

A voyage to St. Kilda. The remotest of all the Hebrides or Western Isles of Scotland ... To which is added an account of Roderick, the late impostor there, pretending to be sent by St. John Baptist with new revelations and discoveries / By M. Martin, Gent.

Contributors

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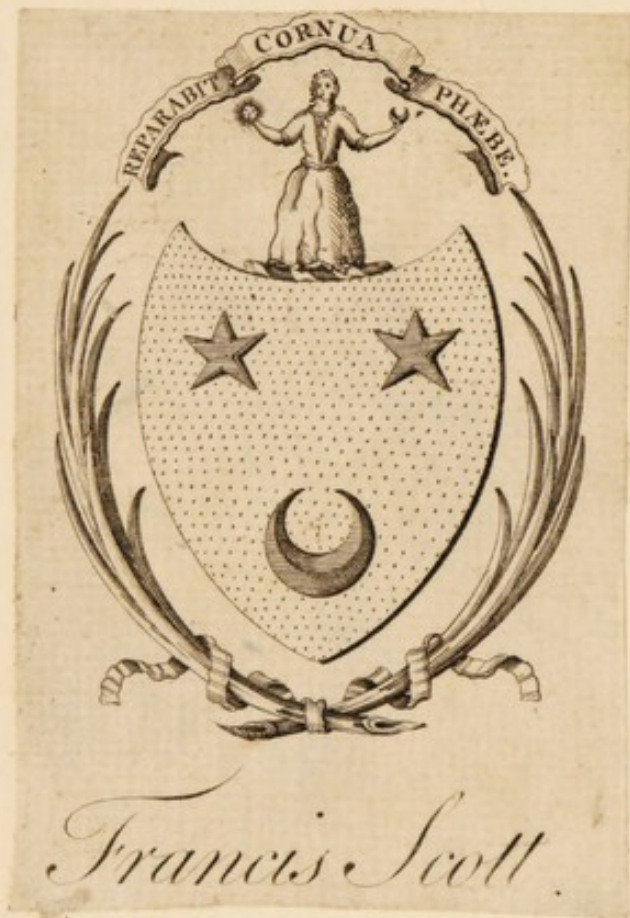


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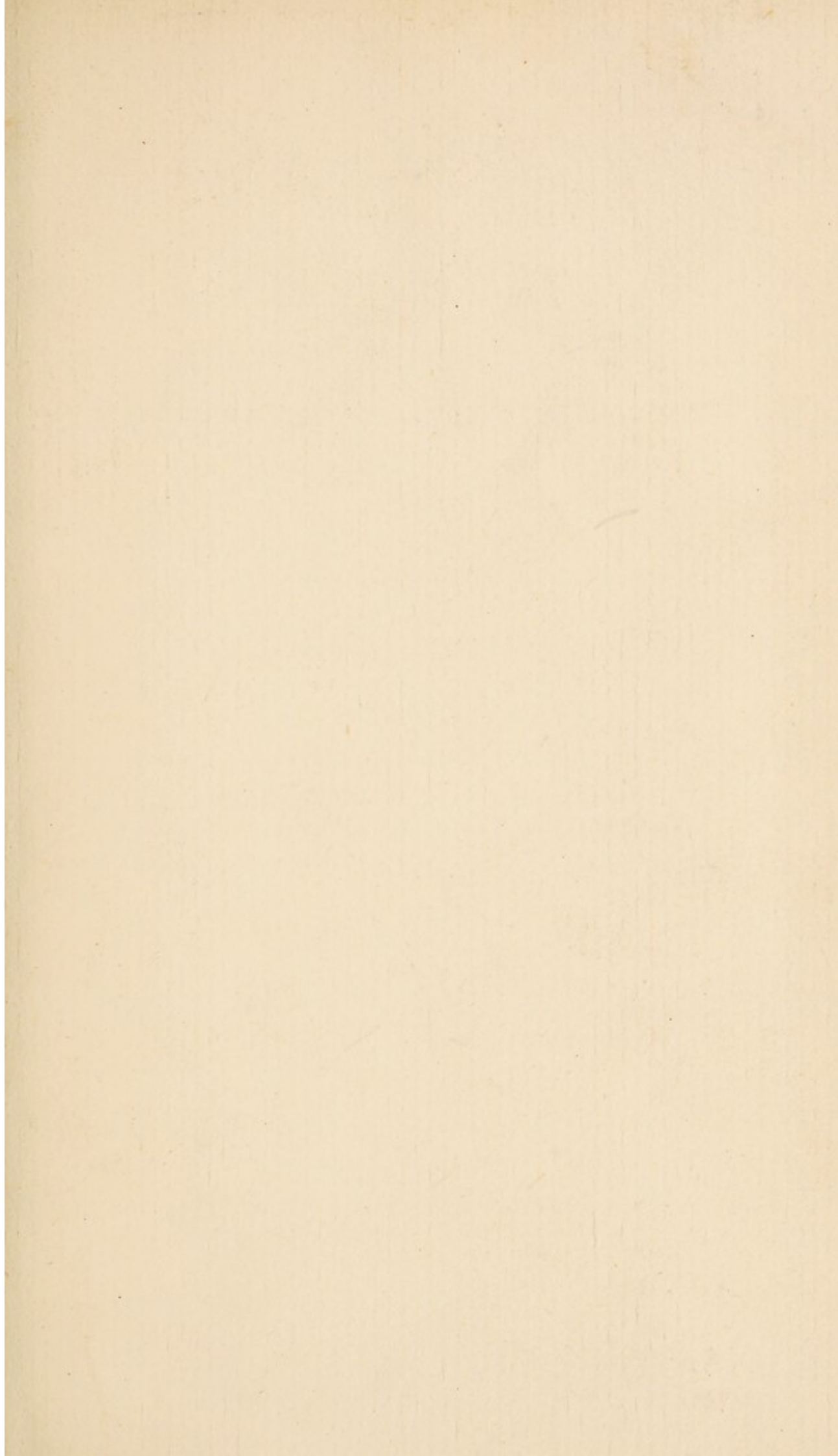
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A

V O Y A G E

T O

St. K I L D A.

The remotest of all the *Hebrides*,
or Western Isles of *Scotland*:

G I V I N G

An ACCOUNT of the very remarkable Inhabitants of that Place, their Beauty and singular Chastity (Fornication and Adultery being unknown among them); their Genius for Poetry, Music, Dancing; their surprising Dexterity in climbing the Rocks, and Walls of Houses; Diversions, Habit, Food, Language, Diseases and Methods of Cure; their extensive Charity; their Contempt of Gold and Silver, as below the Dignity of Human Nature; their Religious Ceremonies, Notion of Spirits and Visions, &c. &c.

To which is added,

An ACCOUNT of *Roderick*, the late Impostor there, pretending to be sent by St. *John Baptist* with new Revelations and Discoveries; his Diabolical Inventions, Attempts upon the Women, &c.

BY M. MARTIN, GENT.

The FOURTH EDITION, corrected.

The Inhabitants of St. Kilda are almost the only People in the World who feel the Sweetness of true Liberty; what the Condition of the People in the Golden Age is feigned to be, that theirs really is. P. 67.

L O N D O N :

Printed for DAN. BROWNE, without *Temple-Bar*;
and LOCKYER DAVIS, in *Fleet-Street*.

MDCCLIII,

A
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Religious Ceremonies, and all of Points and
Visions, &c. &c.



To which is added
An Account of Kildare, the first Invention of
Printing to be sent by St. John Kildare, with new
Observations and Discoveries; his Disposal of his
Estate upon the Women, &c.

B Y M. M. A. R. T. I. M. C. R. A. Y.
The FOURTH EDITION, corrected.
As Inhabitants of St. Kildare are scarce, the only Copy is
deposited in the Museum of the Society; and the
Copy in the British Museum is the only one in
L O N D O N.
Printed for D. N. Brown, at the York Buildings,
and Lockyer Davis, in Pall Mall.
M D C C L I I I.

P R E F A C E.

MEN are generally fond enough of Novelty, not to suffer any thing represented under that plausible Invitation to pass unnoticed. A Description of some remote Corner in the Indies shall be sure to afford us high Amusement, whilst a thousand things much nearer to us might engage our Thoughts to better purpose, and the Knowledge of them serve to promote our true Interest, and the History of Nature. It is a piece of Weakness and Folly to value Things merely on account of their Distance: Thus Men have travelled far in search of foreign Plants and Animals, and continued Strangers to the Productions of their own Climate. The following Relation, therefore, I hope will not prove unprofitable or displeasing, unless the Advantages of Truth and unaffected Simplicity should prejudice it in the Opinion of such as are more trifling and curious than solid and judicious.

The Author, born in one of the most spacious and fertile Isles in the West of Scotland, by a laudible Curiosity was prompted to undertake the Voyage, and that in an open Boat, to the almost manifest hazard of his Life; as the Seas and Tides in those Rocky Islands are more inconstant and raging than in most other places. And he has been careful to relate nothing in the following Account, but what

P R E F A C E.

he asserts for truth, either upon his own particular Knowledge, or from the constant and harmonious Testimony given him by the Inhabitants, People so plain, and so little inclined to impose upon Mankind, that perhaps no place in the World, at this Day, knows Instances like these of true primitive Honour and Simplicity; a People abhorring lying Tricks and Artifices, as they do the most poisonous Plants, or devouring Animals.

The Author confesses he might have put these Papers into the Hands of some capable of giving them, what they really want, a politer Turn of Phrase, but he hopes for the Indulgence of at least the intelligent Reader, who will always set a higher Value upon unadorned Truth in such Accounts than the utmost Borrowings of Art, or the Advantages of refined Languages.

1. 10th of 18th C.



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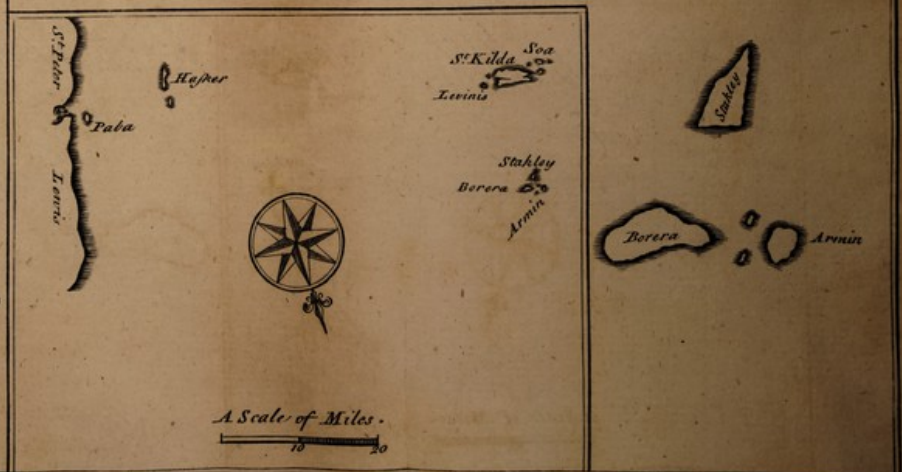


Fulmar



Apsilag

A Scale of one Mile.





A

V O Y A G E

T O

St. K I L D A, &c.



THE various Relations concerning *St. Kilda*, given by those of the Western Isles, and Continent, induced me to a narrow Enquiry about it: For this End I applied my self to the present Steward, who by his Description, and the Products of the Island, which were brought to me, together with a Natural Impulse of Curiosity, formed such an Idea of it in my Mind, that I determined to satisfy my self with going thither; it having been never hitherto described to any purpose; the Accounts given by *Buchanan* and *Sir Robert Murray*, being but Relations from Second and Third Hands, neither of them ever having the Opportunity of being upon the Place. I attempted several times to visit it, but in vain; until last Summer, the Laird of *Mack-Leod* heartily recommending the Care of the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda* to Mr. *John Campbel*, Minister

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of

of *Harries*, he went to *St. Kilda*, and I chearfully embraced the Occasion; and accordingly we embarked at the Isle *Esfay* in *Harries*, May the 29th, 1697, the Wind at S. E.

We set sail with a gentle Breeze, bearing to the Westward, and were not well got out of the Harbour when Mr. *Campbell* observing the Whiteness of the Waves attended with an extraordinary Noise beating upon the Rocks, expressed his Dislike of it, being in those Parts a Prognostic of an ensuing Storm; but the same appearing sometimes in Summer, before excessive Heat, it was slighted by the Crew. But as we advanced about two Leagues further, upon the Coast of the Isle *Pabbay*, the former Signs appearing more conspicuously, we unanimously concluded a Storm approaching, which occasioned a Motion for our Return; but the Wind and Ebb-Tide concurring, determined us to pursue our Voyage, in hopes of arriving at our desired Harbour, before the Wind or Storm should rise, which we judged would not be suddenly: But our fond Imagination was not seconded with a good Event, as will appear; for we had scarce sailed a League further, when the Wind inclined more Southerly, and altered our Measures; we endeavoured by the help of our Oars to reach the *Haw-sker Rocks*, some Four Leagues to the South-Coast, which we were not able to effect, tho' we consumed the Night in this vain Expectation. By this time we so far advanced in the Ocean, that after a second Motion for our Return, it was found impracticable, especially since we could not promise to fetch any Point of *Scotland*; this obliged us to make the best of our way for *St. Kilda*, though labouring under

the Disadvantages of Wind and Tide. Our Crew extremely fatigued and discouraged without sight of Land for Sixteen Hours; at length one of them discovered several Tribes of the Fowls of *St. Kilda* flying, holding their Course Southerly of us, which (to some of our Crew) was a Demonstration we had lost our Course, by the Violence of the Flood and Wind both concurring to carry us Northerly, though we steered by our Compass right West.

