

few of them have travelled far. The common idea that they traverse the entire wilderness is a complete error. Their forefathers may have done so; but now few even of the Aborigines voyage any great distance from home. They have their families and residences, and when employed by the company, which is almost the only employer in the country, they ply between two stations, rarely going farther. They are mere links in a chain, and perfectly as they may understand their particular course, they know little beyond it.

"The company has its stations at regular intervals. These were once block-houses or fortifications against the hostile natives, and from one to the other of these the various goods and peltries are transmitted by canoes and canoe-men, who ply forward and back almost like ferry-boats. These stations were once about a day's journey apart, but of late years many of them have been discontinued where all danger from enemies has disappeared. They are still maintained at the mouth of the Michipicoten and the Neepigon on Lake Superior, but they are rarely visited except by employees of the company or by sportsmen. It is not to be questioned that an exploration of this country, which is as much a *terra incognita* as Central Africa, would lead to the discovery of valuable mineral resources, and perhaps to deposits of precious stones, the less valuable of which are even now found abundantly on the shore of the great lake, Big Sea Water, as it was poetically termed by the aborigines."

The operations reported at Silver Island (mentioned last week) and the rich iron deposits existing in the neighbourhood of Michipicoten bay fully attest the mineral wealth of the region, and to that, rather than its agricultural capabilities, it will doubtless owe its importance in the future of the country's progress.

There is considerable difference among writers as to the orthography of the name of the Lake, Neepigon, Nepigon, and Nipigon being variously used. It is, doubtless, a term of Indian derivation, and we have been assured on excellent authority that "Annapigoong" signifies in or at the elm grove; though why "elm" in preference to other kinds of trees described as being more plentiful in the region we cannot say. It is remarked of the Indians that they never sound the terminal letter in pronouncing the word, but the fact is of little consequence either in deciding its correct orthography or its derivation. We have followed the orthography as we found it on the map which, at the beginning of the series of views, we laid before our readers; but without being able to assign any better reason for it than that it seemingly sounds more euphonic than either of the other two modes; and that, for anything we know to the contrary, it is at least quite as correct.

#### THE LAMENT OF THE POLITICAL STUDENT.

[Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.]

I've the highest respect for the GLOBE.  
Its thunder is awful—but yet  
Its freaks would be trying to Job:  
I must say I prefer the GAZETTE.

But their statements are contrary quite—  
And you find ere you lay the two down,  
That as black can't be turned into white,  
So WHITE can't be converted to BROWN.

CHARLES LODGE.

#### THE POETRY AND HUMOUR OF THE SCOTTISH LANGUAGE.

(From Blackwood's Magazine.)

THE Scottish language? Yes, most decidedly a language! and no more a branch dialect or corruption of English than Dutch is of Danish, or *vice versa*; but a true language, differing not merely from English in pronunciation, but in the possession of many beautiful words, which are not and never were English, and in the use of inflections unknown to literary and spoken English since the days of Piers Ploughman and Chaucer. The English and Scotch languages are both mainly derived from the Teutonic; and, five or six hundred years ago, may be correctly described as having been Anglo-Saxon and Scoto-Saxon. Time has replaced the Anglo-Saxon by the modern English, but has spared the Scoto-Saxon, which still remains a living speech. Though the children of one mother, the two have lived apart, received different educations, developed themselves under dissimilar circumstances, and received accretions from independent and unrelated sources. The English, as far as it remains an Anglo-Saxon tongue, is derived from the Low German with a mixture of the Scandinavian and Icelandic; while the Lowland Scotch, or Scoto-Saxon, is indebted more immediately to the Dutch, Flemish, and Danish, both for its fundamental and most characteristic words, and for its inflection and grammar. The English, like the Teutonic, bristles with the consonants. The Scotch is as spangled with vowels as a meadow with daisies in the month of May. English, though perhaps the most muscular and copious language in the world, is harsh and sibilant; while the Scotch, with its beautiful terminational diminutives, is almost as soft as the Italian. English songs, like those of Moore and Campbell, however excellent they may be as poetical compositions, are, for these reasons, not so available for musical purposes as the songs of Scotland. An Englishman, if he sings of a "pretty little girl," uses words deficient in euphony, and suggests comedy rather than sentiment; but when a Scotchman sings of a "bonnie wee lassie," he employs words that are much softer than their English equivalents, express a tenderer idea, and are infinitely better adapted to music.

