

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, written and compiled by Roddy Maclean, and specifically aimed at Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Roddy can be contacted by e-mail at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk * This is Litir 306.*

Anns an Litir mu dheireadh, bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun dotair ann am Poll Iùbh ann an Siorrachd Rois o chionn timcheall air ochdad bliadhna. 'S e *Miss Rees* a bh' oirre, agus 's e am fear a bha ga moladh ann am bàrdachd – Iain Dubh Mac Dhòmhnail 'ic Iain, a bhuineadh don sgìre ach a bha a' fuireach ann am Brisbane, ann an Astràilia. Co-dhiù, chan e Miss Rees a-mhàin a bha comasach air leigheas a dhèanamh air duine bochd aig an àm ud, a rèir na sgrìobh Iain. Sgrìobh e òran do *bhrochan*.

Bha Coinneach Cemp agus a bhean, Ceit Eilidh, a' fuireach anns an sgìre. Thug iad cuireadh do dh'Iain agus a bhean beagan làithean a chur seachad còmhla riutha. Bha Coinneach agus bean Iain càirdeach do chèile. Air a' chiad oidhche, ge-tà, dh'fhàs Iain tinn le fuachd. Cha robh càil aige airson bracaist agus bha e uile gu lèir trom-inntinneach. Smaoinich e air cur a dh'iarraidh an dotair.

Ach an àite sin, chuir Ceit gu leabaidh e, chuir i plangaidean air, agus thug i brochan dha. Anns a' mhadainn air an làrna-mhàireach, bha Iain slàn fallain a-rithist. Bha e a-riamh a' cumail a-mach gur e am brochan a rinn an leigheas air agus sgrìobh e òran mu dheidhinn. Seo beagan dheth:

*Am brochan luachmhor milis a fhuair mi bho Cheit Eilidh,
Chuir e fuachd air theicheadh fad' a-mach à m' fheadil.*

*Brochan bean Mhic Chemp, a' bhean àlainn chòir,
Chuir e fuachd gun dàil dhìom, 's tha mi slàn gu leòr,
Brochan bean Mhic Chemp, a' bhean àlainn chòir.*

*Bha e slàinteil sùghar, thug e neart is lùths dhomh,
'S chuir e spionnadh ùr a-steach nam chùislean breid'.*

*Brochan bean Mhic Chemp, a' bhean àlainn chòir,
Chuir e fuachd gun dàil dhìom, 's tha mi slàn gu leòr,
Brochan bean Mhic Chemp, a' bhean àlainn chòir.*

Dè tha brochan a' ciallachadh an seo? Bidh cuid a' gabhail brochan air *porridge*. Ach, anns a' cheann a tuath, 's e *lite* a chanas daoine mar as trice airson *porridge*. Ann a sin, tha brochan, nuair a thathar a' bruidhinn air biadh

co-dhiù, a' ciallachadh *thin gruel* – stuth air a dhèanamh le min-choirce agus uisge goileach. Agus tha Iain a' cumail a-mach gun do rinn sin an leigheas air.

Bha mi airson a bhith cinnteach mu dheidhinn sin agus chaidh mi don fhaclair dhualchainnteach aig Roy Wentworth nach maireann. Bha Roy mion-eòlach air Gàidhlig Gheàrrloch. Agus tha am faclair aige a' dearbhadh gur e *lit* a chanas muinntir na sgìre sin ri *porridge*.

An dèidh uisge mòr trom a dh'fhàgas an talamh bog fliuch, canaidh muinntir Gheàrrloch mu dheidhinn leas air cùl an taighe, "*tha e cho fliuch, tha e coltach ri poit lit.*" Tha e cho fliuch, tha e coltach ri poit lit.

Agus seo agaibh seanfhacal às an sgìre sin, anns a bheil lite air ainmeachadh. Ma tha sibh fireann, òg agus gun fheusag, tha mi an dòchas nach gabh sibh dragh. Ged a tha feusag ormsa, chan eil mi ag ràdh gu bheil mi ag aontachadh ris an t-seanfhacal! Co-dhiù seo e: *Lite gun salann is balach gun fheusag, an dà rud as bliaine a th' ann.* Lite gun salann is balach gun fheusag, an dà rud as bliaine a th' ann.

Uill, nuair a tha mi ag ràdh nach eil mi ag aontachadh ris, tha mi ag aontachadh gu tur ris a' chiad phàirt. Cha chuirinn lite gun salann faisg air mo bheul. Ach lite le salann – is, feumaidh mi aideachadh, siùcar donn – chan fhaighear nas fheàrr!

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Faclan na seachdainne: Poll Iùbh: *Poolewe*; cuireadh: *invitation*; càirdeach: *related*; plangaidean: *blankets*; an làrna-mhàireach: *the next day*; àlainn: *beautiful*; sùghar (or sùghmhor): *juicy*; dualchainnteach: *dialect(al) [adj.]*; mion-eòlach: *extremely knowledgeable*.

Abairtean na seachdainne: 'S e *Miss Rees* a bh' oirre: *she was called Miss Rees*; chan e X a-mhàin a bha comasach air leigheas a dhèanamh: *it wasn't only X that was capable of healing, curing*; beagan làithean a chur seachad còmhla riutha: *to spend a few days with them*; dh'fhàs Iain tinn le fuachd: *John became unwell with a cold*; bha e uile gu lèir trom-inntinneach: *he was extremely low in spirits*; smaoinich e air cur a dh'iarraidh an dotair: *he considered sending for the doctor*; bha e a-riamh a' cumail a-mach: *he always maintained*; chuir e fuachd air theicheadh: *it caused the cold to flee*; fad' a-mach à m' fheòil: *far from my flesh*; chuir e fuachd gun dàil dhìom: *it put the cold from me without delay*; thug e neart is lùths dhomh: *it gave me strength and energy*; min-choirce agus uisge goileach: *oatmeal and boiling water*; tha mi an dòchas nach gabh sibh dragh: *I hope you won't get annoyed*; cha chuirinn lite gun salann faisg air mo bheul: *I wouldn't put porridge without salt close to my mouth*; feumaidh mi aideachadh: *I must admit*; chan fhaighear nas fheàrr: *better will not be got (ie you can't beat it!)*

Puing-chànain na seachdainne: chan eil mi ag ràdh gu bheil mi ag aontachadh ris an t-seanfhacal: *I am not saying that I agree with the proverb. Are you comfortable with the t- in front of seanfhacal here? Do you recognise it as the dative singular case, following the simple preposition ri? It is important to try to get this correct as ris an seanfhacal, with the "s" sounded rather than the "t" sounds wrong to the ear. Basically the rule is that if the (singular) noun following the preposition starts with an "s", it is preceded by a t-. The*

exceptions to the rule are where the s is followed by one of four consonants, and they are easy to pick – they are the ones where it is virtually impossible to make the sound of a “t” followed by that consonant ie sg, sm, sp or st. Thus while we say anns an t-sràid, or air an t-slaod, we would say anns an sgoil (not an t-sgoil), air an spùinneadair (not an t-spuinneadair) and às an stèisean (not an t-stèisean).

Seanfhacal na seachdainne: Lite gun salann is balach gun fheusag, an dà rud as bliaine a th’ ann: *porridge without salt and a lad without a beard, the two most insipid things there are.*

** Tha “Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh” air a maoinneachadh le Seirbheis nam Meadhanan Gàidhlig*