

Mrs. A. H. Sutherland

BADDECK TELEPHONE

Devoted to the interests of the Farmer, the Merchant and the Tourist. - - - - Strictly Non-Partisan.

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NO. 4

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Apply to NEIL P. S. McLEAN, Sec'y to Trustees.

ROSS-SHIRE AND ITS PEOPLE.

By Rev. M. A. McKenzie, Middle River.

[Written for the Telephone.]

No. II.

Muir of Old Market.

Muir of Old is situated 3 miles from the town of Beuly, 6 from Dingwall and 14 from Inverness. It is a level surface averaging in area about 40 acres of land, and nestles down amidst the most charming scenery in Scotland. Surrounded by mountains, straths and sea its location has given it an advantage peculiar to itself as a site for a market place, because accessible from every point and place of any importance by land and water. 30 years ago Muir of Old Market, second only to Falkirk in importance, had to be reckoned with and no dealer could trifle with the prices it quoted. Since then, auction sales at Dingwall and Inverness have ruined its influence to a certain extent, although even now some farmers prefer the market to those auction sales.

Three weeks before the market day preparations are made in Skye and Sutherlandshire to have their marketable cattle transported to Old. To-day the train takes them into the very heart of the market, but in former days when the iron horse uttered no shriek among those mountain fastnesses, the distance had to be tramped on foot, however hazardous, and the herds the unscrupulous drivers led were often the terror of the wayside farmers. These animals after descending the mountains into the plains below, having empty stomachs and but little energy, were made common cause of whatever came within their reach—herbage or grain—while the drivers, intruders to such business looked on with indifference. Endless quarrels and sometimes fights emanated from these sources, especially if the wayside coo joined the herd and was driven with the others to market. These droves, gathering from all quarters enlivened the air with their lowing discords mingled with the hallooing of men and the incessant barking of dogs. The nearer we come to the place of rendezvous, the greater the din until it culminates on the Muir. There cattle, horses, swine, sheep, poultry, whiskey stalls, fountain tents, bank offices and candy stalls or tables, mix promiscuously together. The youth who visits such a buzzing scene for the first time can never forget it. His safety is momentarily jeopardized by the prancing horses, the infuriated bulls or by the wheels of rushing vehicles which sweep the roads to show the metal of their steeds.

The people who gather there are as heterogeneous and dissimilar as the cattle. There we find the eastern drover who makes a point of visiting every herd in the neighborhood early in the morning. He has a good idea from the number and quality of stock present how figures will be quoted during the day and if he thinks a bargain can be struck he presses his suit early. Consequently the entries to the market are nearly as busy as inside the gates. This also helps the seller as he escapes the dues collected at these gates.

Williamson the tinker is there with his shabby horses which he bought cheap and sells dear, his daughters with a burden of tinware enough to frighten Hercules thread their way through the crowd vociferating the value of their goods to single and collected men. It is pretty hard too to shake them off. They are ready to tell one's fortune, to keep the coo, to hae a gless, or sing a gipsy wedding sonnet and a for a "banbee".

Other notable characters present are Fraser, the pig dealer with a cartload of young porkers. "Drover na caileagan," the girls favorite, so called because he is so fond of amiable company and of course the market is imperfect without his stalwart figure. Fiddler Douglas is busy a little to the east, discouraging strathspeys, although in reality he acts a reel of some kind with fiddle and person. He is too—and often like himself the fiddle is flat. Further on we meet with the big-bellied Frigar, so called because of his tricks—and few there be who escape his trickery or his disadvantage. A little east yet and we encounter Forsyth in his water tent, presiding over the precious fluid so much needed on these days by man and beast. Half an hour in his tent and you never forget the occasion during your life. Meet him in his house, Forsyth is

kind and hospitable, but on the market day he thinks justice must be done and no matter how cheap water may be in the adjoining brook, when taken from his tent it must be paid for. Some one buys a bucket full for his horse and pays a shilling; immediately a crowd of thirsty boys are lapping the drops which trickle from the pipe. Forsyth sees it and avenges the injury sustained by pouring a bucket full over their heads, remarking at the time, "See, take that lads if you are dry." Whilst this is going on before the tent some robin avails himself of the dire opportunity to swallow a glass full standing on the counter. Forsyth, for the satisfaction of delivering one blow to the thief would leave his charge exposed to the rabble and pursue that lad for half an hour. Indeed poor Forsyth's market day was an incessant proclamation of war against the boys. But he has gone to his rest and here I meantime sever my connection with him and Muir of Old Market.

GENERAL ITEMS.

Of course young Pullman should get a commission. If any one is entitled to a good berth he is.—Chicago Chronicle.

Justin McCarthy is reported to be at Westgate, London, hard at work on his reminiscences, which it is said will be published by the Century Company in the fall. They may before finished run into a couple of volumes, and there is little doubt that they will prove unusually interesting. Mr. McCarthy has known many of the most eminent men of the many, and he can write of them and of great events from an inside point of view.