The principal components of the Scotch tongue are derived, first, from the Teutonic, comprising many words once possessed by the English, but which have become obsolete in the latter; secondly, words and inflections derived from the Dutch, Flemish, and Norse; thirdly, words derived from the French, or from the Latin and Greek through a French medium; and fourthly, words derived from the Gaelic or Celtic language of the Highlands, which is indubitably a branch of the Sanscrit. As regards the first source, it is interesting to note that in the Glossary appended to Mr. Thomas Wright's edition of those ancient and excellent alliterative poems, the "Vision" and "Creed" of Piers Ploughman, there occur about two thousand obsolete English or Anglo-Saxon words, many of which are still retained in the Scoto-Saxon of the Scottish Lowlands; and that in the Glossary to Tyrrwhitt's edition of Chaucer there occur upwards of six thousand words which need explanation to the modern English reader, and full one-half of which need no explanation whatever to a Scotsman. Even Shakespeare is becoming obsolete to his countrymen, and uses

upwards of two thousand four hundred words which Mr. Howard Staunton, his latest, and, in many respects, his most judicious editor, thinks it necessary to collect in a Glossary for the better elucidation of the text. Many hundreds of these words are perfectly familiar to a Scottish ear, and require no interpreter. It appears from these facts that the Scotch is a far more conservative language than the English, and that although it does not object to receive new words, it clings reverently and affectionately to the old. The consequence of this mingled tenacity and elasticity is, that it possesses a vocabulary which includes for a Scotchman's use every word of the modern English language, and several thousand words which the English people never possessed, or have suffered to drop into desuetude.

In addition to this conservancy of the bone and sinew of the language, the Scoto-Saxon possesses an advantage over the modern English in having reserved to itself the power, while retaining all the old words of the language, to eliminate all harsh or unnecessary consonants. Thus it has *loe*, for love; *fa'*, for fall; *wa'*, for wall; *awfu'*, for awful; *smu'*, for small; and many hundreds of similar abbreviations, which detract nothing from the force of the idea or clearness of the meaning, while they soften the roughness of the expression. No such power resides in the English or French, though it was once inherent in both languages. Very little of it belongs to the German, though it remains in all those European tongues which trace their origin to the Platt-Deutsch. The Scottish poet or versifier may write *fa'* or *fall* as it pleases him, but his English compeer must write "fall" without abbreviation. Another source of the superior euphony of the Scoto-Saxon is the single diminutive in *ie*, and the double diminutive in *kie*, which may be applied to any noun in the language, as *wife*, *wifkie*, *wifkie*, wife, little wife, very little wife; *bairn*, *bairnie*, *bairnikie*, child, little child, very little child; *bird*, *birdie*, *birdikie*; and *lass*, *lassie*, *lassikie*, &c. A few English nouns remain susceptible of diminutives, though in a less musical form, as *lamb*, *lambkin*; *goose*, *goslin*, &c. The beauty of the Scottish forms of the diminutive is obvious. Take, for instance, the following lines:—

"Hap and row, hap and row,  
Hap and row the feetie o't;  
It is a wee bit wearie thing,  
I downa bide the greetie o't."

Endeavour to translate into English the diminutives "feetie" "greetie," and the superiority of the Scottish for poetical purposes will be obvious.

While these abbreviations and diminutives increase not only the melody but the *naïveté* and archness of the spoken language, the retention of the old and strong inflections of verbs, that are wrongfully called irregular, contributes very much to its force and harmony, giving it at the same time an advantage over the modern English, which has consented to allow many useful preterites and past principles to perish altogether. In literary and conversational English there is no preterite for the verbs to *beat*, to *bet*, to *bid*, to *forbid*, to *cast*, to *cost*, to *hit*, to *hurt*, to *let*, to *put*, to *shut*, to *thrust*, to *set*, &c.; while only three of them, to *beat*, to *bid*, and to *forbid*, retain the past participle, *beaten*, *bidden*, and *forbidden*. The Scottish language, on the contrary, has retained all the ancient forms of these verbs; and can say, "I *cast*, I *coost*, and I have *casten* a stone;" or "I *put*, I *pat*, or I have *putten* on my coat;" "I *hurt*, I *hurten*, or I have *hurten* myself;" "I *thrust*, I *thrusten*, or I have *thrusten* him out of doors;" and "I *let*, I *loot*, or I have *letten* fa' my tears," &c.

