

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Dùghall Bochanan (3)

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.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 656. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 352 corresponds to Litir 656.

Nuair a bha Dùghall Bochanan, am bàrd spioradail, na dheugaire chaidh e a dh’fhuireach ann an Sruighlea. Chaidh e far rathad an Tighearna, ged a bha na peacaidhean aige a’ bualadh air a chogais. Tha e ag innse anns an leabhar aige *Beatha agus Iompachadh Dhùghaill Bhochanain* mar a thachair dha aon latha nuair a bha e a-muigh air an t-sràid. “Bha saighdear **air mhìsg** a’ falbh romham,” tha e ag ràdh, “agus bha gillean òg’ eile a’ cur mì-thlachd air le bhith tilgeadh seann ghiobal de luideag shalach na aodann...”

Cha do thuig Dùghall an suidheachadh agus thog e an clobhd airson a thilgeil far an rathaid. Shaoil an saighdear gun robh Dùghall air fear de na bleigeardan a bha a’ dèanamh dì-meas air. Tharraing e a bheigeileid agus rinn e air Dùghall. Seo an tuairisgeul a tha Dùghall a’ dèanamh dheth: “Chaidh mi a-steach ann an clobhsa agus dìreach mar a bha mi a’ dol a-steach, agus esan air tì a lann a shàthadh annam, dh’òrdaich an Tighearna na fhreastal glòrmhor gun thuit e an aghaidh a chinn agus làigh e car ùine **gun mhothachadh** gus an d’ fhuair mi teicheadh lem bheatha.”

An dèidh ùine ann an Sruighlea chaidh Dùghall a dh’fhuireach ann an Dùn Èideann greis agus an uair sin don Cheapan ann an Siorrachd Shruighlea. “Bha mi nis’ ochd bliadhna deug a dh’aois agus dh’iarr m’ athair orm ceàird de sheòrs’ eigin a roghnachadh a chum a dhol ga h-ionnsachadh, ach sin an nì nach robh mi riamh deònach a dhèanamh,” tha e ag aideachadh, “oir ghràdhaich mi mo chaitheamh-beatha diamhanach, fuasgailt fhèin cho mòr ’s nach b’ urrainn mi smuainteachadh le tlachd air a’ chaochladh.” ’S iad na caraidean aige a mhol dha gu làidir ceàird a thoirt a-mach. Ghabh e obair le caraidean airson trì bliadhna airson saoirsneachd ionnsachadh.

Ach mus robh na trì bliadhna seachad, chaidh Dùghall is a mhaighstir a-mach air a chèile agus chaidh e gu fear eile ann an Dùn Breatann. Cha do mhair an obair sin fada nas motha. Bha Dùghall air a ghlacadh le gnothaichean spioradail, ach chan eil sin a’ ciallachadh gun robh e an-còmhnaidh dìleas do theagasg nan sgrìobtaran.

Anns an leabhar, tha e ag innse dhuinn mar a thug cuid de shearmonaichean buaidh mhòr air. Seo eisimpleir: *Bha sàcramaid suipeir an Tighearna gu bhith air a frithealadh ann an Calasraid, agus chaidh mise don àite sin agus air Disathairne chuala mi searmon glè shòlasach ... Thug am ministear fa-near gum faodadh an creideach a bhith air uairean ann an gluasad a’ ghràis cho lag ri caol-smùid a bhiodh de choinneal an dèidh a sèideadh às; “Ach,” ars esan, “am mùch an Tighearn’ Iosa an caol-smùid sin? Cha mhùch, beòthaichidh e e agus sèididh e air le gaoth an Spioraid Naoimh gus an gabh e suas na lasair.”*

Ann an seachd ceud deug, ceathrad 's a dhà (1742), chaidh Dùghall gu co-chruinneachadh mòr ann an Camas Long faisg air Glaschu. Thàinig dà fhichead mìle duine cruinn airson èisteachd ris an t-searmonaiche ainmeil Seòras Whitefield. Fhuair Dùghall misneachd ach bha fhathast teagamhan a' bualadh air. Bha a bheatha a' dol a dh'atharrachadh gu mòr, ge-tà, mar a chì sinn anns an ath Litir.

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Faclan na Litreach: Dùghall Bochanan: *Dugald Buchanan*; deugaire: *teenager*; Sruighlea: *Stirling*; clobhd: *cloth*; clobhsa: *close (between houses)*; saoirsneachd: *joinery, carpentry*; Dùn Breatann: *Dumbarton*; dìleas: *loyal*; sòlasach: *pleasing to the mind*; creideach: *believer*; air uairean: *sometimes*; gràs: *grace*; Camas Long: *Cambuslang*; searmonaiche: *preacher*; lasair: *flame*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Chaidh e far rathad an Tighearna: *he eschewed the way of the Lord*; bha na peacaidhean aige a' bualadh air a chogais: *his sins were preying on his mind*; bha gillean òg' eile a' cur mì-thlachd air: *other young lads were annoying him*; le bhith tilgeadh seann ghiobal de luideag shalach na aodann: *by throwing an old torn dirty rag in his face*; gun robh Dùghall air fear de na bleigeardan: *that Dugald was one of the louts*; tharraing e a bheigeileid: *he drew his bayonet*; air tì a lann a shàthadh annam: *about to thrust his blade into me*; dh'òrdaich an Tighearna na fhreastal glòrmhor: *the Lord ordered in his glorious providence*; thuit e an aghaidh a chinn: *he fell flat on his face*; teicheadh lem bheatha: *fleeing with my life*; dh'iarr m' athair orm ceàird de sheòrs' eigin a roghnachadh: *my father asked me to choose some trade or other*; ghràdhaich mi mo chaitheamh-beatha diamhanach: *I loved my idle life*; 's nach b' urrainn mi smuainteachadh air a' chaochladh: *that I couldn't think of an alternative*; chaidh Dùghall is a mhaighstir a-mach air a chèile: *Dugald and his master fell out with each other*; sàcramaid suipeir an Tighearna: *the sacrament of the Lord's supper*; thug am ministear fa-near: *the minister noticed*; cho lag ri caol-smùid a bhiodh de choinneal an dèidh a sèideadh às: *as weak as a wisp of smoke from a candle after it has been blown out*; am mùch X Y?: *will X extinguish Y?*; sèididh e air le gaoth an Spioraid Naoimh: *he will blow on it with the wind of the Holy Spirit*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Bha saighdear air mhisg a' falbh romham: *A drunken soldier was walking in front of me*. Misg means 'drunkenness, intoxication'. Air mhisg means 'drunk'. The lenition of misg in the indefinite dative singular following air is an old grammatical model still seen in Irish Gaelic and preserved in our own language in phrases like air mhàl, mean air mhean. From misg we get the adjective misgeach 'drunken, addicted to drink' and the noun misgear 'drunkard, tippler'. Three stages of drunkenness from sòbarra upwards (or, more realistically, downwards) would be fo smùid, air mhisg and air a dhalladh [leis an deoch] (for a male) or air a dalladh (for a female).

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: gun mhothachadh: *unconscious*.

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