The Inhabitants of *St. Kilda* take their Measures from the Flight of those Fowls, when the Heavens are not clear, as from a sure Compass, Experience shewing that every Tribe of Fowls bends their Course to their respective Quarters, though out of sight of the Isle; this appeared clearly in our gradual Advances; and their Motion being compared did exactly quadrate with our Compass. The Inhabitants rely so much upon this Observation, that they prefer it to the surest Compass; but we begged leave to differ from them, though at the same time we could not deny their Rule to be as certain as our Compass. While we were in this state, we discovered the Isle *Borera*, near Three Leagues North of *St. Kilda*, which was then about Four Leagues to the South of us; this was a joyful Sight, and gave new Vigour to our Men, who being refreshed with Victuals, lowering Mast and Sail, rowed to a Miracle: While they were tugging at the Oars, we plied them with Plenty of *Aqua Vitæ* to support them, whose borrowed Spirits so far wasted their own, that upon our Arrival at *Borera*, there was scarce one of them able to manage Cable or Anchor: We put in under the Hollow

of an extraordinary high Rock, to the North of this Isle, which was all covered with a prodigious Number of *Solan* Geese hatching in their Nests; the Heavens were darkened by their flying over our Heads, their Excrements were in such quantity, that they gave a Tincture to the Sea, and at the same time sullied our Boat and Cloaths: Two of them confirmed the Truth of what has been frequently reported of their stealing from one another Grass wherewith to make their Nests, by affording us the following very agreeable Diversion, and it was thus: One of them finding his Neighbour's Nest without the Fowl, lays hold on the Opportunity, and steals from it as much Grass as he could conveniently carry off, taking his flight towards the Ocean; from thence he presently returns, as if he made a foreign Purchase, but it does not pass for such. For the Owner had discovered the Fact, before the Thief had got out of sight, and, too nimble for his Cunning, waits his Return, all armed with Fury, and engages him desperately; this bloody Battle was fought above our Heads, and proved fatal to the Thief, who fell dead so near our Boat, that our Men took him up, and presently dressed and eat him; which they reckoned as an Omen of good Success in the Voyage.

We proposed being at *St. Kilda* next Day, but our Expectation was frustrated by a violent Storm, which almost drove us to the Ocean; where we incurred no small Risque, being no ways fitted for it; our Men laid aside all Hopes of Life, possessed with the Belief that all this Misfortune proceeded from the Impostor *Roderick* (of whom hereafter) who they believed had employed the Devil to raise
this

this extraordinary Storm against Mr. *Campbell*, who was to counteract him. All our Arguments, whether from Natural Reason, or the Providence of God, were not of Force enough to persuade them to the contrary, until it pleased God to command a Calm the Day following, which was the First of *June*, and then we rowed to *St. Kilda*. As we came close upon the Rocks, some of the Inhabitants, who were then employed in setting their Gins, welcomed us with a *God save you*, their usual Salutation, admiring to see us get thither contrary to Wind and Tide; they were walking unconcernedly on the side of this prodigious high Rock, at the same time keeping pace with our Boat, to my great Admiration, insomuch that I was quickly obliged to turn away my Eyes, lest I should have had the unpleasent Spectacle of some of them tumbling down into the Sea; but they themselves had no such Fears, for they outrun our Boat to the Town, from thence they brought the Steward and all the Inhabitants of both Sexes to receive us: we approached the outmost Part of the low Rock, called the *Saddle*; a Parcel of the Inhabitants were mounted upon it, having on their Feet the usual Dress on such Occasions, *i. e.* Socks of old Rags sowed with Feathers instead of Thread; our Boat being come pretty near, it was kept off this Rock with long Poles; some of their Number coming by Pairs into the Sea received Mr. *Campbell* and me upon their Shoulders and carried us to Land, where we were received with all the Demonstrations of Joy and Kindness they were able to express; the Impostor *Roderick* endeavouring to outdo his Neighbours, and placing himself always in the Front of our Attendants,

disco-

discovered his Hypocrisy. We all walked together to the little Village where there was a Lodging prepared for us, furnished with Beds of Straw; according to the ancient Custom of the Place, the Officer, who presides over them in the Steward's Absence summoned the Inhabitants, who by Concert agreed upon a daily Maintenance for us, as Bread, Butter, Cheese, Mutton, Fowls, Eggs, Fire, &c. all which was to be given in at our Lodging twice every Day; this was done in the most regular manner, each Family by turns paying their Quota proportionably to their Lands: I remember the Allowance for each Man *per diem*, beside a Barley Cake, was Eighteen of the Eggs laid by the Fowl called by them *Lavy*, and a greater Number of the lesser Eggs, as they differed in proportion; the largest of these Eggs is near in bigness to that of a Goose, the rest of the Eggs gradually of a lesser Size.

We had the Curiosity after Three Weeks Residence, to make a Calculation of the Number of Eggs bestowed upon those of our Boat, and the *Stewart's Birlin*, or *Galley*; the whole amounted to Sixteen thousand Eggs: The Inhabitants, were thrice our Number, and must consume a Number of Eggs and Fowls in proportion. From this it is easy to imagine, that a vast Number of Fowl must resort here all Summer, which is yet the more propable if it be considered, that every Fowl lays but one Egg at a time, when allowed to hatch.

The Inhabitants live together in a small Village, carrying all the Signs of an extreme Poverty; the Houses are of a low Form, and the Doors all to the North-East, to secure them from the Shocks
of

of the tempestuous South-West Winds. The Walls of the Houses are rudely built of Stone, the short Couples joining at the ends of the Roof, upon whose Sides small Ribs of Wood are laid, and these covered with Straw; the whole secured by Ropes made of twisted Heath, the Extremity of which on each side is poised with Stone to preserve the Thatch from being blown away. This little Village is seated in a Valley surrounded with Four Mountains, serving as Ramparts of Defence, and are so many Amphitheatres, from whence a fair Prospect of the Ocean and Isles may be seen in a fine Day.

This Isle is by the Inhabitants, as likewise by all the Western Islanders, called *Hirt*; *Buchanan* calls it *Hirta*; Sir *John Narbrough*, and all Sailors, *St. Kilda*; in Sea Maps it is called *St. Kilder*, particularly in a *Dutch Sea Map* from *Ireland* to *Zeland*, published at *Amsterdam* by *Peter Goas* in the Year 1663, wherein it is placed due West betwixt Fifty and Sixty Miles from the middle of the *Lewis*, and the Isle answers directly to the Fifty Eighth Degree of Northern Latitude, as marked upon the ends of the Map, and from it lies *Rokol*, a small Rock 60 Leagues to the Westward of *St. Kilda*; the Inhabitants of this Place call it *Rokabarra*; this Map contains the Soundings of some Places near *St. Kilda*; these not exceeding Twenty or Thirty Fathom; it contains only the larger Isle, and a part of the Lesser Isles; this Island is also called *St. Kilda*, by a Company of *French* and *Spaniards*, who lost their Ship at *Rokol* in the Year 1686, which they named to the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda*, whose Latitude is Fifty seven Degrees and Three Minutes.

The Air here is sharp and wholesome; the Hills are often covered with ambient White Mists, which in Winter are Forerunners of Snow, if they continue on the Tops of the Hills; and in Summer, if only on the Tops of the Hills, they prognosticate Rain; when they descend to the Valleys it is a Prognostic of excessive Heat. The Night here about the Time of the Summer Solstice exceeds not an Hour in length, especially if the Season is fair, then the Sun disappears but for a short Space, the Reflex from the Sea being all the time visible; the Harvest and Winter are liable to great Winds and Rain, the South-West Wind annoying them more than any other; it is commonly observed to blow from the West for the most part of, if not all, *July*.

St. Kilda is Two Miles long from East to West; in Breadth from South to North One Mile; and Five Miles in Circumference. It is naturally fenced with one continued Face of a Rock of great height, except a part of the Bay, which lies to the South-East, and is well defended generally with a raging Sea: This Bay is Half a Mile in length, and as much in breadth; it is not common for any Vessels to anchor within this Bay, in case of a Storm, as it might be dangerous for them; therefore they drop anchor at the Entry, judging it the securest: The only place for landing, is on the North side of this Bay, upon a Rock with a little Declination, which is slippery, being covered with several sorts of Sea-Weeds; these, with a boisterous Sea, render the Place almost inaccessible, the Sea being seldom otherwise but under favour of a Neap Tide, a North-East or West Wind, or with a perfect Calm; when these

Circumstances concur, the *Birlin* or Boat is brought to the side of the Rock, and all the Inhabitants of both Sexes are ready to join their united Force to hale her through; for this end they have a Rope fastened to the Fore-part; and a competent Number of them are employed on each side; both these are determined by a Cryer, who is employed on purpose to warn them all at the same Minute, and he ceases whenever he finds it convenient to give them a breathing.

At the Head of the Bay is a plain Sand, only to be seen in Summer, the Winter-Sea washing it all off the Stones; there's no landing upon this Place with Safety, which the *Steward* has learned to his Cost. There is a little Bay on the West side of this Isle, all faced with an Iron-coloured Rock; some Vessels take shelter here, when the Wind is at South or North-East; there is a Place of the Rock here on the South-side the Rivulet, where you may land, if a Neap-Tide or Calm offer. The Sea is very impetuous every where about this Isle; they shewed me large Stones which were lately removed out of their place, and cast into the Gallies Dock; I measured some of them which were in length some seven, others eight Feet, and three or four Feet in breadth.

On the South Part of the South-East Bay is a little old ruinous Fort called the *Down*. It is evident from what has been already said, that this Place may be reckoned among the strongest Forts, Natural or Artificial, in the World; Nature has provided the Place with store of Ammunition for acting on the Defensive; that is, a heap of loose Stones in the Top of the Hill *Oterveaul*, directly above the Landing-place; it is very easy to dis-

charge Vollies of this Ammunition directly upon the Place of Landing, and that from a great eminence almost perpendicular; this I my self had occasion to demonstrate, having for my Diversion put it in practice to the great Satisfaction of the Inhabitants, to whom this Defence had never hitherto occurred: But they are resolved to make use of this for the future, to keep off the Lowlanders, against whom of late they have conceived strong Prejudices. A few Hands may be capable of resisting some hundreds by the above-mentioned Weapons. The Four great Mountains are faced on the side towards the Sea, with Rocks of extraordinary height; the Hill *Conagir* on the North side, is not less than Two Hundred Fathom perpendicular above the Sea.

Around this Isle are Four Arches or Vaults, through which the Sea passes, as does the Daylight from either side, which is visible to any, though at a considerable Distance; some of them representing a large Gate: Two of these look to the South, and two North-West; that on the Point of the West Bay is six Fathom high above Water, four in breadth, fifty Paces in length, the Top two Fathom thick, and very strong, the Cattle feeding upon it.

There are several Veins of different Stone to be seen in the Rocks of the South-East Bay; upon the North side of this Rock is one as it were cut out by Nature, resembling a Terras Walk. The Chrystal grows under the Rock at the Landing-place, this must be pierced a Foot or two deep, before the Chrystal can be had from the Bed of Sand where it lies; the Water at the bottom is of a black Colour; the largest Piece is not
above

above four Inches long, and about two in Diameter, each Piece Sexangular.

Upon the West side of this Isle lies a Valley with a Declination towards the Sea, with a Rivulet running through the middle of it, on each side of which is an Ascent of half a Mile; all which Piece of Ground is called by the Inhabitants, The Female Warrior's *Glen*: This *Amazon* is famous in their Traditions: Her House or Dairy of Stone is yet extant; some of the Inhabitants dwell in it all Summer, though it be some Hundred Years old; the whole is built of Stone, without any Wood, Lime, Earth, or Mortar to cement it, and is in form of a Circle Pyramid-wise towards the Top with a Vent in it, the Fire being always in the Centre of the Floor; the Stones are long and thin, which supplies the Defect of Wood: The Body of this House contains not above Nine Persons sitting; there are three Beds or low Vaults at the side of the Wall, which contains five Men each, and are separated by a Pillar; at the Entry to one of these low Vaults is a Stone standing upon one end; upon this she is reported ordinarily to have laid her Helmet; there are two Stones on the other side, upon which she is said to have laid her Sword: they tell you she was much addicted to Hunting, and that in her Days all the Space betwixt this Isle and that of *Harries*, was one continued Tract of Dry Land. Some years ago a Pair of large Deers-horns were found in the Top of *Oterveaul* Hill, almost a Foot under Ground, and a Wooden Dish full of Deer's Grease. 'Tis said of this Warrior, that she let loose her Grey-hounds after the Deer in *St. Kilda*, making their Course towards the opposite Isles. There

are several other Traditions concerning this famous *Amazon*. But I shall trouble my Reader with no more of them.

In this Isle are plenty of excellent Fountains or Springs; that near the Female Warrior's House is reputed the best: It is called *Tou-bir-nim-beuy*, importing no less than the Well of Qualities or Virtues; it runs from East to West, being sixty Paces Ascent above the Sea: I drank of it twice, an *English* Quart each time; it was very clear, exceeding cold, light and diuretic; I was not able to hold my Hand in it above a few Minutes for its Coldness; the Inhabitants of *Harries* find it effectual against Windy-Cholics, Gravel, and Head-aches; this Well hath a Cover of Stone.

There is a very large Well near the Town, called *St. Kilder's* Well; from which the Island is supposed to derive its Name; this Water is not inferior to that above-mentioned; it runs to the South-East from the North-West.

There is another Well within half a Mile of this, named after one *Conirdan*, an hundred Paces above the Sea, and runs from North-West towards the South-East, having a Stone Cover.

Within twelve Paces of this is a small excellent Fountain, which those of *Harries* and *St. Kilda* will needs call by the Author's Name, and were then resolved to give it a Cover of Stone, such as is above described.

There is a celebrated Well issuing out of the Face of a Rock on the North-side of the East Bay, called *the Well of Youth*, but is only accessible by the Inhabitants, no Stranger daring to climb the steep Rock; the Water of it is received, as it falls, into the Sea; it runs towards the South-East.

