is the sea, wi' its heaving tide,
And bonnie are the plains in their simmer pride;
But the sea wi' its tide, and the plains wi' their rills
Are nae half sae dear as my heather hills.

I can heedless look on the siller sea,
I may tentless muse on the flow'ry lea,
But my heart wi' a nameless rapture thrills
When I gaze on the cliffs o' my heather hills.
Chorus.

Then hurrah, hurrah, for the heather hills,
Where the bonnie thistle waves to the sweet blue bells,
And the wild mountain floods heave their crests to the clouds,
Syne foam down the steeps o' my heather hills.

O! aft in my roving youthfu' days,
I've nestled and row'd on their sunny braes;
And pouket the bloom and the sweet hare bells
Aff the bonnie broomy knowes o' my heather hills.
I ha'e herried the nest o' the wild muircock,
I ha'e clamber'd the steeps o' the raven's rock;
I ha'e courted my love in their rocky fells,
And won a sweet bride on my heather hills.
Chorus.

I cling to their braes like the bud to the thorn,
For many their heather knowlets sae free, was I born;
And the hame o' my youth is my lov'd hame still,
'Neath the kindly shade o' a heather hill.
And when nature fails, row'd in my plaid,
I'll lay me down on a heather bed;
And leesome I'll wait till kind Heaven wills
To waft me awa' frae my heather hills.
Chorus.

—John Ballantine.

The Land of the Bright Blooming Heather

Here's a health to the land of the mountain and glen,
To the land of the lake and the river,
Where the wild thistle grows in her rude, rocky den,
Proud Freedom's stern emblem forever.
The land of the claymore, the kilt, and the plaid,
The bagpipes, the bonnet, and feather;
Let's join heart and hand, all upstanding in pride,
Here's the land of the bright blooming heather.

Here's a health to the land of the hero and bard,
The birthplace of Ossian and Wallace;
The land of bright mem'ries, of brave hearts who dared
Gory death in each cause Freedom hallows.
The land of the eagle, the oak, and the pine,
Where the free storms of heaven do gather;
Let's join heart and hand, all upstanding in pride,
Here's the land of the bright blooming heather.

Here's a health to the land of the bannock and brose,
The land of the sheep-head and haggis;
Of warm hearts to friends, and cauld steel to foes,
When to battle they venture to drag us;
The land of braw lassies and leal-hearted men,
Where beauty and worth twine together;
Let's join heart and hand, all upstanding in pride,
Here's the land of the bright blooming heather.

Here's a health to the land where we first saw the light,
The home of our kindred and lovers,
Whose sod yet shall screen us in death's gloomy night,
As now many loved ones it covers;
May virtue and freedom stand firm by her side,
Each dark weed that stains her soon wither;
Then join heart and hand, all upstanding in pride,
Here's the land of the bright blooming heather.

—Hugh MacDonald; 1817-1860.

Sweet Heather Bell

The emblems of nations are sung of with rapture,
And many are the flowers which in beauty excel,
But I'll sing of a wild flower that decks our rough mountains,
And blooms round the cot where my Flora doth dwell.

Chorus.

Sweet heather bell, where fairies do dwell,
In legends of daring what deeds there befel.
The sweet heather bell is sae like hersel'.
My ain native blossom, my sweet heather bell.

When the sun frae the east sheds his rays on this blossom,
Its fragrance perfumes a' the moorland and dell,
But a glance from my Flora is life's dearest treasure.
And moves my fond heart with love's glowing spell.

—J. H. Devon.

O'er the Muir

The more popular words to the same tune and chorus of this ballad beginning "Comin' through the Craigs o' Kyle," are believed, on the authority of Burns, to have been the composition of Jean Glover, a girl of respectable parentage, born at Kilmarnock in 1758, who became attached to a company of strolling players. Lewis is said to have claimed priority for his verses, and the point is not likely ever to be decided. This much may be said in favor of Lewis' claim, that he had long been the writer of respectable lyrics; while Jean Glover, though well skilled as a musician, is not otherwise known to have composed verses. One of the songs is evidently an echo of the others.—Mackay.

Ae morn of May, when fields were gay,
Serene and charming was the weather,
I chanced to roam some miles frae home,
Far o'er yon muir, amang the heather.
O'er the muir amang the heather,
O'er the muir amang the heather,
How healthsome 'tis to range the muirs,
And brush the dew from vernal heather.

