

It appears that, with the strangely stern common sense which in Scotland exists side by side with the strongest imaginative power, the prisoners were acquitted principally on account of this evidence, whose "visionary" nature threw discredit on the whole proceedings. One difficulty lay in the possibility of communication between the murdered man and the dreamer, since the one spoke only English and the other nothing but Gaelic. Years afterwards, however, when both the accused men were dead, their law agent admitted confidentially that he had no doubt of their guilt.

Singularly enough, a story strikingly similar in many of its details found its way before a criminal tribunal in our own century.

In the remote and sequestered Highland region of Assynt, Sutherland, a rustic wedding and merry-making came off in the spring of 1830. At this festivity there figured an itinerant peddler named Murdoch Grant, who, from that occasion, utterly disappeared. A month afterwards, a farm servant, passing a lonely mountain lake, observed a dead body in the water, and on its being drawn ashore the features of the missing peddler were recognized. He had been robbed, and had met his death by violence. The sheriff of the district, a Mr. Lumsden, investigated the affair without any result, in his searches being aided by a well-educated young man of the neighborhood, one Hugh MacLeod, ostensibly a school-master, but then without employment.

One day the sheriff, chancing to call at the local post office, Macleod's name, probably owing to the part he was taking in these investigations, came into the conversation, and the postmaster casually remarked that he should not have thought Macleod so well off, he having recently changed a £10 note at his shop. Mr. Lumsden's suspicions were aroused by this, and on his asking Macleod a few questions on the matter he proved the young man to be untruthful. Therefore he put him under arrest, and caused his home to be searched. But none of the peddler's property being found there, and no other suspicious circumstance transpiring, he was about to be released, when a tailor named Kenneth Fraser came forward with the following extraordinary story:

In his sleep he declared that the Macleods' cottage was presented to his mind, and that a voice said to him in Gaelic, "The merchant's pack is lying in a cairn of stones, in a hole near their house." The directions given in this dream were carried out by the authorities; articles belonging to Grant were discovered, and the murdered man's stockings were presently found in Macleod's possession. He was accordingly charged with the crime. Kenneth Fraser formulated the evidence of his dream with great firmness and consistency. Macleod was condemned and executed, but not before making a full confession of his guilt.

Here, again, as in the case of Mrs. Greenwood, we may notice that the dream is only revealed after suspicion had been already aroused. Fraser was a boon companion of Macleod's, and it has been suggested that in their carousings he got some hint of his comrade's terrible secret. A somewhat similar explanation might serve to account for McPherson's dream of the murdered English soldier, and even the antique visions of Mrs. Greenwood. The form of a dream was a