East. The Taste of the Water of those Wells was so agreeable to me, that for several Weeks after, the best Fountains in the adjacent Isles seemed to have lost their Relish. There is a Rivulet running close by the Town, and another larger beyond *Kilder's* Well; this last serves for washing Linnen, which it does as well without Soap, as other Water with; of this we had Experience, which was a Confirmation of what had been reported to us concerning this Water: We searched if in the Brinks we could discover any Fullers-Earth, but found none; we discovered some Pieces of Iron-Ore in several places; this Rivulet drops from the Mossy Ground in the top of the Hills.

The whole Island is one hard Rock, formed into four high Mountains, three of which are in the middle; all thinly covered with black or brown Earth, not above a Foot, some places half a foot deep; except the top of the Hills, where it is above three Foot deep, and affords them good Turf; the Grass is very short but kindly, producing plenty of Milk; the number of Sheep commonly maintained in *St. Kilda*, and the two adjacent Isles, does not exceed Two thousand, and generally they are speckled, some White, some Philamort, and are of a common size; they do not resemble Goats in any respect, as *Buchanan* was informed, except in their Horns, which are extraordinary large, particularly those in the lesser Isles.

The number of Horses exceeds not Eighteen, all of a Red Colour, very low, and smooth Skinned, and are employed in carrying Turf and Corn, and at their Anniversary Cavalcade, of which
here-

hereafter. The Cows, which are about Ninety in number, small and great, have their Fore-heads White and Black, which is discernable at a great distance, are of a low stature, but fat and sweet Beef; the Dogs, Cats, and all the Sea-Fowls of this Isle are speckled.

The Soil is very grateful to the Labourer, producing ordinarily Sixteen, Eighteen, or Twenty Fold; their Grain is only *Bear*, and some Oats; the Barley is the largest produced in all the Western Isles; they use no Plough but a kind of Crooked Spade; their Harrows are of Wood as are the Teeth in the front also, and all the rest supplied only with long Tangles of Seaware tied to the Harrow by the small ends; the Roots hanging loose behind, scatter the Clods broken by the Wooden Teeth; this they are forced to use for want of Wood. Their Arable Land is very nicely parted into Ten Divisions, and these into Subdivisions, each distinguished by the Name of some Deceased Man or Woman, who were Natives of the Place; there is one Spot called *Multa Terra*, another *Multus Agris*. The chief Ingredient in their Composts is Ashes of Turf mixed with Straw; with these they mix their Urine, which by Experience they find to have much of the Vegetable Nitre; they do not preserve it in Quantities as elsewhere, but convey it immediately from the Fountain to the Ashes, which by daily Practice they find most advantageous; they join also the Bones, Wings, and Entrails of their Sea-Fowls to their Straw; they sow very thick, and have a proportionable Growth; they pluck all their *Bear* by the Roots in Handfuls, both for the sake of their Houses,
which

which they thatch with it, and their Cows which they take in, during the Winter; the Corn produced by this Compost is perfectly free from any kind of Weed; it produces much Sorrel where the Compost reaches.

The Coast of *St. Kilda*, and the lesser Isles, are plentifully furnished with variety of Cod, Ling, Mackarel, Congars, Braziers, Turbet, Graylords, Sythes; these last two are of the same kind, only differing in bigness; some call them Black Mouths; they are large as any Salmon, and somewhat longer; there are also Laiths, Podloes, Herring, and many more; most of these are fished by the Inhabitants upon the Rock, for they have neither Nets nor long Lines. Their common Bait is the Lympets or *Patellæ*, par-boiled; they use likewise the Flesh of a Fowl called by them Bowger, which the Fish near the lesser Isles catch greedily; sometimes they use the Bowger's Flesh, and the *Patellæ* at the same time upon one Hook, and this proves successful also. In the Month of *July* a considerable quantity of Mackarel run themselves ashoar, but always with a Spring-Tide. The *Amphibia* seen here, are the Otters and Seals; this latter the Inhabitants reckon very good Meat; no sort of Trees, not even the least Shrub grows here, nor has a Bee been ever seen here.

Levinis, a Rock about fourteen Paces high, and Thirty in Circumference, but narrower at the Top, stands about half a League to the South-East Bay, covered with no kind of Earth or Grass; a Spring of Fresh Water issues out from the side of it; this Rock, by an ancient Custom, belongs to the Galley's Crew.

Betwixt

Betwixt the West point of *St. Kilda*, and the Isle *Soa*, is the famous Rock *Stackdonn*, *i. e.* a *Mischievous Rock*, for it hath proved so to some of their Number, who perished in attempting to climb it; it is much of the Form and Height of a Steeple; there is a very great Dexterity, and it is reckoned no small piece of Gallantry, to climb this Rock, especially that part of it called the *Thumb*, which is so little, that of all the Parts of a Man's Body, the Thumb only can lay hold on it, and that must be only for the Space of one Minute; during which time his Feet have no Support, nor any part of his Body touches the Stone, except the Thumb, in which Minute he must jump by the help of his Thumb, (the Agility of his Body concurring to raise him higher at the same time) to a sharp point of the Rock, which when he has got hold of, puts him out of danger, and having a Rope about his Middle, which he casts down to the Boat, by the help of this he brings up as many Persons as are designed for Fowling at this time; the Foreman, or principal Climber has the Reward of four Fowls bestowed upon him over and above his Proportion; perhaps, one might think four thousand too little to compensate so great a Danger as this Man incurs; But he has the Advantage by it, of being recorded among their greatest Heroes; as are all the Foremen who lead the Van in getting up this same *Mischievous Rock*.

Within Pistol-shot from this place is the Isle *Soa*, a Mile and an half in circumference, but contracted narrower toward the Top, being a full half Mile in difficult Ascent all round, most of it bare Rock, some parts of it covered with Grass, but dangerous to ascend; the Landing is also very hazard-

hazardous, both in Regard of the raging Sea, and the Rock that must be climbed; yet the Inhabitants are accustomed to carry Burthens both up it and down, and of this I was once a Witness. There is scarce any Landing here, except in one Place, and that under favour of a West-Wind and Neap-Tide; the Waves upon the Rock discover when it is accessible; if they appear White from *St. Kilda*, the Inhabitants do not so much as offer to launch out their Boat, in order to land in *Soa*, or any other Isle or Rock, tho' their Lives were at stake. This little Isle is furnished with an excellent Spring, the Grass is very sweet, feeds five hundred Sheep, each of which generally has two or three Lambs at a Birth, and every Lamb so fruitful, that it brings forth another before itself is a Year old. The same is also observed of Lambs in the little Isles adjacent to those of *Harries* and *North-Wist*. The Sheep in the Isle *Soa* are never milked, which disposes them to be the more prolific: There are none to catch them but the Inhabitants, whom I have seen pursue the Sheep nimbly down the steep Descent, with as great Freedom as if it had been a plain Field.

This Isle abounds with an infinite Number of Fowl, as Fulmar, Lavy, Falk, Bowger, &c.

There was a Cock-Boat some two Years ago came from a Ship for Water, being favoured by a perfect Calm; the Men discerned a prodigious Number of Eggs upon the Rocks, which tempted them to venture near the Place, and at last obtained a competent Number of them; one of the Seamen was industrious enough to put them into his Breeches, which he took off for that Pur-

pose; some of the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda* who happened to be in the Isle that Day were Spectators of this Diversion, and were offended at it, being done without their Consent; they therefore devised an Expedient, which at once robbed the Seamen of their Eggs and the Breeches; 'twas thus: They found a few loose Stones in the Superficies of the Rock, some of which they let fall down perpendicularly above the Seamen, the Terror of which obliged them quickly to remove, abandoning both Breeches and Eggs for their Safety; and the Tarpawlin Breeches were no small Ornament in a Place where all wore Girded Plaids.

About two Leagues and a Half to the North of *St. Kilda*, is the Rock *Stack-Ly*, two hundred Paces in circumference, and of a great height, being a perfect Triangle turning to a Point at the Top; it is visible above twenty Leagues distant in a fair Day, and appears blue; there is no Grass nor Earth to cover it, but sometimes perfectly White with *Solan* Geese sitting on and about it. One would think it next to impossible to climb this Rock, which I expressed, being very near it; but the Inhabitants assured me it was practicable, and to convince me of the Truth of it, they bid me look up near the Top, where I perceived a Stone Pyramid-house, which the Inhabitants built for lodging themselves in it in *August*, at which time the Season proves inconstant there; this obliges the Inhabitants in point of Prudence to send a competent Number of those to whose share the Lot falls; these are to land on this Rock some Days before the *Solan* Geese take Wing; if they

they neglect this Piece of Foresight, one windy Day may disappoint them of five, six, or seven thousand *Solan* Geese, which this Rock affords yearly. They are so very numerous here, that they cannot be divided in respect to their Lands, as elsewhere; this therefore is the Reason why they send here by Lots, and those who are sent act for the public Interest, and when they have knocked on the head all that may be reached, they then carry them to a sharp Point, called the *Casting-Point* , from whence they throw them into the Sea, for the height is such that they dare not throw them into the Boat, until the Boatmen cry, *Enough*, lest the Sea, which has a strong Current there should carry them off, as it does sometimes, if too many are thrown down at once: Thus, by Degrees, getting all in, they return home; and after their Arrival every Man has his share proportioned to his Lands, and what remains under the Number ten, is due to the Officer as a Part of his yearly Salary. In this Rock the *Solan* Geese are allowed to hatch their first Eggs, but it is not so in the Rocks next to be described; and that for this Reason, that if all were allowed to hatch at the same time, the Loss of the Product in one Rock would at the same time prove the Loss of all the rest, since all would take Wing pretty nearly at the same Time.

The Isle *Borera* lies near half a League from *Stack-Ly*, to the N. E. of it, being in circumference one Mile and an half; it feeds about four hundred Sheep *per Annum*, and would feed more, did not the *Solan* Geese pluck a large share of the Grass for their Nests.

This Isle is very high, all Rock, inaccessible except in a Calm, and has only one Place for Landing, towards the South: In the West end of this Isle is *Stallir-House*, which is much larger than that of the Female Warrior in *St. Kilda*, but of the same Model in all respects; it is all Green without like a little Hill; the Inhabitants have a Tradition that it was built by one *Stallir*, a devout Hermit of *St. Kilda*; and had he indeed travelled the Universe he could scarcely have found a more solitary Place for a Monastic Life.

There are about forty Stone Pyramids in this Isle, for drying and preserving their Fowl, &c. These little Houses are all of loose Stones, and seen at some Distance; here is also a surprizing Number of Fowl, the Grass as well as the Rocks filled with them. The *Solan* Geese possess it for the most part; they are always Masters wherever they come, and have already banished several Species of Fowl from this Isle.

An Earthquake was felt here in the Year 1686, which lasted only a few Minutes; it was very amazing to the poor People, who were unacquainted with any such Commotion before, or since.

To the West of *Borera* lies the Rock *Stack-Narmin*, within Pistol-shot; this Rock is half a Mile in circumference, and as inaccessible as any of the above-mentioned; there is a Possibility of landing only in two Places; nor that but in a perfect Calm, and after landing the Danger in climbing is very great. The Rock has neither Earth or Grass to cover it, has a Fountain of
good

good Water iffuing out above the middle of it, running Easterly, and abounds with *Solan* Geefe and other Fowl; here are feveral Stone Pyramids, as well for lodging the Inhabitants that attend the Seafons of the *Solan* Geefe, as for thofe that preferve and dry them. The Sea rife and rages extremely upon this Rock: We had the Curiofity, being invited by a fair Day, to vifit it for Pleafure, but we found it very hazardous; the Waves from under our Boat rebounding from off the Rock, and mounting over our Heads, we durft not venture to land, though Men with Ropes were fent before us; we thought it indeed hazard enough to be near this Rock; the Wind blowing frefh, we had much difficulty to reach *St. Kilda* again. I remember they brought 800 of the preceeding Year's *Solan* Geefe dried in their Pyramids; after our landing, the Geefe being caft together in one heap upon the Ground, the Owners fell to fhare out each Man his own; at which I was a little furprifed, they being all of a Tribe; but having found upon Enquiry that every Goose carried a diftinguifhing Mark on the Foot, peculiar to the Owner, I was then fatisfied in this Piece of Singularity.

There is a violent Current, whether Ebb or Flood, upon all the Coafts of *St. Kilda*, the leffer Ifles and Rocks. It is obferved to be more impetuous with Spring than Neap Tides; there are Eddies on all the Coafts, except at a fharp Point where the Tides keep their due Courfe; the Ebb Southerly, and Flood Northerly.

A S. E. Moon caufes high Tide; the Spring-Tides are always at the Full and New Moon; the
two

two Days following they are higher, and from that time decrease until the Increase of the Moon again, with which it rises gradually till the second after the full Moon. This Observation the Seamen find to hold true betwixt the *Mule of Kantyre*, and the *Farrow Head* in *Strathnaver*.

The Land-Fowls produced here are Hawks extraordinary good, Eagles, Plovers, Crows, Wrens, Stone-Chaker, Craker, Cuckoo; this last is said very rarely to be seen here, and that upon extraordinary Occasions, such as the Death of the Proprietor *Mack-Leod*, the Steward's Death, or the Arrival of some notable Stranger. I was not able to forbear laughing at this Relation, as founded only upon Fancy; which I no sooner expressed, than the Inhabitants wondered at my Incredulity; saying, that all their Ancestors for a *Series* of several Ages had remarked the Truth of this Observation, and for a further Confirmation appealed to the present Steward, whether he had not known this Observation to have been true, both in his own and his Father's Time, who was also Steward before him? After a particular Enquiry, he told me, that both in his own and Father's Life-time the Truth of the Observation had been constantly believed, and that several of the Inhabitants now living have observed the Cuckoo to have appeared after the Death of the two last Proprietors, and the two last Stewards, and also before the Arrival of several Strangers; it was taken notice of before our Arrival, which they ascribe to my coming there, as the only Stranger; the Minister having been there before.