J. F. J. Archibald, the first American correspondent to be wounded in the war with Spain, will have an article in the August Scribner describing the fight near Cuba, where two companies of regulars were engaged. It is to be illustrated with his own sketches and with photographs by Dwight L. Elmendorf. Richard Harding Davis contributes to the same number an account of the "Landing of Shafter's Army" at Daiquiri.

The first monthly number of "The Critic" which will shortly make its appearance, will contain the eleventh in the new series of "Authors at Home." Mrs. Margaret Deland in her residence, in Mount Vernon Street, Boston, will be the subject of the sketch, which will be appropriately illustrated. There will be reproduction of a photograph of Mrs. Deland's library and a page from her book of poems, "The Old Garden," with Walter Crane's decorative drawing for it.

War Benefiting Canada.

OTTAWA, July 15.—Canada is benefiting by the Spanish-American war, so far as the mineral wealth of the country is concerned. Every year Canada exports from the eastern townships to the United States between 35,000 and 40,000 tons of copper pyrites. As the ore is sent over in its crude state, it contains a certain amount of sulphur, and this mineral when extracted is employed in the manufacture of gunpowder. Spain has lately supplied the United States with sulphur, but since hostilities began the Spaniards keep their sulphur to themselves. Thus Canada's mineral trade is rapidly increasing through the United States seeking Canadian sulphur for the manufacture of gunpowder.

Communion Service at Little Narrows.

A friend who attended the Little Narrows Communion Services held there on the 16th writes to state how much he enjoyed the occasion, which was profitable to soul and body. Mr. McLeod was ably assisted by the local brethren and his good name-sake from the States, who thrilled his audience with his eloquent words of conviction and admonition. The Narrows people are taking on new life. The young have tastefully attended to the fences, gates and pasture land and the congregation are contemplating erecting a new church. We hope indeed they will do so in order to be an additional ornament to a place already grand by nature. The present church, although sufficiently large, is by no means modern and it is well to gratify the taste for things sublime especially when connected with the Lord's service.

Middle River Items.

Miss Mary A. McLennan, formerly a resident of Middle River, was married several days ago at Belfast, Maine, to a sea captain who at the present time sails between Belfast, Maine, and Boston, Mass.

Mr. Joseph Matheson and two brothers are visiting friends and relations at Middle River. They all hail from Marble Mountain, C. B. Mr. Joseph Matheson is "reading law" at Port Hood.

Miss Hanna J. McDonald, of Baddeck, was here last week visiting friends and former pupils, having taught school here for some time. Just before leaving she, accompanied by several others, paid a visit to the Gairloch Mountain Falls. A description of the falls and surrounding scenery is expected.

Mr. J. W. McPhail, pastor of Middle River church during the summer of '97, was among his old friends here during communion week.

Operations have been suspended at the Gairloch Mountain "Klondyke" on account of the drawing nigh of the hay-making season. They have channelled into the bowels of the earth for quite a distance—but the temperature still remains unaffected. There is every indication of gold in paying quantities to be found.

Messrs. Campbell, of Middle River, owners of the carding mill on the West Side, have put quite expensive repairs on the above-named building, and are now ready to take orders in the carding line.

Wagamatecock Lodge No. 56, I. O. G. T., is prospering finely, notwithstanding its small membership and numerous encumbrances. Doubtless it does its part in crushing the nefarious and diabolical traffic.

The residence of Mr. John McLean is in the process of completion. It is situated about a mile north of Middle River church.

The mill (steam) owned by Mr. Murdoch McKee, of Middle River, is to be removed to Upper Settlement, Middle River, lumber having given out at former situation.

American tourists are not as numerous as in former years around here. Doubtless the war with Spain is to blame, it causing a depression in pleasure as well as business of all kinds.

Crops of all kinds are in a much better condition than in former years. It really appears as if the "good times" are coming. Some far-seeing socialists among us say it is the beginning of the "Millennium." We all must admit our socialistic friends are very "bright."

Kenneth McQuarrie, wife and family, of Boston, Mass., having paid a visit of two weeks to the old homestead, returned to Massachusetts on Monday the 15th instant. Mr. McQuarrie is engaged in the telegraphic business.

In all probability the teacher in the West Side Section, for the coming term will be Miss Agnes McLennan of Nyanza; She holds a C certificate and is a graduate of the Normal school, Truro, Nova Scotia.

John A. Campbell, Esq., of West Middle River, has the honor of having the most peculiarly shaped vehicle in Victoria County. When viewed from a distance it has the appearance of a gun-carriage, but on a closer examination it develops into an object somewhat resembling the pictures of those war-chariots with scythe-armed axles used by the ancient Britons—but minus the scythe, and eventually into an imitation of a road cart. Doubtless it makes up in comfort what it lacks in style.

Mr. Alex McRae of West Middle River, has completed a new tram-cart. It really is a model specimen of artistic workmanship.

FELIX.

West Middle River, July 20th, 1898.

An old colored citizen who was trying to dissuade his son from enlisting in the army said:—"Now, lemme tell you somepin. Ef you makes up your min' ter go, on gits blowed up by one of dem Spanish torpedos, don't you come back here ter me—don't you show yo face heah no mo'! Mind that, now!"—Atlanta Constitution.

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