

The Late Mr. John Currie

WE regret to note the death of Mr. John J. Currie, Kildalloig, Kintyre. Born at Ballachulish, Mr. Currie was well-known as a farmer and hotel proprietor. Ford Hotel, Loch Awe, and Cuilfail Hotel, Kilmelford, were his for many years. He was prominent in agricultural circles as a breeder of Highland cattle, and was president of the Highland Cattle Society. He served as a show judge at shows in England as well as in Scotland. For a number of years he served in the Argyll County Council.

Mr. Currie was a past president of the Campbeltown branch of An Comunn Gaidhealach.

We express our sympathy with his widow, his sister, Mrs. Jenny M. B. Maclean, and other relatives.

Anns A' Mhaileid

“Gabhaidh sinn an rathad mór”

Dear Sir,—I wonder if any of your Gaelic readers can throw some light for me on the above-mentioned poem.

- (1) Who wrote the verses and when?
- (2) With what episode in Highland history are they connected?
- (3) Who are the “Sinn” who were taking the road?
- (4) Why are the MacIntyres specially mentioned?
- (5) Who were “Bodaich mhaol an lagain?”
- (6) Are not the Stewarts “sluagh an rìgh”—not the MacNabs as given in Blackie’s Gaelic Reader III?

L. S. DAIR.

Celtic Design

Sir,—Like the writer of the “Eisteddfod Impressions” in the January number, I was surprised to learn that no use was made of Celtic decoration on the regalia or dress, particularly in the form of embroidery.

I have been reading recently about wonderful examples of quilting produced by cottage craftsmen and women in Wales and Durham, under the guidance of the Rural Industries Bureau, using traditional methods and styles of design, scrolls and diamond units, to form all-over patterns entirely covering the quilts. There was an accompanying photograph, from which anyone familiar with the Pictish School of Celtic Art would recognise the basic shapes of “Saltire” lattice-work, trefoils, and spirals. Although the effect was pleasing and the execution excellent, the design was extremely

simple—only a faint reflection of the glorious masterpieces produced with such profusion by the Celtic artists of the past.

It is gratifying to be able to claim these triumphs of skill and ingenuity as a native industry, peculiar to one of the Celtic nations; but how seldom one finds their characteristics adapted to present-day use (except on jewellery and tombstones). A Celtic tea-cosy would be much more beautiful, original, and truly Scottish than a pseudo-tartan one! Jestings apart, these mathematically exact and balanced patterns are fit to compete with any of the popular modern abstractions, as George Bain’s carpets have shown.

Their seeming intricacy has perhaps discouraged amateur craftsmen and needlewomen, but, in fact, “it’s easy when you know how.” I feel that if the general public could disassociate the idea of Celtic art from “mouldy old stones,” and see it translated into shapes and colours on contemporary articles, their heritage would be a revelation to them.

I am, etc.,

C. M. MACKENZIE.

Comunn Na h-Oigridh

The Southern Sub-Committee of An Comunn’s Comunn na h-Oigridh Committee held a ceilidh in the Highlanders’ Institute, Glasgow, with Mr. J. M. Bannerman as Fear-an-tighe. There was a very good attendance. A varied and much appreciated programme was sustained by Carol Galbraith, Margaret Mackinnon, Anne Bone, Angus Macleod, Norman Maclean, and Charles Maclean, and included piping and accordion selections. Miss Chrissie Turner was accompanist, and a vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. Colin Palmer.

National Mod, Largs 2nd to 5th October, 1956

The following publications for the National Mod are now available—Syllabus, 1/-; Junior solos, 2/-; Junior Choral Booklet, 1/4; Junior Recitation, 8d.; Senior Solos and Recitations, 3/-; Senior Choral Booklet, 3/6.

Orders under 5/- in value must be accompanied by the appropriate remittance. Postage extra, 1½d per copy.

N.B.—Mod Entries close on Saturday, 2nd June. Entries for the Nova Scotia Vocal Solo Competition must be submitted at the close of each Provincial Mod.

The above publications are available from, and entries should be sent to, The Secretary of An Comunn Gaidhealach, 65 West Regent Street, Glasgow, C.2.