The Sea-Fowl are, first, *Gairfowl*, being the stateliest, as well as the largest Sort, and above the Size of a *Solan* Goose, of a black Colour, red about the Eyes, a large white Spot under each, a long broad Bill; it stands stately, its whole Body erected, its Wings short, flies not at all; lays its Egg upon the bare Rock, which, if taken away, she lays no more for that Year; she is whole-footed, and has the hatching Spot upon her Breast, *i. e.* a bare Spot from which the Feathers have fallen off with the Heat in hatching; its Egg is twice as big as that of a *Solan* Goose, and is variously spotted, Black, Green, and Dark; it comes without Regard to any Wind, appears the first of *May*, and goes away about the middle of *June*.

The *Solan* Goose, as some imagine from the *Irish* word *Sou'l-er*, corrupted and adapted to the *Scottish* Language, *qui oculis irretortis è longinquo respicit prædam*, equals a common Goose in bigness; is by measure from the Tip of the Bill to the Extremity of the Foot, Thirty four Inches long, and to the End of the Tail, Thirty nine; the Wings extend very far, there being Seventy two Inches distance betwixt the extreme Tips; its Bill is long, strait, of a dark Colour, a little crooked at the Point; behind the Eyes the Skin of the side of the Head is bare of Feathers; the Ears small; the Eyes Hazel-coloured; it hath Four Toes; the Feet and Legs Black as far as they are bare; the Plumage is like that of a Goose. The Colour of the Old-ones is White all over, excepting the extreme Tips of the Wings, which are Black, and the Top of the Head, which is
yellow,

yellow, as some think the Effect of Age. The Young ones are of a Dark Brown Colour, turning White after they are a Year old; its Egg somewhat less than that of a Land-Goose, small at each end, and casts a thick Scurf, and has little or no Yolk; the Inhabitants are accustomed to drink it raw, having from Experience found it very pectoral, and cephalic. The *Solan* Geese hatch by turns. When it returns from its Fishing, it carries Five or Six Herrings in its Gorget, all entire and undigested: Upon its Arrival at the Nest, the hatching Fowl puts its Head in the Fisher's Throat, and pulls out the Fish with its Bill as with a Pincer, and that with very great Noise, which I had Occasion frequently to observe. They continue to pluck Grass for their Nests from their coming in *March* till the Young Fowl is ready to fly in *August* or *September*, according as the Inhabitants take or leave the First or Second Eggs. It is remarkable they never pluck Grass but on a windy Day; the Reason the Inhabitants give for this is, that a windy Day is their Vacation from Fishing, and they bestow it upon this Employment, which proves fatal to many of them; for after their Fatigue they often fall asleep, and the Inhabitants, taking the Opportunity, are ready at hand to knock them on the Head. Their Food is Herring, Mackrel, and *Syes*. *English* Hooks are often found in the Stomachs both of Young and Old *Solan* Geese, though none of this kind are used nearer than the Isles Twenty Leagues distant; this must happen either from the Fish pulling away the Hooks in those Isles and then

going to *St. Kilda*, or by their being carried thither; by the old Geese.

The *Solan* Geese are always the surest Sign of Herrings, for where-ever the one is seen, the other is never far off. There is a Tribe of barren *Solan* Geese which have no Nests, and sit upon the bare Rock; these are not the Young Fowls of a Year Old, whose Dark Colour would soon distinguish them, but Old ones, in all things like the rest; these have a Province, as it were, allotted them, and are in a separate State, having a Rock Two hundred Paces distant from all other; neither do they meddle with, or approach to those hatching, or any other Fowl; they sympathize and fish together; this was told me by the Inhabitants, and afterwards confirmed several times by my own Observation.

The *Solan* Geese have always some of their Number keeping Centry in the Night, and if they are surprized, as it often happens, all the Flock are taken one after another; but if the Centinel be awake at the Approach of the creeping Fowlers, and hear a Noise, it cries softly, *Grog, Grog*, at which the Flock move not; but if the Centinel sees or hears the Fowler approaching, he cries quickly, *Bir, Bir*, which should seem to import Danger, since immediately after, the whole Tribe take Wing, leaving the Fowler alone on the Rock to return home *re infectâ*, all his Labour for that Night being spent in vain. *Apollonius Tyanaeus* might have here found a large Field of Diversion, who is said to have travelled over many Kingdoms, to learn the Language of Beasts and Birds.

Besides this way of stealing upon them in the Night-time, they are also caught in common Gins of Horse-Hair, from which they struggle less to extricate themselves than any other Fowl, notwithstanding their Size and Strength; they are also caught in the Herring Loches with a Board set on purpose to float above Water, upon it a Herring is fixed, which the Goose perceiving, flies up to a competent height, till finding himself in a strait line above the Fish, bends his course perpendicularly piercing the Air, as an Arrow from a Bow, hits the Board, into which he runs his Bill with all his Force, and is irrecoverably taken. The *Solan* Goose comes about the middle of *March* with a S. W. Wind, warm Snow, or Rain, and goes away, according as the Inhabitants determine the Time, *i. e.* by taking away, or leaving its Egg, whether at the First, Second, or Third time he lays.

The *Fulmar* in Bigness equals the *Malls* of the Second rate; its Wings very long, the outside of which are of a Greyish white Colour, the inside and Breast all White, a thick Bill Two Inches long, crooked and prominent at the end, with wide Nostrils in the middle, all of a pale Colour; the upper Mandible, or Jaw, hangs over the lower on both sides and at the point, the Feet pale, not very broad, with sharp Toes, and a back Toe; it picks Food out of the Backs of living Whales, it as is said uses Sorrel with it, for both are found in its Nest; it lays its Egg commonly the First, Second, or Third Day of *May*; which is larger than that of a *Solan* Goose Egg, of a White Colour, and very thin, the Shell so
very

very tender that it breaks in pieces if the Season proves rainy; when the Egg is once taken away it lays no more that Year like other Fowl; the Young ones are hatched in the middle of *June*, and are ready to take Wing before the Twentieth of *July*; it comes in *November*, the sure Messenger of Evil Tidings, being always accompanied with boisterous W. Winds, great Snow, Rain, or Hail, and is the only Sea-Fowl that stays here all the Year, except the Month of *September*, and Part of *October*. The Inhabitants prefer this, whether Young or Old, to all other; the Old is of a delicate Taste, is a mixture of Fat and Lean; the Flesh White, no Blood to be found but in the Head and Neck; the Young is all Fat, except the Bones, having no Blood but in the Head; and when the Young *Fulmar* is ready to take Wing, upon being approached, ejects a Quantity of pure Oil out at his Bill, and will be certain to hit any that attack him, in the Face, though Seven Paces distant; this he uses by way of Defence; but the Inhabitants take care to prevent it, by surprizing the Fowl behind, having for this purpose a Wooden Dish fixed to the end of their Rods, which they hold before his Bill as he spouts out the Oil; they surprize him also from behind, by taking hold of his Bill, which they tie with a Thread, and upon their return home they untie it with a Dish under to receive the Oil; this Oil is sometimes of a Reddish, sometimes of a Yellow Colour, and the Inhabitants and other Islanders put a great Value upon it, and use it as a *Catholicon* for Diseases, especially for Pains in the Bones, Stitches, &c. some in the adjacent Isles use it as a

Purge, others as an Emetic; it is hot in Quality, and forces its passage through any Wooden Vessel.

The *Fulmar* is a sure Prognosticator of the W. Wind; if it comes to Land, no W. Wind is to be expected for some time, but if it keeps at Sea, or goes to Sea from the Land, whether the Wind blow from the S. N. or E. or whether it is a perfect Calm, his keeping the Sea is always a certain Prefage of an approaching W. Wind; from this Quarter he is observed to return with his Prey; its Egg is large as that of a *Solan* Goose, White in Colour, sharp at one end, somewhat blunt at the other.

The *Scraber*, so called in *St. Kilda*, in the *Farn* Islands *Puffinet*, in *Holland* the *Greenland Dove*, has a small Bill sharp pointed, a little crooked at the End, and prominent; it is as large as a Pigeon, its whole Body being Black, except a White Spot on each Wing; its Egg Grey, sharp at one End, and blunt at the other.

It comes in the Month of *March*, and in the Night-time, without Regard to any Wind; it is never to be seen but in the Night, being all the Day either abroad at Fishing, or upon its Nest, which it digs very far under Ground, from whence it never comes in Day-light; it picks its Food out of the living Whale, with which, they say, it uses Sorrel, and both are found in its Nest. The Young *Puffin* is fat as the Young *Fulmar*, and goes away in *August* if its First Egg be spared.

The *Lavy*, so called by the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda*, by the *Welch* *Guillem*, is nearly as big as a Duck; its Head, and upper-side of the Neck all downwards of a dark Brown, the Breast White,
the

the Bill strait and sharp pointed; the upper Chop hanging over the lower; its Feet and Claws Black.

Its Egg in bigness is near to that of a Goose Egg, sharp at one end, and blunt at the other; the Colour of it prettily mixed with Green and Black; others of them are of a pale Colour, with Red and Brown Streaks; but the latter is very rare; this Egg for ordinary Food is by the Inhabitants, and others, preferred above all the Eggs had here. This Fowl comes with a S.W. Wind, if fair, the twentieth of *February*; the time of its going away depends upon the Inhabitants taking or leaving its first, second, or third Egg: If it stays upon Land for the space of three Days without Intermission, it is a Sign of Southerly Wind and fair Weather; but if it goes to Sea before the third expires, it is then a Sign of a Storm.

The Bird, by the Inhabitants called the *Falk*, the *Rasor-Bill* in the West of *England*, the *Awk* in the North, the *Murre* in *Cornwall*, *Alca Hoeri*, is a size less than the *Lavy*; its Head, Neck, Back, and Tail, Black; the inside toward the middle of the Throat, White; the Throat under the Chin, of a dusky Black; beyond the Nostrils in the upper Jaw, is a Furrow deeper than that in the *Coulter Neb*, the upper Chop crooked at the end, and hangs over the lower, both having transverse Furrows. It lays its Egg in *May*, its Young take Wing the middle of *July*, if the Inhabitants do not determine its Stay longer, by taking the Egg; which in bigness is next to the *Lavy*, or *Guillem* Egg, and is variously spotted, sharp at one end, and blunt at the other.

The

The *Bowger*, so called by those in *St. Kilda*, *Coulter-Neb* by those in the *Farn* Islands, and in *Cornwall*, *Pope*, is of the Size of a Pigeon, its Bill short, broad, and compressed sidewise, contrary to the Bills of Ducks, of a Triangular Figure, and ending in a sharp Point, the upper Jaw arcuate and crooked at the Point; the Nostrils are long Holes produced by the Aperture of the Mouth; the Bill is of two Colours; near the Head, of an Ash Colour, and Red towards the Point; the Feet are Yellow, the Claws of a dark Blue; the whole Back Black, Breast and Belly White. They breed in Holes under Ground, and come with a S. W. Wind about the twenty-second of *March*, lay their Egg the twenty-second of *April*, and produce the Fowl the twenty second of *May*; if their first Egg be not taken away; it is sharp at one end, and blunt at the other.

The *Affilag* is as large as a *Linnet*, black Bill, wide Nostrils at the upper part, crooked at the point like the *Fulmar's* Bill. It comes about the twenty second of *March*, without any Regard to Winds, lays its Egg about the twentieth of *May*, and produces the Fowl towards the middle of *October*, then goes away about the end of *November*.

There are three sorts of *Sea-Malls* here; the first of a grey Colour, like a Goose, the second considerably less, and of a grey Colour; and the third sort white, and less in size than a Tame Duck; the Inhabitants call it *Reddag*; it comes the fifteenth of *April* with a S. W. Wind, lays its Egg about the middle of *May*, and goes away in the Month of *August*.

The *Tirma*, or *Sea-Pie*, by the Inhabitants called *Trilichan*, comes in *May*, goes away in *August*; if it comes the beginning of *May*, it is a Sign of a good Summer; if later, the contrary is observed. This Fowl is cloven-footed, and consequently swims not.

It is observed of all the Sea-Fowls here, that they are fattest in time of hatching, except the *Solan Geese*.

Every Fowl lays an Egg three different times, except the *Gair-fowl* and *Fulmar*, which lay but once; if the first or Second Egg be taken away, every Fowl lays but one other Egg that Year, except the *Sea-Malls*, and they ordinarily lay the third Egg, whether the first and second Eggs be taken away, or no.

The Inhabitants observe, that when the *April* Moon goes far in *May*, the Fowls are ten or twelve Days later in laying their Eggs, than ordinarily they use to be.

The Inhabitants likewise say, that of these Fowls, there first come over some Spies, or Harbingers, especially of the *Solan Geese*, tow'ring about the Islands where their Nests are, and that when they have made a Review thereof they fly away, and in two or three Days after, the whole Tribe are seen coming. Whither the Fowls fly, and where they spend their Winter, the Inhabitants are utterly ignorant of.

The Eggs are found to be of an astringent and windy Quality to Strangers, but, it seems, are not so to the Inhabitants, who are used to eat them from the Nest. Our Men upon their Arrival eating greedily of them became costive and fever-

ish, some had the *Hemorrhoid* Veins swelled; Mr. *Campbell* and I were at no small trouble before we could reduce them to their ordinary Temper; we ordered a Glister for them made of the Roots of *Sedges*, fresh Butter, and Salt, which, being administered, had its wished-for Effect; the Inhabitants reckoned this an extraordinary Performance, being, it seems, the first of the kind they had ever heard of.

They preserve their Eggs commonly in their Stone-Pyramids, scattering the burnt Ashes of Turf under and about them, to defend them from the Air, Dryness being their only Preservative, and Moisture their Corruption; they preserve them six, seven, or eight Months, as abovesaid; and then they become appetizing and loosening, especially those that begin to turn.

That such a great Number of wild Fowl are so tame, as to be easily taken by the Rods and Gins, is not to be much admired by any who will be at the pains to consider the Reason, which is the great Inclination of propagating their Species; so powerful is the natural Affection for their Offspring, that they chuse rather to die upon the Egg, or Fowl, than escape with their own Lives, (which they could do in a Minute) and leave either of these to be destroyed.

