

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Dùghall Bochanan (1)

A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for 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, Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclea@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 654. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 350 corresponds to Litir 654.

Tha mi a’ dol a leughadh earrann à seann leabhar Gàidhlig. ’S e fèin-eachraidh a th’ ann. A bheil sibh ag aithneachadh an ùghdair?

Bha mi cho sona ’s gun do ghineadh mi bho phàrantan diadhaidh sa bhliadhna 1716, a rinn na h-uile dhìcheall a chum mo thogail suas ann an eagal an Tighearna, agus mo dhleastanas a theagasg dhomh gu tràthail; gu h-àraidh mo mhàthair chaomh a dh’ionnsaich dhomh ùrnaigh a dhèanamh cho luath ’s a b’ urrainn mi labhairt...

Cò am fear a sgrìobh an leabhar? Fear a bha diadhaidh agus ainmeil ri a linn. ’S e bàrd a bh’ ann, a bhiodh a’ sgrìobhadh bàrdachd spioradail Ghàidhlig. ’S e an t-ainm a bh’ air Dùghall Bochanan. Thàinig Bochanan don Tighearna tràth na bheatha, mar a tha e a’ mineachadh anns an leabhar aige.

Mar as fheàrr mo chuimhne, air dhomh a bhith eadar cùig is sè bliadhna a dh’aois, chaidh mi a-mach aon Dòmhnach gun fhios do mo mhàthair, agus chuir mi seachad greis de thìm ri cluich amaideach; agus ged a phill mi dhachaigh mun deach m’ ionndrainn, gidheadh bha m’ inntinn làn de dh’uabhas agus de dhìteadh cogais airson bristeadh na Sàbaid. Agus, air an oidhche sin fhèin, an dèidh dhomh dol a laighe agus cadal, bha mi fo mhòr-uabhas leis a’ bhruadar seo a leanas: - Bhruadair mi gun do thaisbean an Tighearn Iosa e fhèin domh ann am mòr-chorraich, agus gun tuirt e gum biodh e diolte dhìom airson bristeadh a Shàbaid.

Air dhomh dùsgadh, ghabh mi aithreachas airson an uilc a chuir mi an gnìomh; agus chuir mi romham nach dèanainn a leithid gu bràth tuillidh. Uime sin, thòisich mi ri ùrnaigh na bu trice na bu ghnàth leam a dhèanamh roimhe sin: oir roimh an àm seo, cha d’ rinn mi ùrnaigh ach mar a cho-èignicheadh mo mhàthair mi gu sin a dhèanamh. Ach a-nis thòisich mi air ùrnaigh gun neach air bith a’ cur ìmpidh orm.

Anns na beagan Litrichean romhainn, tha mi a’ dol a thoirt sùil air eachdraidh-beatha Dhùghaill Bhochanain, agus mar a rinn Dùghall tuairisgeul oirre na Ghàidhlig ghnàthasach fhèin. Bhuineadh e don Iomaire Riabhach no *Strathyre* faisg air Both Chuidir ann an Siorrachd Shruighlea. Chan e a-mhàin gur e bàrd spioradail a bh’ ann, ach gun do chuidich e an t-Urramach Seumas Stiùbhart à Cill Fhinn ann a bhith ag eadar-theangachadh an Tiomnaidh Nuaidh gu Gàidhlig.

Nuair a bha e sia bliadhna a dh’aois, chaochail màthair Dhùghaill no, mar a chuireas e san leabhar e, ‘thoilich an Tighearna mo mhàthair a thoirt air falbh às an t-saoghal seo’. Goirid an dèidh sin bha aislingean aige a thug buaidh mhòr air. Cuiridh mi crìoch air an Litir seo leis an tuairisgeul aige: ... *thòisich an Tighearn’ air m’*

fhiosrachadh le seallaidhean uabhasach; aislingean anns an oidhche a chuir eagal ro mhòr orm. Bhruadair mi gu tric gun tàinig latha a' Bhreitheanais agus gun robh Iosa air teachd anns na neòil a chum breith a thoirt air an t-saoghal, agus gun robh gach uile shluagh air cruinneachadh fa chomhair a chathrach, agus gun do thearb e iad nan dà bhuidheann, a h-aon air a làimh dheis agus an t-aon eile air a làimh chli; agus chunnaic mi mi fhèin maille ri buidheann eile air mo dhìteadh a chum losgadh siorraidh.

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Faclan na Litreach: fèin-eachraidh: *autobiography*; caomh: *gentle*; Dùghall Bochanan: *Dugald Buchanan*; spioradail: *spiritual*; gidheadh: *nevertheless*; ùrnaigh: *prayer*; bruadar: *dream*; aislingean: *dreams, visions*; breitheanas: *judgment*.

Abairtean na Litreach: cho sona 's gun do ghineadh mi bho phàrantan diadhaidh: *so happy that I was produced by pious parents*; na h-uile dhìcheall a chum mo thogail suas ann an eagal an Tighearna: *every effort to raise me in fear of the Lord*; mo dhleastanas a theagasg dhomh gu tràthail: *to teach me my duty early in my life*; aon Dòmhnach gun fhios do mo mhàthair: *one Sunday without my mother's knowledge*; greis de thim ri cluich amaideach: *a while at idiotic play*; ged a phill mi: *although I returned [Phill is an alternative form of thill]*; de dhìteadh cogais airson bristeadh na Sàbaid: *reproach of conscience for breaking the Sabbath*; fo mhòr-uabhas: *horrified*; gun do thaisbean an Tighearn Iosa e fhèin domh ann am mòr-chorraich: *that Christ the Lord showed himself to me in a great wrath*; gum biodh e diolte dhìom airson bristeadh a Shàbaid: *that he would seek requital from me for breaking his Sabbath*; ghabh mi aithreachas airson an uilc a chuir mi an gnìomh: *I regretted the evil I had performed*; nach deanainn a leithid gu bràth tuillidh: *that I would never do the like again*; na bu trice na bu ghnàth leam: *more often than had been my practice*; mar a cho-èignicheadh mo mhàthair mi: *as my mother would force me to*; gun neach air bith a' cur impidh orm: *without anybody persuading me*; bhuineadh e don Iomaire Riabhach: *he belonged to Strathyre*; ag eadar-theangachadh an Tiomnaidh Nuaidh: *translating the New Testament*; a chum breith a thoirt air an t-saoghal: *to pass judgment on the world*; fa chomhair a chathrach: *in front of his chair*; thearb e iad nan dà bhuidheann: *he separated them into two groups*; chunnaic mi mi fhèin ... air mo dhìteadh a chum losgadh siorraidh: *I saw myself ... being condemned to eternal fire*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: *air dhomh a bhith eadar cùig is sè bliadhna a dh'aois: after I'd reached between five and six years of age. As a Gaelic learner you'll likely have been told that 'five, six' is còig, sia. But, if you look in old Gaelic dictionaries you'll find that another common form of còig is cùig, and that sè is an alternative form of sia. The southern and eastern dialects in which these forms were common have largely been lost, but sè is still encountered in Argyll. Cùig and sè are the forms in Irish Gaelic.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: *mun deach m' ionndrainn: before I was missed.*

Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoineachadh le MG ALBA