

FATHER ALLAN MACDONALD.
The Cathedral, Oban.

Mss. now in the possession of Bishop Grant.

"Strange Things. No 86. There is a dance called "Cailleach an durdain" - "The Carlin of the dusk". It is a Punch and Judy dance and has a special pip tune for itself called "Cailleach an Durdain". Two take part in the dance - an old man and an old trembling shivering hag (a man dressed in punch attire does her part). The old hag comes in trembling and quivering with a stick in her hand and her husband similarly armed. They fight with the sticks - dancing all the time. Finally the old man thrusts his stick into her body and she falls down dead. The old man beats his hands and howls most atrociously as it occurs to him that he has murdered the old woman. The sudden change from anger and animosity to grocer-heartedness for the loss of his partner in life is ridiculous. He bends down over her only to find out more surely that she is dead. The lamentation is heart-rending. Again and again he bends over her and again his sorrow is only intensified. He bends down and touches her foot and the foot rises a little and quivers away most singularly. The old man regains a little confidence. He bends down again and touches the other foot, and it too begins to shake necessarily. At these signs of returning life he bursts out into hysterical laughter. He touches the hands one by one. They too begin to quiver. The old carlin stretched out on the floor with her two feet and two hands quivering looks ridiculous to a degree and the spectators nearly drown the piper with their uproar. The old man then bends down and touches her hair and up she springs with renewed life and they both rush into each other's arms most gleefully."

"Strange Things. No 87. "Danns an Amadain" - "The foos' dance" is as follows. The men recline on the floor and everything going at the merriest, when there springs in from some hidden place a being whose appearance is diabolical. He appears to be headless and has two legs and four arms, whichever you may choose to imagine them. He goes about frantically and the fair sex scream in terror and leave the floor at the first glimpse of him. Their more valorous partners hurry to their seats after them. The anguish made by fastening a jacket not over the shoulders but under with the under part of the jacket fastened about the chest, the arms stuffed with straw hanging from the sides and looking very like a pair of supplementary legs. The head is covered with a dove's tail. The two arms stretched up and outwards on each side of the head and giving a peculiar shape to the neckpiece of the monster.

Of course this dance is done only rarely. The charm would be varied by a recitation.