It deserves our Consideration to reflect seriously upon the natural Propensity and Sagacity of these Animals in their Kind; which, if compared with many rational Creatures, do far outstrip them, and justly obey the Prescript of their Natures, by living up unto that Instinct that Providence has given them.

The Inhabitants here are originally descended of those of the adjacent Isles, *Lewis, Harries, South and North Vist, and Sky*: both Sexes are naturally grave, and of a fair Complexion; such as are not fair are Natives only for an Age or two; but their Off-spring proves fairer than themselves.

There are several of them would be reckoned among Beauties of the first Rank, were they upon a Level with others in their Dress.

Both Men and Women are well proportioned, nothing differing from those of the Isles and Continent. The present Generation comes short of the last in Strength and Longevity. They shewed us huge big Stones carried by the Fathers of some of the Inhabitants now living; any of which is a Burthen too heavy for any two of the present Inhabitants to raise from the Ground; and this Change is all within the compass of forty Years. But notwithstanding this, any one inhabiting *St. Kilda* is always reputed stronger than two of the Inhabitants belonging to the Isle of *Harries*, or the adjacent Isles. Those of *St. Kilda* have generally but very thin Beards, and those too do not appear till they arrive at the Age of thirty, and in some not till after thirty five; they have all but a few Hairs upon the upper Lip, and point of the Chin.

Both Sexes have a Lisp, but more especially the Women, neither of them pronouncing the Letters, *d, g, or r*. I remember a Story of a *Craker* that lisped (two Years ago) the Boys of the Place took notice of, and were pleased to hear him, and to ape his Cry; one of the Steward's

Men beholding them, enquired the meaning of their Noise, which he told them was ridiculous; they returned Answer, that it was worth his while to behold the sport of a lisp^{ing} *Craker*, whom they aped; but the Man replied, that they played the Fool, for the *Craker* diverted himself in lisp^{ing} after them, and charged them with that Imperfection; the Boys no sooner heard this, but away they ran, and left the *Craker* to Cry and Lisp as he pleased.

There are some of both Sexes who have a Genius for *Poetry*, and are great Admirers of Music: the Trump or *Jews Harp* is the only Musical Instrument they have, which disposes them to Dance mightily. Their Sight is extraordinary good, and they can discern things at a great Distance: they have very good Memories, and are resolute in their Undertakings, chaste and honest, but reputed jealous of their Wives. They argue closely, and with less Passion than other Islanders, or those inhabiting the High-lands on the Continent.

They are very cunning, and there is scarce any circumventing of them in Traffic and Bartering: the Voice of one is the Voice of all, being all of a piece, one common Interest uniting them firmly together. They marry very young, the Women at about thirteen or fourteen; and are nice in examining the Degrees of Consanguinity before Marriage. They give Suck to their Children for two Years. The most ancient Person among them at present is not above eighty Years old.

Providence is very favourable to them in that they are not infested with several Diseases which are so predominant in the other Parts of the World;

World; the Distemper that most prevails here, is a Spotted Fever, and that too confined to one Tribe, to whom this Disease is, as it were, become hereditary; others are liable to Fluxes, Fevers, Pleurifies, and the Spleen; for all which they have but a few Remedies: To get away their pleuretic Disorders, they commonly lie upon a warm Hearth, with the Side affected downwards; this they look upon as almost infallible for dispelling the Humour, or Wind, that torments them. The Small-Pox hath not been heard of in this Place for several Ages, except in one Instance, of a single Man who had been infected on the Arrival of two of the Steward's Retinue, who had not been well recovered of it.

The Plants produced here, are *Lapathum Vulgare*, the common Dock, Scurvy-Grass round, being large as the Palm of the Hand, *Mille-Foil*, *Bursa Pastoris*, Silver-Weed, or Argentine, Plantain, Sage, Chicken-Weed, Sorrel, long, or the common Sorrel; All-Hail, or *Siderites*, the *Sea-Pinck*, *Tormentil*, the *Scurf upon the Stones*, which has a drying and healing Quality, and is likewise used for dying. The Inhabitants are ignorant of the Virtues of these Herbs; they never had a Potion of Physic given them in their lives, nor know any thing of Phlebotomy; so that a Physician could not expect his Bread in this Commonwealth.

They have generally good Voices, and sound Lungs; to this the *Solan* Goose Egg supped raw doth not a little contribute; they are seldom troubled with a Cough, except at the Steward's

Landing; which is no less rare, than firmly believed by the Inhabitants of the adjacent Isles.

Those of *St. Kilda*, upon the whole, gave me this following Account: That they always contract a Cough upon the Steward's Landing, and it proves a great deal more troublesome to them in the Night-time, they then discharging a great Deal of Phlegm; this Indisposition continues for some ten, twelve or fourteen Days; the most sovereign Remedy against this Disease, is their great and beloved *Catholicon*, the *Giben*, *i. e.* the Fat of their Fowls, with which they stuff the Stomach of a *Solan* Goose, in fashion of a Pudding; this they put in the Infusion of Oatmeal, which in their Language they call *Brochan*; but it is not so effectual now as at the Beginning, because of the frequent Use of it. I told them plainly, that I thought all this Notion of Infection was but a meer Fancy, and that, at least, it could not always hold; at which they seemed offended, saying, that never any, before the Minister and my self, was heard to doubt of the Truth of it; which is plainly demonstrated upon the landing of every Boat; adding further, that every Design was always for some End, but here there was no room for any, where nothing could be proposed; but for Confirmation of the whole, they appealed to the Case of Infants at the Breast, who were likewise very subject to this Cough, but could not be capable of affecting it, and therefore in their Opinion, they were infected by such as lodged in their Houses. There were scarce Young or Old in the Isle whom I did not examine particularly upon this Head, and all agreed in the Confirmation

tion of it. They add farther, that when any foreign Goods are brought thither, then the Cough is of longer Duration than otherwise. They remark, that if the Fever has been among those of the Steward's Retinue, though before their Arrival there, some of the Inhabitants are infected with it. If any of the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda* chance to live, though but a short Space, in the Isles of *Harries*, *Skey*, or any of the adjacent Isles, they become meagre, and contract such a Cough, that the *Giben* must be had, or else they must return to their Native Soil. This *Giben* is more sovereign for removing of Coughs, being used by many other Islanders, than those of *St. Kilda*. They love to have it frequently in their Meat as well as Drink, by which too frequent Use of it, it is apt to lose its Virtue; it was remarkable, that after this infected Cough was over, we Strangers, and the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda*, making up the Number of about two hundred and fifty, though we had frequently assembled upon the Occasion of Divine Service, yet neither Young nor Old among us all did so much as once cough more.

Some thirteen Years ago the Leprosy broke out among them, and some of their Number died by it; there are two Families at present labouring under this Disease. The Symptoms of it are, their Feet beginning to fail, their Appetite declining, their Faces becoming too red, and breaking out in Pimples, a Hoarseness, and their Hair falling off from their Heads, the Crown of it exulcerates and blisters, and lastly, their Beards grow thinner than ordinary.

This Disease may in a large measure be ascribed to their gross Feeding, and that on those fat Fowls,

Fowls, as the *Fulmar* and the *Solan* Geese; the latter of which they keep for the Space of a whole Year, without Salt or Pepper to preserve them; these they eat roasted or boiled.

One of these Lepers, being with me one Day at the *Fulmar*-Rock, importuned me to give him a Remedy for his Disease; I began to chide him for his ill Diet in Feeding so grossly; but finding the poor Fellow ready and implicitly disposed to do whatever I should enjoin, I bid him take Example from the *Fulmar*, who, they say, feeds sometimes on *Sorrel*; this was a very surprizing Advice to him, but when he considered that the *Fulmar* required *Sorrel* to qualify the *Whale*, he was the sooner persuaded that his *Giben* and *Goose* might require the same; I advised him further, to abstain from the *Giben* and *fat Fowls*, which was no small Trouble to him, for he loved them exceedingly: I obliged him likewise to mount the Hill *Conagor*, a Mile in Height, once every Morning and Evening, and he was very careful to comply with those Injunctions for the Space of three Days; in which short time he made some Advances towards recovering his almost lost Speech and Appetite, for his Throat was pretty nearly stopped up. He continued this Practice a Week longer, by which means he mended considerably; and I left him fully resolved to proceed in this Practice, until he was perfectly restored to his former State of Health. I had the Occasion to observe another of these Lepers rave for some Minutes, and when he was recovered to his right Mind, he worked at his ordinary Employment.

The Inhabitants are *Christians*, and much of the Primitive Temper, neither inclined to Enthusiasm

asm nor to Popery. They swear not the common Oaths that prevail in the World; when they refuse or deny to give what is asked of them, they do it with a strong Affeuration, which they express emphatically enough in their Language to this purpose, *You are no more to have it, than if God had forbid it*; and thus they express the highest Degree of Passion. They do not so much as name the Devil once in their life-times.

They leave off Working at twelve o' clock on *Saturday*, as an ancient Custom delivered down to them from their Ancestors, and go no more to it again till *Monday Morning*. They believe in *God the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost*; in a future State of Happiness and Misery, and that all Events, whether good or bad, are predetermined by God. They use a set Form of Prayer at the hoisting of their Sails: They lie down at Night, rise again in the Morning, and begin their Labours always in the Name of God. They have a Notion, that Spirits are embodied, and fancy them to be locally in Rocks, Hills, or where-ever they list, in an Instant.

Here are three Chapels, each of them built with one End towards the East, the other towards the West, the Altar always placed at the East end; the first of these is called *Christ Chapel*, near the Village; it is covered and thatched after the manner of their Houses; there is a Brazen *Crucifix* lies upon the Altar, not exceeding a Foot in length; the Body is compleatly done, distended, and has a Crown on, all in the Crucified Posture; they have it in great Reverence, though they pay no kind of Adoration or Worship to it, nor do they either
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handle or see it, except upon the Occasions of Marriage, and swearing decisive Oaths, which puts an end to all Strife, and both these Ceremonies are publicly performed. The Church-yard is about an hundred Paces in Circumference, fenced in with a little Stone Wall ; within which they bury their Dead; and take care to keep it perfectly neat, void of any kind of Nastiness, nor suffer their Cattel to have any access to it. The Inhabitants, Young and Old, come to the Church-yard every *Sunday* Morning, the Chappel not being capacious enough to receive them; here they devoutly say the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments.

They observe the Festivals of *Christmas*, *Easter*, *Good-Friday*, *St. Columba's Day*, and that of *All Saints*; upon this they have an Anniversary Cavalcade, the Number of their Horses not exceeding eighteen; these they mount by turns, having neither Saddle nor indeed a Bridle of any kind, except a Rope, which manages the Horse only on one side; they ride from the Shoar to the House, and when each Man has performed his Tour, the Show is at an end. They are very charitable to their Poor, of whom there are not at present above Three, and These carefully provided for, by this little Commonwealth; each particular Family contributing according to their Ability for their Necessities; their Condition is enquired into Weekly, or Monthly, as their Occasions serve; but more especially at the time of their Festivals, they slay some Sheep on purpose to distribute among the Poor, with Bread proportionable; they are very charitable likewise to
Strangers

Strangers in Distress; this they had Opportunity to express to a Company of *French* Men and *Spaniards* who lost their Ship at *Rokol* in the Year 1686, and came in, in a Pinnace to *St. Kilda*, where they were plentifully supplied with Barley-Bread, Butter, Cheese, *Solan* Geese, Eggs, &c. Both Seamen and Inhabitants were *Barbarians* one to another, the Inhabitants speaking only the *Irish* Tongue, to which the *French* and *Spaniards* were altogether Strangers. Upon their Landing they pointed to the *West* naming *Rokol* to the Inhabitants, and after that, they pointed downward with their Finger, signifying the sinking and perishing of their Vessel; they shewed them *Rokol* in the Sea Map, far West off *St. Kilda*. This, and much more, the Masters of these Ships told to a Priest in the next Island who understood *French*. The Inhabitants acquainted me that the Pinnace which carried the Seamen from *Rokol* was so very low, that the Crew added a Foot height of Canvas round it all, and began to work at it upon *Sunday*; at which the Inhabitants were astonished, and being highly dissatisfied, plucked the Hatchets and other Instruments out of their Hands, and did not restore them till *Monday* Morning.

The Inhabitants had Occasion to shew great Kindness to a Boat's Crew that was driven from the opposite Isle S. W. whither they themselves were driven afterwards, and where they were treated with no less Civility and Kindness than the abovementioned had been by them: So that it may be said of them with great Justice, that their Charity is as extensive as the Occasions of it.

The second of these Chappels bears the Name of *St. Columba*, the third of *St. Brianan*; both
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built

built after the manner of *Christ's Chappel*; having Church-yards belonging to them, and are a Quarter of a Mile distant from each other.

They told me of a Ship that dropped Anchor in the Mouth of the Bay the preceeding Year, and that the Lowlanders aboard her were not Christians; I enquired if their Interpreter, who they said spoke bad *Irish*, had owned this to be a Truth. They answered in the Negative; but that they knew this by their Practices, and that in these three Particulars; the first was the Working upon *Sunday*, carrying several Boats full of Stones aboard for Ballast; the second was the taking away some of their Cows without any Return for them, except a few *Irish* Copper Pieces; and the third was, the Attempt made by them to ravish their Women, a Practice altogether unknown in *St. Kilda*, where there has not been one Instance of Fornication or Adultery for many Ages before this Time. I remember they told me, that the Bribe offered for debauching the poor Women, was a Piece of broad Money, than which there could be nothing less charming in a Place where the Inhabitants make no Distinction betwixt a Guinea and a Sixpence.

Their Marriages are celebrated after the following Manner: When any two of them have agreed to take one another for Man and Wife, the Officer who presides over them, summons all the Inhabitants of both Sexes to *Christ's Chappel*, where being assembled, he enquires publicly if there be any lawful Impediment why these Parties should not be joined in the Bond of Matrimony? And if there be no Objection to the contrary,

trary, he then enquires of the Parties if they are resolved to live together in Weal and Woe, &c. After their Assent, he declares them married Persons, and then desires them to ratify this their solemn Promise in the Presence of God and the People, in order to which the Crucifix is tendered to them, and both put their right Hands upon it, as the Ceremony by which they swear Fidelity one to another during their Life-time.