Chaucer, as was remarked in an article upon "Lost Preterites" in *Maga* for September, 1869, made an effort to introduce many French words into the courtly and literary English of his time, but with very slight success. No such systematic effort was made by any Scottish writer of repute; yet, nevertheless, in consequence of the friendly intercourse long subsisting between France and Scotland—an intercourse that was alike political, commercial, and social—a considerable number of words of French origin crept into the Scottish vernacular, and there established themselves with a tenacity that is not likely to be relaxed as long as the language continues to be either written or spoken. Some of these are among the most racy and characteristic differences between the English and the Scotch. It will be sufficient if we cite: to *fash* one's self, to be troubled with or about anything—from *se fâcher*, to be angered; *douce*, gentle, good-tempered, courteous—from *doux*, soft; *dour*, grim, obdurate, slow to forgive or relent—from *dur*, hard; *lien*, comfortable, well to do in worldly affairs—from *bien*, well; *ashed*, a dish—from *assiette*, a plate; a *creel*, a fish-basket—from *creille*, a basket; a *gigot* of mutton—from *gigot*, a leg; *awmrie*, a linen-press or plate-cupboard—from *armoire*, a movable cup-board or press; *bonnie*, beautiful and good—from *bon*, good; *airles* and *airle-penny*, money paid in advance to seal a bargain—from *arrhes*, a deposit on account; *brulzie*, a fight or dispute—from *semb ouiller*, to quarrel; *callant*, a lad, a brave boy—from *galant*, a lover or a gallant youth; *braw*, fine—from *brave*, honest and courageous; *dool*, sorrow—from *deuil*, mourning; *grozet*, a gooseberry (which he it said in parenthesis, is a popular English corruption from *gorseberry*)—from *groseille*; *taupie*, a thoughtless, foolish girl, who does not look before her to see what she is doing—from *taupe*, a mole; *haggis*, the Scottish national dish—from *hachis*, a hash; *pawn*, peacock—from *paon*; *caddie*, a young man acting as a porter or messenger—from *cadet*, the younger born (whence the English "cad," popularized by Thackeray.—Ed. C. I. N.); *spaule*, the shoulder, from *epaule*, &c.

Scoto-Saxon words derived immediately from the Dutch, and following the Dutch rules of pronunciation, are exceedingly numerous. Among these are *wanhope*—from *wanhoop*, despair; *wanchance*, *wanlust*, *wanrestfu*, and many others, where the English adopt the German *un* instead of *van*. *Ben*, the inner, as distinguished from *but*, the outer, room of a cottage, is from *binne*, or *be-in*, within, as *but* is from *byten*, or *be-out*, without. *Stane*, a stone, comes from *steen*; *smack*, to taste—from *smak*; *goud*, gold—from *goud*; *loopen*, to leap—from *loopen*; *fell*, cruel, violent, fierce—from *fel*; *kist*, a chest—from *kist*; *mutch*, a woman's cap—from *muts*; *g aist*, a ghost—from *geest*; *dowf*, sad—from *dof*, heavy; *kame*, a comb—from *kam*; *rocklay* (rock-lay), a short coat—from *rok*, a petticoat or jupon; *het*, hot—from *heet*; *gee*, to mock or make a fool of—from *gek*, a fool; *lear*, knowledge—from *leer*, doctrine or learning; *bane* or *bain*, a bone—from *been*; *paddock*, a toad—from *pad*; *caff*, chaff—from *kaf*, straw; *yooky*, itchy—from *yuk*, an itch; *hawer*, oatmeal ("Oh, whaur did ye get that hawermeal bannock?"—Burns)—from *haver*, oats; *clyte*, to fall heavily or suddenly to the ground—from *kluyt*, the sword, and *kluyten*, to fall on the sword; *breeks*, breeches, trousers—from *breek*; *blythe*, lively, good-humoured—from *blyde*, contented; and *minnie*, a term of childish endearment for mother—from *min*, love.

The Scottish words derived from the Gaelic are more apparent in the names of places than in the colloquial phraseology of everyday life. Among these, *ben*, *glen*, *burn*, *burnie*, *strath*, *bog*, *corrie*, *crag*, or *craig*, and *cairn*, will recur to the memory of any one who has lived or travelled in Scotland, or is conversant with Scottish literature. *Gillie*, a boy or servant; *grieve*, a land-steward or agent, are not only ancient Scottish words, but have lately become English. *Loof*, the open palm is derived from the Gaelic *lamh* (pronounced *laff* or *lav*), the hand; *cuddle*, to embrace—from *cadail*, sleep; *whisky*—from *uisge*, water; *clachan*, a village—from *clach*, a stone; *croon*, to hum a tune—from *cruiin*, to lament or moan; *bailie*, a city or borough magistrate—from *baile*, a town; *tinder*, from *teine*, fire; *sonsie*, fresh, healthful, young, good-looking—from *sonas*, good fortune; *grove*, an assemblage of trees—from *croobh*, pronounced *croav*, a tree; *fallow*, lying uncultivated, from *falamb*, pronounced *fallav*, empty,—may serve as specimens of the many words which, in the natural intercourse between the Highlanders and the Lowlanders, have been derived from the ancient Gaelic by the more modern Scoto-Saxon.