I walk'd along, and humm'd a song,
My heart was light as ony feather,
And soon did pass a lovely lass,
Was wading barefoot through the heather,

O'er the muir amang the heather,
O'er the muir amang the heather;
The bonniest lass that e'er I saw
I met ae morn amang the heather.

Her eyes divine, mair bright did shine,
Than the most clear unclouded ether;
A fairer form did ne'er adorn
A brighter scene than blooming heather.
O'er the muir amang the heather,
O'er the muir amang the heather;
There's ne'er a lass in Scotia's isle,
Can vie with her amang the heather.

I said, "Dear maid, be not afraid;
Pray sit you down, let's talk together;
For, oh! my fair, I vow and swear,
You've stole my heart amang the heather."
O'er the muir amang the heather,
O'er the muir amang the heather;
Ye swains, beware of yonder muir,
You'll lose your hearts amang the heather.

She answer'd me, right modestly,
"I go, kind sir, to seek my father,
Whose fleecy charge he tends at large,
On yon green hills beyond the heather."
O'er the muir amang the heather,
O'er the muir amang the heather;
Were I a king thou shouldst be mine,
Dear blooming maid, amang the heather.

Away she flew out of my view,
Her home or name I ne'er could gather,
But aye sin' syne I sigh and pine
For that sweet lass amang the heather.
O'er the muir amang the heather,
O'er the muir amang the heather;
While vital heat glows in my heart,
I'll love the lass amang the heather.

—Stuart Lewis; 1756-1818.

Amang the Braes o' Blooming Heather

Gae hame, gae hame, auld Lewie Grahame,
Nor long sae sair to be my lover;
Yon bonnie barque rocks 'mang the faem,
That norlan' breeze will waft her over.
Gang to your towers, your ha's, an' bowers,
'Mid scented groves that ne'er shall wither:
But ler me spend life's latest hours
Amang the braes o' blooming heather.

I winna cross the braid, braid sea,
For gowden crown or gilded palace;
Tho' slaves around should bend the knee—
Nae slave e'er trod the land o' Wallace.
I canna' leave auld Scotia's shore,
Where Love and Freedom dwell thegether.
Where Friendship keeks frae ilka door
Amang the braes o' blooming heather.

Your gaudy groves may well be green,
Your towers may kiss the lift fu' eerie;
But ken they o' the birken screen
Where ilka warbler sings sae cheerie?
Your flaunting flowers may tak' the ee,
But fairer far than ony ither
The dark blue bells grow wild an' free
Amang the braes o' blooming heather.

The thistle waves aboon the cairns,
To mark where lovely worth is sleepin';
The dew-draps, frae the mossy ferns,
Fa' down like tears o' Nature's weepin'.
'Mang Scotia's hills my hame shall be;
The tartan plaid that screen'd my mither
Shall hap me, till the day I dee,
Amang the braes o' blooming heather.

—George W. Donald.

When the Heather Scents the Air

Canadian woods are bonny,
And Canadian waters blue,
When the summer airts the maple,
And the clover drains the dew;
But a longing comes at mornin',
And at e'en the heart is sair,
For the hills o' bonny Scotland,
When the heather scents the air!
Oh! hills sae broon an' bonny,
When the heather scents the air!

St. Lawrence rolls in grandeur,
And Ottawa's dark tide,
'Twixt banks o' bloom an' verdure,
Sweeps onward sunny wide;
But a something here is wantin';
And a licht that's gane is there—
By the Clyde, the Tweed, the Annan,
When the heather scents the air.
Oh! hame's my heart in Scotland,
When the heather scents the air!
—John MacFarlane (John Arbory).

My Heather Land

My heather land, my heather land,
My dearest pray'r be thine;
Although upon thy hapless hearth
There breathes nae friend o' mine.
The lanely few that Heav'n has spared
Fend on a foreign strand;
And I maun wait to weep with thee,
My hameless heather land.

My heather land, my heather land,
Though fairer lands there be,
The gowany braes in early days
Were gowden ways to me.
Maun life's puir boon gang dark'ning down,
Nor die whaur it had dawn'd?
But claught a grave ayont the wave,
Alas! my fatherland.

My heather land, my heather land,
Though chilling winter pours
Her freezing breath round fireless hearth,
Whaur breadless mis'ry cowers,
Yet breaks the light that soon shall blight
The godless reiving hand;
When wither'd tyranny shall reel
Frae our rous'd heather land.

—"Lyric Gems."

Finis