Mr. *Campbell*, the Minister, married in this Manner fifteen Pair of the Inhabitants on the seventeenth of *June*, who immediately after their Marriage joined in a Country Dance, with a Bagpipe for their Music, which pleased them exceedingly.

They baptize in the following Manner: The Parent calls in the Officer, or any of his Neighbours, to baptize his Child, and another to be Sponsor; he that performs the Minister's Part being told what the Child's Name is to be, says, *A. B. I baptize thee to your Father and your Mother, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; then the Sponsor takes the Child in his Arms, as doth his Wife as Godmother, and ever after this there is a Friendship between the Parent and the Sponsor, which is esteemed so sacred and inviolable, that no Accident, how cross soever, is able to set them at variance; and it reconciles such as have been at enmity formerly.

This Isle belongs in Property to the Laird of *Mack-Leod*, Head of one of the most ancient Families of *Scotland*; it is never farmed, but most commonly bestowed upon some Favourite,

one of his Friends or Followers, who is called *Steward of the Isle*. The present Steward's Name is *Alexander Mack-Leod*, who pays Yearly to his Master an Acknowledgement of the various Products of this Isle. This Steward visits *St. Kilda* every Summer, and upon his Arrival he and his Retinue have *all the Milk in the Isle* bestowed on them in a Treat; there is another bestowed on them upon *St. Columba's Day*, the fifteenth of *June*; and we had a share of this second Treat. The Steward's Retinue consists of forty, fifty, or sixty Persons, and among them, perhaps, the most meagre in the Parish are carried thither to be recruited with good Chear; but this Retinue is now retrenched, as also some of their ancient and unreasonable Exactions.

The Steward lives upon the Charge of the Inhabitants until the time that the *Solan Geese* are ready to fly, which the Inhabitants think long enough; the Daily Allowance paid by them is very regularly exacted, with Regard to their respective Proportions of Lands and Rocks. There is not a Parcel of Men in the World more scrupulously nice and punctilious in maintaining their Liberties and Properties than these are, being most religiously fond of their ancient Laws and Statutes; nor will they by any means consent to alter their first, though unreasonable, Constitutions; and we had a pregnant Instance of this their Genius for preserving their ancient Customs; they have unchangeably continued their first and ancient Measures, as the *Maile*, *Amir*, and *Cubit*; this *Maile* contains ten Pecks: The *Amir*, which they at present make use of, is probably the *Hebrew*

brew Omer, which contains near two Pecks; the *Cubit*, or in their Language, *Lave Keile*, i. e. an Hand of Wood, is the Distance from the Elbow to the Finger's ends; this they only use in Measuring their Boats: The *Amir*, or rather *Half-Amir*, as they call it, is composed of thin Boards, and, as they acknowledge, has been used these fourscore Years; in which Tract of time it is considerably fallen short of the Measure of which it was at first, which they themselves do not altogether deny; the *Steward* to compensate this Loss, pretends to a received Custom of adding the Hand of him that measures the Corn to the *Amir* side, holding some of the Barley above the due Measure, which the Inhabitants complain of as unreasonable; the *Steward* to satisfy them, offered to refer the Debate to Mr. *Campbell's* Decision and mine, they themselves being to propose their Objections, and two of his Retinue, who were well skilled in the Customs of the Place, in the time of some of the former Stewards, being appointed to answer them, and he promised that he would acquiesce in the Decision, though it should prove to his Prejudice; but they would not alter that Measure if *Mack-Leod* did not expressly command it, being perswaded that he could not attempt to do so as his and their Ancestors had had it in such Esteem for so many Ages. So great was their Concern for this *Amir*, that they unanimously determined to send the Officer as Envoy, according to the ancient Custom, to represent their Case to *Mac-Leod*; this was the Result of a general Council, in which the Master of every Family has a Vote, since every Family pays this Officer

an *Amir* of Barley *per Annum*, to maintain his Character.

This Officer as such, is obliged to adjust the respective Proportions of Lands, Grass, and Rocks, and what else could be claimed by virtue of the last *Tack*, or Lease, which is never longer than for three Years, condescended to by the Steward; nay, he is obliged always to dispute with the Steward for what is due to any of them, and never to give over until he has obtained his Demand, or put the Steward into such a Passion, that he gives the Officer at least three Strokes with his Cudgel upon the Crown of his Head; which is the utmost that is required of him by their ancient Customs. I said to the Officer, who gave me this Account, what if the Steward should give him but one Blow? He answered, that the Inhabitants would not be satisfied if he did not so far plead as to irritate the Steward to give both a second and a third; I had the farther Curiosity to enquire of the Steward himself if *he* was wont to treat the Officer in this Manner; who answered, that it was an ancient Custom, which in his short time he had not had Occasion to practise, but if he should, he'd not confine himself to the Number of three Blows, if the Officer should prove indiscreet.

The Steward bestows some Acres of Land upon the Officer for serving him and the Inhabitants; he gives him likewise the Bonnet worn by himself upon his going out of the Island; the Steward's Wife leaves with the Officer's Wife the *Kercher*, or Head-dress worn by her self, and she bestows likewise upon her an Ounce of *Indi-*

go. The Steward has a large Cake of Barley presented to him by the Officer at every Meal, and it must be made so large as shall be sufficient to satisfy three Men at a time, and by way of eminence it is baked in the Form of a Triangle, and furrowed twice round; the Officer is likewise obliged to furnish the Steward with Mutton, or Beef, to his Dinner every *Sunday* during his Residence in the Island.

Notwithstanding these reciprocal Acts of Kindness, this Officer must be allowed to go in Quality of an Envoy to *Mack-Leod* against the Steward, upon extraordinary Occasions, if the Commonwealth have any Grievances to Redress, as that of the *Amir* now depending; but the Commission given him is limited, the whole Boat's Crew being joined in Commission with him, and are a Check upon him, lest his Dependance upon the Steward might be apt to bias him. He makes his Entry very submissively, taking off his Bonnet at a great Distance when he appears in *Mack-Leod's* Presence, bowing his Head and Hand low near to the Ground, his Retinue doing the like behind him one after another, making, as it were, a Chain; this being their Manner of walking both at home and abroad; for they walk not abreast as others do; and in making their Purchase among the Rocks, one leads the Van, and the rest follow.

The Number of People inhabiting this Isle, at present, is about one hundred and eighty, who in the Steward's Absence are governed by one *Donald Mack-Gill-Colm*, as their *Meijre*, which imports an *Officer*. This Officer was anciently chosen

chosen, or at least approved of, by the People, before the Steward settled him in his Office, but now the Stewards have the Nomination of him absolutely; he is President over them in all their Debates, takes care that the Lots be managed impartially, that none to whose share they fall may have cause to repine, whether it be for the Steward's Service, or that of the Common-wealth. The Use of the Lots, together with the Crucifix, do mightily contribute to their Peace and Quiet, keeping every one within his proper Bounds. It must needs be a very odd Case indeed that falls not within the Compass of either of these two to determine. When any Case happens which does not fall under the Decision of Lots, and it is capable of being decided only by the Oath of the Parties, then the Crucifix must determine the matter; and if it should prove to be a Case of the highest Importance, any of them are at liberty to refer it to his Neighbour's Oath, without any Suspicion of Perjury, provided the Ceremony of touching the Crucifix with their right Hand be observed; and this is always publicly performed.

If any Man is guilty of beating his Neighbour, he is liable to a Fine not exceeding the Value of two Shillings *Sterling*; if any has beat his Neighbour so as to draw Blood from him, he is liable to a Fine, not exceeding four Shillings and Sixpence. These Crimes are complained of by the Officer to the Steward upon his Arrival; who either exacts the whole, or dispenses with the Fines, as he judges convenient for their future Quiet and Peace.

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They have only one common *Kiln*, which serves them all by turns, as the Lots fall to their share; he whose Lot happens to be last does not resent it at all.

The Officer, by virtue of his Place, is obliged through a Point of Honour to be the first that Lands in the lesser Isles and Rocks, from whence they carry their Fowls and Eggs, and not without some Trouble too. This Notion of Honour exposes him to frequent Dangers; and, perhaps, it may not be unpleasant to describe it as I have seen it practised; and 'tis thus: When they come as near to the Rock as they think may consist with the Safety of the Boat, which is not a little tossed by the raging of the Sea, those, whose Turn it is, are employed with Poles to keep off the Boat, which is in great Danger, in Regard of the Violence of the Waves beating upon the Rock, and they are to watch the Opportunity of the calmest Wave; upon the first Appearance of which the Officer jumps out upon the Rock; if there be any apparent Danger he ties a Rope about his Middle, with one end of it fastened to the Boat; if he has landed safe, he then fixes his Feet in a secure Place, and by the Assistance of this Rope draws up all the Crew to him, except those whose Turn it is to look after the Boat; but if in jumping out he falls into the Sea, as his Misfortune is so to do sometimes, he is drawn into the Boat again by that part of the Rope that is so fastened to it, and then the next, whose Turn it is, must try his Luck, the Officer after his Fall being supposed to be sufficiently fatigued, so that he is not obliged to adventure his Person again to a second

Hazard upon this Occasion, especially as he is exposed to the greatest Danger that offers upon their landing when they return back again to the Isle, where the Sea often rages, he being obliged then by virtue of his Office to stay in the Boat, after the whole Crew are landed, where he must continue employing his Pole, until the Boat be either brought safe to Land, or split upon the Rocks.

They furnish themselves with Ropes to carry them through the more inaccessible Rocks; of these Ropes there are only three in the whole Island, each of them twenty four Fathoms in length; and they are either knit together and lengthened by tying the one to the other, or used separately as Occasion requires; the chief thing upon which the Strength of these Ropes depends, is Cows Hides salted, and cut out in one long piece; this they twist round the ordinary Rope of Hemp, which secures it from being cut by the Rocks; they join sometimes at the lower end two Ropes, one of which they tie about the Middle of one Climber, and another about the Middle of another, that these may assist one another in case of a Fall; but the Misfortune is, that sometimes the one happens to pull down the other, and so both fall into the Sea; but if they escape, as they commonly do of late, they get an incredible Number of Eggs and Fowls.

The Ropes belong to the Commonwealth, and are not to be used without the general Consent; the Lots determine the Time, Place, and Persons for using them; they get together in three Days a much greater Number of Fowls and Eggs than their Boat is able to carry away, and therefore
what

what is over and above they leave behind in their Stone-Pyramids: They catch their Fowls with Gins made of Horfe-hair, these are tied to the end of their Fishing-rods, with which the Fowlers creep through the Rocks indiscernably, putting the Noose over their Heads and about their Necks, and so draw them instantly; they use likewise Hair Gins which they set upon plain Rocks, both the ends fastened by a Stone, and so catch forty or fifty a Day with them.

The Inhabitants, I must tell you, run no small danger in quest of these Fowls and Eggs, inso-much that I fear it would be thought an *Hyperbole* to relate the Inaccessibleness, Steepness, and Height, of those formidable Rocks which they venture to climb. I my self have seen some of them climb up the Corner of a Rock with their Backs to it, making use only of their Heels and Elbows, without any other Assistance; and they have this way acquired a Dexterity in climbing beyond any I ever yet saw; Necessity has made them apply themselves to this, and Custom has perfected them in it; so that it is become familiar to them almost from their Cradles, the young Boys at three Years old begin to climb the Walls of Houses: Their frequent Discourses of climbing, together with the fatal End of several in the Exercise of it, is the same to them, as that of fighting and killing is with Soldiers, and is become as familiar and less formidable to them, than otherwise certainly it would be. I saw two young Men, to whose share the Lots fell in *June* last, for taking the Nest of a Hawk, which was in a high Rock above the Sea, bringing home the

Hawks in a few Minutes, without any Assistance at all.

Their Dogs are likewise very dextrous in climbing and bringing out from their Holes those Fowls which build their Nests far under Ground, such as the *Scraber*, *Puffinet*, &c. which they carry in their Teeth to their Masters, letting them fall upon the Ground before them, though asleep.

The Inhabitants speak the *Irish* Tongue only; they express themselves slowly but pertinently, and have the same Language with those of *Harries* and other Isles, who retain the *Irish* in its Purity.

Their Habit antiently was of Sheepskins, which has been wore by several of the Inhabitants now living; the Men at this Day wear a short Doublet reaching to their Waste, about that a double Plait of Plad, both ends joined together with the Bone of a *Fulmar*; this Plad reaches no further than their Knees, and is above the Waist girt with a Leather Belt; they wear Caps of the same Colour and Shape with the *Capuchines*, but shorter; and on *Sundays* they wear Bonnets; some of late have got Breeches, they are made wide and open at the Knees; they wear Cloth Stockings, and go without Shoes in Summer; their Leather is dressed with the Roots of *Tormentil*.

The Women wear upon their Heads a Linnen Dress, strait before, and drawing to a small point behind below the Shoulders, a Foot and an half in length, and a Lock of about sixty Hairs hanging down each Cheek, to their Breasts, the lower end tied with a Knot; their Plad, which is the upper Garment, is fastened upon their Breasts
with

with a large round Buckle of Brass in form of a Circle; the Buckles antiently worn by the Steward's Wives were of Silver, but the present Steward's Wife makes no use of either this Dress or Buckle. The Women inhabiting this Isle wear no Shoes nor Stockings in the Summer-time; their ordinary and only Shoes are made of the Necks of *Solan* Geese, which they cut above the Eyes, the Crown of the Head serves for the Heel, the whole Skin being cut close at the Breast, which end being sowed, the Foot enters into it, as into a piece of narrow Stocking; this Shoe does not last above five Days, and if the downy Side be next the Ground, then not above three or four; however, there are Plenty of them, some thousands being caught, or, as they term it, *Stolen* every *March*.