Four centuries ago, the English or Anglo-Saxon, when Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate were still intelligible, had a much greater resemblance to the Scoto-Saxon than it has at the present day. William Dunbar, one of the earliest, as he was one of the best, of the Scottish poets, and supposed to have been born in 1465, in the reign of James III. in Scotland, and of Edward IV. in England, wrote, among other poems, the "Thrissel and the Rose." This composition was equally intelligible to the people of both countries. It was designed to commemorate the marriage of James IV. with Margaret Tudor, daughter of King Henry VII. of England—that small cause of many great events, of which the issues have extended to our time, and which gave the Stewarts their title to the British throne. Though Dunbar wrote in the Scotch of the *literati*, rather than in that of the common people, as did King James I. at an earlier period, when, a captive in Windsor Castle, he indited his beautiful poem, "The King's Quair," to celebrate the grace and loveliness of the Lady Beaufort, whom he afterwards married; the "Thrissel and the Rose" is only archaic in its orthography, and contains no words that a commonly well educated Scottish ploughman cannot at this day understand, though it might puzzle some of the University men who write leaders for the London press to interpret it without the aid of a glossary. Were the spelling of the following passages modernised, it would be found that there is nothing in any subsequent poets, from Dunbar's day to our own, with which it need fear a comparison, either in point of poetry or of popular comprehension—

"Quhen Merché wes with variand windis past,  
And Aprill haddé, with her silver shouris,  
Tane loif at nature, with ane orient blast,  
And lusty May, that muddir is of flouris,  
Had maid the birds to begyn their houris  
Among the tender odouris reid and quhyt.  
Quhois harmony to heir it was delyt."

"In bed at morrowe, sleiping as I lay,  
Methocht Aurora, with her crystal een,  
In at the window lukit by the day,  
And halsit me with visage pale and grene,  
On quhois hand a lark sang fro the splene:  
'Awauk luvaris! out of your slumbering!  
See how the lusty morrowe dois upspring!'"

Many of the popular authors of that century did not, like Dunbar, confine their poetic efforts to the speech of the learned, but wrote in the vernacular of the peasantry and townspeople. The well-known poem of "Pebilis to the Play" is the earliest specimen of this class of literature that has come down to us. It has been attributed—but not on sufficient authority—to the royal author of "The King's Quair." This composition scarcely contains a word that Burns, three hundred years later, would have hesitated to employ. In like manner the poem of "Christ's Kirk on the Green," written nearly three hundred and twenty years ago, made use of the language of the peasantry to describe the assembly of the lasses and their wooers that came to the "dancing and deray," with their gloves of the "raffele richt" (right doeskin), their "shoon of the straitis" (coarse cloth), and their

"Kirtles of the lincum light,  
Weel pressed wi' mony plaitis."

The author's description of "Gillie" is equal to anything in Allan Ramsay or Burns, and quite as intelligible to the Scottish peasantry of the present day:—

"Of all their maidens mild as meid  
Was nane say gymp as Gillie;  
As any rose her rude was reid,  
Hir lire was like the lily.  
Bot zallow, zallow was hir heid,  
And sche of luif sae sillie,  
Thof a' hir kin suld hae bein deid,  
Sche would hae bot sweit Willie."

Captain Alexander Montgomery, who was attached to the service of the Regent Murray, in 1577, and who enjoyed a pension from King James VI., wrote many poems in which the beauty, the strength, and the humour of the Scottish language were very abundantly displayed. The "Cherry and the Slae" is particularly rich in words that Allan Ramsay, Walter Scott, Robert Burns, and Christopher North have since rendered classical, and is, besides, a poem as excellent in thought and fancy as it is copious in diction. The description of the music of the birds on a May morning may be taken as a specimen:—

"The cushat croods, the corbie cries,  
The Coukoo couks, the prattling pies  
To keek hir they begin.  
The jargon o' the jangling jays,  
The creaking craws and keeking kayes,  
Thy deaved me with their din."

"The painted pawn with Argus e'es  
Can on his maycock call;  
The turtle wails on withered trees,  
And Echo answers all.  
Repeating, with greting,  
How fair Narcissus fell,  
By lying and spying  
His shadow in the well."

Time was within living memory when the Scotch of the upper classes prided themselves on their native Doric; when judges on the bench delivered their judgments in the broadest Scotch, and would have thought themselves guilty of puerile and unworthy affectation if they had preferred English words or English accents to their own; when advocates pleaded in the same homely and plastic tongue; when ministers of religion found their best way to the hearts and to the understanding of their congregations in the use of the language most familiar to themselves, as well as to those whom they addressed; and when ladies of the highest rank—celebrated alike for their wit and their beauty—sang their tenderest,