Both Sexes wear coarse *Flannel* Shirts, which they put off when they go to Bed; they thicken their Cloaths upon *Flakes*, or Mats of Hay twisted and woven together in small Ropes; they work hard at this Employment, first making use of their Hands, and then of their Feet; when they are at this Work, they commonly sing the whole time, one of their Number acting the Part of a prime Chantress, whom all the rest follow.

They place the Faces of their Dead towards the East when they bury them, bewail their Relations excessively, and upon these Occasions make doleful Songs, which they call *Laments*. Upon the News of the late *Mack-Leod's* Death, they abandoned their Houses, and mourned two Days in the Fields. They kill a Cow, or a Sheep, before the Interment, unless it be in the Spring, when

when this Ceremony is, on account of the Cattle being at that time poor and lean, deferred till they become fat.

Their ordinary Food is Barley and some Oat-Bread baked with Water; they eat all the Fowl, already described, being dried in their Stone-Houses, without any Salt or Spice to preserve them; and all their Beef and Mutton is eat fresh, after the same Manner they use the *Giben*, or Fat of their Fowls; this *Giben* is by daily Experience found to be a soveraign Remedy for the Healing of green Wounds; it cured a *Cancer* in an Inhabitant of the Isle of *Lewis*, and a *Fistula* in one *Nicholson* of *Sky*, in *St. Mary's* Parish; this was performed by *John Mack-Lean*, Surgeon there: They boil the Sea-plants, *Dulse*, and *Slake*, melting the *Giben* upon them instead of Butter, and upon the Roots of Silver-weed and Dock boiled, and also with their Scurvy-grass stoved, which is very purgative, and is here of an extraordinary Breadth. They use this *Giben* with their Fish, and it is become the common Vehicle that conveys all their Food down their Throats. They are undone for want of Salt, of which as yet they are but little sensible; they use no Set Times for their Meals, but are determined purely by their Appetites.

They use only the Ashes of *Sea-ware* for Salting their Cheese, and the shortest only, which grows in the Rocks, is used by them; that being reckoned the mildest.

Their Drink is Water, or Whey, commonly: They brew Ale but rarely, using the Juice of *Nettle-roots*, which they put in a Dish with a little
Barley-

Barley-meal Dough; these *Sowens*, (*i. e.* Flumery) being blended together, produce Yest, which puts their Wort into a Ferment and makes good Ale, which, when drank plentifully of, generally disposes them to dance merrily.

They preserve the *Solan* Geese in their Pyramids for the Space of a Year, flitting them down the Back, for they have no Salt to keep them with. They have built above five hundred of these Stone Pyramids for their Fowls, Eggs, &c.

We made particular Enquiry after the Number of *Solan* Geese consumed by each Family in the Year before we came there, and it amounted in the whole to twenty two thousand six hundred, which they said was less than the ordinary Number, a great many being lost by the Badness of the Season, and the great Current into which they are obliged to be thrown when taken, the Rock being of so extraordinary an Height, that they cannot reach the Boat.

There is one Boat sixteen Cubits long, which serves the whole Commonwealth; it is very curiously divided into Apartments proportionable to their Lands and Rocks; every Individual has his Space distinguished to a Hair's Breadth, which his Neighbour cannot encroach so much as to lay an Egg upon it.

Every Partner in Summer provides a large Turf to cover his Space of the Boat, thereby defending it from the Violence of the Sun, which (in its Meridian Height) reflects most vehemently from the Sea, and Rock, upon which the Boat lies; at the drawing it up, both Sexes are employed in pulling a long Rope at the Fore-end; they are

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determined in uniting their Strength, by the Cryer, who is therefore excepted from his share in the Labour.

There is but one Steel and Tinder-box in all this Commonwealth; the Owner whereof fails not upon every Occasion to strike Fire in the lesser Isles, to go there, and exact three Eggs, or one of the lesser Fowls from each Man as a Reward for his Service; this by them is called the *Fire-Penny*, and this Capitation is very uneasy to them; I bid them try their Chrystall with their Knives, which when they saw it produced Fire, they were not a little astonished, and at the same time accusing their own Ignorance, considering the Quantity of Chrystal growing under the Rock of their Coast. This Discovery has delivered them from the *Fire-Penny* Tax, and they are now no longer liable to it.

They have likewise a *Pot-Penny* Tax, which is exacted in the same manner as the *Fire-Penny* was, but is much more reasonable; for the Pot is carried to the Inferior Isles for the public Use, and is in hazard of being broken; so that the Owners may justly exact upon this score, since any may venture his Pot when he pleases.

When they have bestowed some Hours in fowling about the Rock, and caught a competent Number, they sit down near the Face of it to refresh themselves, and in the mean time they single out the fattest of their Fowls, plucking them bare, which they carry home to their Wives, or Sweet-hearts, as a great Present, and it is always accepted very kindly from them, and could not indeed well be otherwise, without great Ingratitude, fee-
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ing these Men ordinarily expose themselves to great Danger, if not to the Hazard of their Lives, to procure those Presents for them.

In the Face of the Rock, South from the Town, is the famous Stone, known by the Name of the *Mistress-Stone*; it resembles a Door exactly, and is in the very Front of this Rock, which is twenty or thirty Fathom perpendicular in height, the Figure of it being discernable about the Distance of a Mile: Upon the Lintel of this Door, every Batchelor-Wooper is, by an antient Custom, obliged in Honour to give a Specimen of his Affection for the Love of his Mistress, and it is thus: He is to stand on his left Foot, having the one Half of it over the Rock, he then draws the right Foot towards the left, and in this Posture bowing, puts both his Fists further out to the right Foot; after he has performed this, he has acquired no small Reputation, being ever after accounted worthy the finest Woman in the World: They firmly believe this Atchievement is always attended with the desired Success.

This being the Custom of the Place, one of the Inhabitants very gravely desired me to let him know the time limited by me for trying this Piece of Gallantry before I designed to leave the Place, that he might attend me: I told him the Performance would have a quite contrary Effect upon me, by robbing me both of my Life and Mistress at the same Moment; but he was of a contrary Opinion, and insisted on the good Fortune attending it; but I must confess all his Arguments were too weak to make me attempt the Experiment.

They take their Measures in going to the lesser Islands from the Appearance of the Heavens; for

when it is clear or cloudy in such a Quarter, it is a Prognostic of Wind or fair Weather; and when the Waves are high on the East-point of the Bay, it is an infallible Sign of a Storm, especially if they appear very White, even though the Weather be at that time calm.

If the Waves in the Bay make a Noise as they break before their beating upon the Shoar, it is an infallible Forerunner of a W. Wind; if a Black Cloud appears above the South side of the Bay, a S. Wind follows some Hours afterwards. It is observed of the Sea betwixt *St. Kilda* and the Isles *Lewis*, *Harries*, &c. that it rages more with a N. Wind, than when it blows from any other Quarter. And it is likewise observed to be less raging with the S. Wind than any other.

They know the Time of the Day by the Motion of the Sun from one Hill or Rock to another; upon either of these the Sun is observed to appear at different times; and when the Sun does not appear, they measure the Day by the ebbing and flowing of the Sea, which they can tell exactly, though they should not see the Shoar for some Days together: Their Knowledge of the Tides depends upon the Changes of the Moon, which they are likewise very exact in observing.

They use for their Diversion short Clubs and Balls of Wood; the Sand is a fair Field for this Sport and Exercise, in which they take great pleasure, and are very nimble at it; they play for Eggs, Fowl, Hooks, or Tobacco; and so eager are they for Victory, that they strip themselves to their Shirts to obtain it: They use swimming and diving, and are very expert in both.

The Women have their Assemblies in the Middle of the Village, where they discourse of their Affairs, in the mean time employing their Distaff, and spinning in order to make their Blankets; they sing and jest for Diversion, and in their way understand Poetry, and make Verses. Both Men and Women are very courteous; as often as they passed by us every Day, they saluted us with their ordinary Compliment of *God save you*; each of them making their respective Courtesies.

Both Sexes have a great Inclination to Novelty; and, perhaps, any thing may be thought new with them that is but different from their way of managing Land, Cattle, Fowl, &c. A Parcel of them were always attending the Minister and me, admiring our Habit, Behaviour, &c. In a word, all we did or said was wonderful in their Esteem; but above all, Writing was most astonishing to them; they cannot conceive how it is possible for any Mortal to express the Conceptions of his Mind in such Black Characters upon White Paper. After they had with Admiration argued upon this Subject, I told them, that within the Compass of two Years or less, if they pleased, they might easily be taught to read and write, but they were not of the Opinion that either of them could be obtained, at least by them, in an Age.

The Officer, in his Embassy in *July* last, travelled so far as to Land on the Continent next to *Sky*, and it was a long Journey for a Native of *St. Kilda*, for scarce any of the Inhabitants have ever had the Opportunity of travelling so far into the World.

They observed many wonderful things in the Course of their Travels; and think *Mack-Leod's*

Family is equivalent to that of an Imperial Court, and believe the King alone to be Superior to him: They say his Lady wore so strange a *Lowland* Dress, that it was impossible for them to describe it; they admired Glass Windows hugely, and a Looking-Glass to them was a Prodigy; they were amazed when they saw Hangings covering a thick Wall of Stone and Lime, and condemned it as vain and superfluous.

They reckon the Year, Quarter, and Month, as in *Great Britain*. They compute the several Periods of Time by the Lives of the Proprietors and Stewards, of whose greatest Actions they have a Tradition, of which they discourse with as great Satisfaction, as any Historian reflecting on the *Cæsars*, or greatest Generals in the World.

They account Riding one of the greatest of earthly Grandeurs, and told me with a strange Admiration, that *Mack-Leod* travelled not on foot, as they supposed all other Men did, and that they had seen several Horses which were kept on purpose for him to ride upon.

One of their Number, landing in the Isle of *Harries*, enquired who was the Proprietor of those Lands? They told him, that it was *Mack-Leod*; which did not a little raise his Opinion of him. This Man afterwards, when he was in the Isle of *Sky*, and had travelled some Miles there, one Day standing upon an Eminence, and looking round about, fancied he saw a great Part of the World, and then asked to whom those Lands belonged? and when one of the Company had acquainted him, that *Mack-Leod* was Master of those Lands also, the *St. Kilda* Man, lifting up his
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Eyes and Hands to Heaven, cried out with Admiration, *O Mighty Prince! who art Master of such vast Territories!* This he expressed so emphatically in the *Irish* Language, that the saying from that time became a Proverb whenever any body would express a Greatness and Plenitude of Power.

One of the things they admired most, was the Growth of Trees; they thought the Beauty of the Leaves and Branches admirable, and how they grew to such a height above Plants, was far beyond their Conception: One of them, much astonished, told me, that the Trees pulled him back as he travelled through the Woods: And they resolved once to carry some few of them on their Backs to their Boats, and take them to *St. Kilda*, but upon second Thoughts, the Length of the Journey, being through the greatest Part of the Isle of *Sky*, deterred them from this undertaking, for though they excel others in Strength, they are yet but bad Travellers on foot, being so much unused to it.

One of their Number travelling in the Isle of *Sky*, to the South Part of it, thought this a prodigious Journey; and seeing in the opposite Continent the Shire of *Inverness*, divided from *Sky* only by a narrow Sea, enquired of the Company, if that was the Border of *England*.

One of the *St. Kilda* Men, after he had taken a pretty large Dose of *Aqua-Vitæ*, and was become very heavy with it, as he was falling into a Sleep, and fancying it to be his last, expressed to his Companions the great Satisfaction he had in meeting with such an easy Passage out of this World;

World; *For*, said he, *it is attended with no kind of Pain.* In short, their Opinion of foreign Objects is as remote from the ordinary Sentiments of other Men as they are themselves from all foreign Converse.

I must not omit acquainting the Reader, that the Account given of the Sailors Rudeness to the Inhabitants has created great Prejudices in them against Seamen in general; and though I endeavoured to bring them into some good Opinion of them, it will not be improper to speak of the Terms upon which the Inhabitants are resolved to receive Strangers. They will admit of no Number exceeding ten, and they too must be unarmed, or the Inhabitants will oppose them with all their Might; but if any Number, not exceeding the above, come peaceably, and with good Designs, they may expect Water and Fire *Gratis*, and what else the Place affords, on the easiest Terms in the World.

The Inhabitants of *St. Kilda*, are much happier than the generality of Mankind, being almost the only People in the World who feel the Sweetness of true Liberty: What the Condition of the People in the Golden Age is feigned by the Poets to be, that theirs really is, I mean, in Innocency and Simplicity, Purity, mutual Love and cordial Friendship, free from solicitous Cares, and anxious Covetousness; from Envy, Deceit, and Dissimulation; from Ambition and Pride, and the Consequences that attend them. They are altogether ignorant of the Vices of Foreigners, and governed by the Dictates of Reason and Christianity, as it was first delivered to them by
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those Heroic Souls whose Zeal moved them to undergo Danger and Trouble to plant Religion here in one of the remotest Corners of the World.

There is this only wanting to make them the happiest People in this habitable Globe, *viz.* That they themselves do not know how happy they are, and how much they are above the Avarice and Slavery of the rest of Mankind. Their way of living makes them contemn Gold and Silver, as below the Dignity of human Nature; they live by the Munificence of Heaven, and have no Designs upon one another, but such as are purely suggested by Justice and Benevolence.

There being about thirty of the Inhabitants one Day together in the Isle *Soa*, they espied a Man with a Grey Coat and Plad, in a Shirt, floating on the Sea upon his Belly, and saw likewise a *Mall* pecking at his Neck; this Vision continued above a Quarter of an Hour, and then disappeared; but shortly after, one of the Spectators chanced to fall into the Sea, and being drowned, resembled the forewarning Vision in all things, and the *Mall* was also seen upon his Neck; this was told me by the Steward some Years before, and afterwards was confirmed to me by such as were themselves Eye-witneses of it.

None of the Inhabitants pretended to the *Second Sight*, except *Roderick* the Impostor, and one Woman, and she told her Neighbours that she saw, some Weeks before our coming, a Boat (different from that of the Steward) with some Strangers in it, drawing near to their Isle.

An Account of one Roderick, supposed to have had Conversation with a Familiar Spirit, and pretending to be sent by St. John the Baptist with new Revelations and Discoveries.

AFTER our landing, the Minister and I, according to our first Resolution, examined the Inhabitants apart concerning the new pretended Religion delivered to them by their false Prophet.

All of them, Young as well as Old, both Men and Women, unanimously agreed in the following Account: They heartily congratulated the Minister's Arrival, and at the same time declared their Abhorrence of the Impostor's Delusions, and with repeated Instances begged for the Lord's sake that he might be for ever removed out of the Isle.

This Impostor is a comely, well-proportioned Fellow, red-haired, and exceeding all the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda* in Strength, Climbing, &c. He is illiterate, and under the same Circumstances with his Companions; for he had not so much as the Advantage of ever seeing any of the Western Isles; all his Conversation being with the Steward's

ard's Retinue only, who were as ignorant of Letters as himself.

In the eighteenth Year of his Age, he took the Liberty of going to fish on a *Sunday* (a Practice altogether unknown in *St. Kilda*); and he asserts, that in his return homeward, a Man in *Lowland* Dress, *i. e.* a Cloak and Hat, appeared to him upon the Road; at this unexpected Meeting, *Roderick* fell flat on the Ground in great Disorder; the Man desired him not to be surprized at his Presence, for that he was *John the Baptist* immediately come from Heaven with good Tidings to the Inhabitants of that Place, who had been for a long time kept in Ignorance and Error; that he had Commission to instruct *Roderick* in the Laws of Heaven for the Edification of his Neighbours: *Roderick* answered, That he was no way qualified for so great a Charge; but the pretended *Baptist* desired him to be of good Courage, for that he would instantly make him capable for his Mission, and then delivered to him the following Scheme, in which *Roderick* so mixed the laudable Customs of the Church with his own Diabolical Inventions, that it became impossible for so ignorant a People, to distinguish the one from the other.

The first and principal Command he imposed upon them, was that of the *Friday's* Fast, which he enjoined with such Strictness, as not to allow one of them to taste any kind of Food before Night, no, not so much as a Snuff of Tobacco, which they love extremely; this bare Fast, without any religious Exercise attending it, was the first Badge and Cognizance of his Followers. He persuaded the People, that some of their deceased Neighbours were nominated Saints in Heaven, and Ad-

vocates for those who survived; he told them, every one had his respective Advocate; that the Anniversary of every Saint was to be commemorated by every Person under whose Tutelage he was reputed to be. And this is observed by treating the Neighbours with a plentiful Entertainment of Beef or Mutton, Fowls, &c. the Impostor himself being ever the chief Guest at the Feast; from whence a Share of the Provision was punctually sent to his Wife and Children; the Number of Sheep ordinarily consumed on these Occasions was proportionable to the Ability of him that bestowed them.

He imposed likewise several Penances which they were obliged to submit to, under pain of being expelled from the Society of his Congregation, which he pretended to be founded upon no less Authority than that of St. *John the Baptist*, and threatened to inflict the severest Judgments upon those who should prove refractory, and not obey his Injunctions.

The ordinary Penance he imposed upon them, was making them stand in cold Water, without any Regard to the Season; during his Pleasure; and if there were more of them upon whom this Severity was to be inflicted, they were to pour cold Water upon one another's Heads till they had satisfied his tyrannical Humour. This Diabolical Severity was Evidence enough, that he was sent by him who is the *Father of Lies, and was a Murtherer from the beginning*.

He commanded that every Family should slay a Sheep upon the Threshold of their Doors, but a Knife must not so much as touch it; he would have them only make use of their crooked Spades for

for their Instruments to kill them with; for which, if duly considered, there is nothing more improper, the Edge with which he commanded the Sheep's Neck to be cut being almost half an Inch thick. Now this was to be done in the Evening, and if either Young or Old had tasted a Bit of the Meat of it that Night, the equivalent Number of Sheep were to be slain the following Day, after the former Manner.

He forbid the Use of the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments, and instead of them prescribed diabolical Forms of his own. His Prayers and rhapsodical Forms were often blended with the Names of God, our blessed Saviour, and the immaculate Virgin; he used the *Irish* word *Pherfichin*, *i. e.* Verses, which is not known in *St. Kilda*, nor in the North-West Isles, except to such as can read the *Irish* Tongue. But what seemed most remarkable, in his obscure Prayers, was his mentioning *E L I*, with the Character of our Preserver. He used several unintelligible Words in his Devotions, of which he could not tell the Meaning himself; saying only, that he had received them implicitly from *St. John the Baptist*, and delivered them before his Hearers without any Explication.

He taught the Women a Devout Hymn, which he called the *Virgin Mary's*, as sent from her; this Hymn was never delivered in public, but always in a private House, or some remote Place where no Eye could see them but that of Heaven; he persuaded the innocent Women that it was of such Merit and Efficacy, that any one who was able to repeat it by heart, would not die in Child-bearing:

bearing: And every Woman paid a Sheep to the Impostor for teaching her the Hymn.

The Place and Manner of teaching this Hymn afforded him a fair Opportunity of debauching many of the simple Women; and this some of their Number acknowledged to the Minister and me upon Examination.

He prescribed to all his Auditory, long Rhimes, which he called Psalms; these he ordinarily sung at his rhapsodical Preachments.

He endeavoured to alter the common way of burying, *viz.* in placing the Faces of the Dead to the East, and would have persuaded them to place them to the South, and that he might prevail the more with them so to do, he set the Bodies of those of his own Family who happened to die, in that Position; but the Inhabitants would never follow his Example in this, but continued their former Practice.

He persuaded the Women, that if in all things they complied with his new Revelation, they should be undoubtedly carried to Heaven, and that in their Journey thither they were to pass through the Firmament riding upon White Horses. These and many more such Whims he imposed upon the People, of which this is a short Abstract.

This unhappy Fellow to consecrate his Enterprize, pitched upon a little rising spot of Ground, which he called *John the Baptist's Bush*; upon which he said these Oracles were delivered to him. This Bush was from that time forward believed to be holy Ground, and must not be trod upon by any of their Cattle; if by chance

one of them happen to touch it, it was forthwith to be slain and eaten by *Roderick* and the Owners; and if any proved refractory, and were resolved to spare their Cattle, a most dreadful Commination was issued out against them, of being thenceforward excluded from any further Fellowship with him, until they should acknowledge their Faults, and comply with his luxurious Desires, which to disobey he made them believe was damnable. It was reckoned meritorious for any body to reveal those who had transgressed the Orders given by him.

This Impostor continued for several Years, without Controul, to delude these innocent well-meaning People, until at last his villanous Design upon the Women was found out, which he intended to accomplish under the Mask of the devout Hymn he taught them, and was first discovered by the Officer's Wife, who the Impostor first made a Profelyte of to his false Doctrines, and after that would have debauched her from her conjugal Fidelity. This Woman was so heroically virtuous, as to communicate his lewd Design to her Husband, who ordered the Matter so as to be in a Room hard by at the time he supposed *Roderick* would be coming, where he continued till this Letcher began to caress his Wife, and then he thought himself obliged seasonably to appear to her Rescue, and boldly reprov'd the Impostor for his wicked Practices, which were so widely contrary to his Profession, and that upon the whole it appeared he had no true Mission.

The Impostor was very much surprized at this unexpected and fatal Disappointment, which put
him

him into an extream Disorder, infomuch that he asked the Officer's Pardon, acknowledged his Crime, and promised never to attempt the like again. The Officer continued to upbraid him, telling him, he was instigated by the Devil; that Innocence and Chastity were always the Effects of true Religion, and that the contrary Practices were countenanced only by false Prophets; and that now no other Proof was wanting of his being a notorious Deceiver: However the Impostor's great Reputation prevailed with the Officer to patch up a Friendship, for the Continuance of which he condescended to be *Roderick's* Sponsor at the Baptism of one of his Children; of which Ceremony an Account has been given: When there is no Opportunity of being Sponsor to each other, and it is thought necessary to enter into Bonds of Friendship at Baptism, the Inhabitants of the Western Isles supply this Ceremony by tasting a Drop of each other's Blood.

Notwithstanding the Friendship thus patched up between the Officer and *Roderick*, the latter's Miscarriages got air, which administred Occasion to the most thinking among them, to doubt much of his Mission; his Father, who was reputed a very honest Man, told him frequently, that he was a Deceiver, and would come to a fatal End. For this Impostor once prophesied that one of the Inhabitants (whose Name I have heard) should be killed in a Battle, to be fought in the Isle of *Harries*, within a limited Space of Time; the unthinking Man relying on this infallible Oracle, ventured more desperately on the Rock than usual, fancying he could not fall, but it so happened that

that he tumbled over and was drowned, at which the Inhabitants were a good deal alarmed; but the Impostor still continued in the Exercise of his pretended Mission.

One of the Inhabitants called *Muldonich*, alias *Lewis*, Cousin-German to this Man, had a Ewe which brought forth three Lambs at one time, which were seen feeding upon the sacred Bush, but *Lewis* refused to comply with the Order for killing the Sheep, and had the Boldness to aver, that it was an unreasonable Piece of Worship to destroy so many Cattle, and deprive the Owners of their Property, adding withal, that he never heard any such thing practised in any of the Western Isles upon a Religious Account. The Impostor insisted that the heavenly Command was to be observed by all his Followers, adding the dreadful Threatning against such as proved disobedient; but *Lewis* nevertheless remained obstinate, chusing to be excluded from such Worship, rather than kill his Sheep.

The silly People expected no less than a speedy Judgment to befall this Recusant, but when nothing ensued upon his Disobedience, they all began to have a less Veneration for the Impostor than before; and began to think within themselves, that they might as well have ventured to run the same risque with *Lewis* for the Preservation of their Cattle.

Notwithstanding this notorious Villainy, the Impostor continued to maintain his Authority, till one Night (for it was always at Night, that he kept his Religious Meetings) by a special Providence, a Boy of the Isle of *Harries*, (who
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had staid with his Father a Year in *St. Kilda*, and was employed in mending their Boat) happened to go into the House where *Roderick* was preaching; the Boy lurked in the dark, and gave his Father an account of what he had heard, at least so far as he could remember; which the Boy's Father communicated to the Steward upon his Arrival, who being highly concerned at the Relation given him, carried *Roderick* along with him to the Isle of *Sky* before the late *Mack-Leod*, who forbid him from that time forward to preach any more, on pain of Death.

This was a sensible Mortification, as well as Disappointment to the Impostor, who had flattered himself that *Mack-Leod* would hear him preach, and expected no less than to persuade him to become a Profelyte as he has since confessed.

This Fellow asserts, that every Night after he had assembled the People, he heard a Voice without, saying, *Come you out*; which when he heard, he had no Power to stay within; and that after his going forth, *John the Baptist* always met him, and instructed him what he should say to the People at that particular Meeting. He says, that *St. John* used to repeat the Discourse to him only once, which he owns he could scarcely remember one Sentence of, and therefore he enquired of the Saint how to behave himself in this Case; that the answer was, *Go, you have it*; which the Impostor believing, was upon his return able to deliver fluently all he had heard, and would continue, after his own way, for several Hours together

together, to preach until he had lulled most of his Hearers to sleep.

When the Earthquake before-mentioned was over, one of the Inhabitants enquired of him with Admiration, how the Rock was made to tremble? He answered, that it was the Effect of pleasant Musick played by a devout Saint in a Church under Ground: His Neighbour owned his Love for Musick, but heartily wished never to hear any more of this kind, which carried so great Terror along with it.

The Impostor owned the Truth of all this Account, first to the Minister and me, and then publickly after divine Service, in the Presence of all the Inhabitants, and such as were come to that Place from the Isle of *Harries*. The Minister and Congregation jointly prayed for Repentance and Pardon to this poor Wretch, which when ended, we carried him and all the Inhabitants to the Bush pretended to be sacred; he himself, leading the Van, was commanded to demolish that Wall which he had ordered to be built round the said Bush (which otherwise would in a short time have proved a Purgatory, to have robbed them of all their Goods) which he and the Inhabitants did in the Space of an Hour; we made them scatter the Stones up and down in the Field, lest their Posterity might see such a Monument of Folly and Ignorance. We reprov'd the credulous People for complying implicitly with such Follies and Delusions as were delivered to them by the Impostor; and all of them with one Voice answered, that what they did was unaccountable;

but seeing one of their own Number and Stamp in all respects, endued, as they fancied, with a powerful Faculty of preaching so fluently and frequently, and pretending to converse with *John the Baptist*, they were induced to believe his Mission from Heaven, and therefore complied with his Commands without Dispute, and the rather, as he did not attempt to change their Laws of Neighbourhood.

They now regret their wandering, and hope that God may pardon their Error, as what they did was with a Design (though a mistaken one) to serve him.

They are now overjoyed to find themselves undeceived, and the Light of the Gospel restored to them, as it was at first delivered to their Ancestors by the first Christian Monks, who had gone thither to instruct them.

This Impostor is a Poet, and also endued with that rare Faculty of enjoying the *Second Sight*, which makes it the more probable that he was haunted by a familiar Spirit. It hath been observed of him, before his Imposture was discovered, that so often as he was employed by the Steward to go to, or return from, *Harries*, they were always exposed to the greatest Dangers by violent Storms, being at one time driven fifty Leagues to the N. E. and by special Providence were at last cast upon the little Isle *Rona*, twenty Leagues N. E. of *Lewis*; the Steward's Wife, and all his Crew reflecting upon these Dangers since the Discovery of his Imposture, could never be prevailed upon to receive him again into their

Boat.

Boat. They often intreated Mr. *Campbell* and me not to admit him into our Boat, but we did not yield to these Fears, for we received and brought him along with us, and afterwards delivered him to the Steward's Servants in the Isle of *Pabby* in *Harries*, where he remains still in Custody in order to his Trial.

F I N I S.



