

Crack Aboot Politics



Document 10

Hingin' In & Mair Prejudeece
bi Airchie Tait 1903-1905

Background

The twa extracts follaein ablow wis waled oot the screivings o Aiberdeen journalist Jeems Leatham that wrate unner the name o Airchie Tait. He wis born intil a Scotland that haed mony social ills, cawed apairt wi industrial warks, wi an upper cless that wis weel-tochert while the wirkin man an wumman affen haed tae dae athoot. It wisna muckle wunner that Leatham becam a socialist an wantit tae see a better warld for the wirkin man an wumman. But Leatham wis kenspeckle in ither weys. He becam editor o the *Peterhead Sentinel* in North East Scotland in 1897 and set furth a screed o airticles wrutten in North East Scots (whiles kent as the Doric) that made comment on aw kin kind o subjects unner the sun, politics comprehendit.

The Airticles

In the first o the twa airticles – *Hingin' In* – Leatham speaks about the wirkin life, an daily darg, an hoo mony that comments on this life fae afaur (he cites the screivar Tamas Carlyle) did sae wi a guid dose o heepocrisy. Leatham uses his airticle tae mak a pynt about the upper clesses, an in parteeclear Edwart Saxe-Coburg-Gotha that wis croont as Edwart VII in Lunnon in 1901. Leatham's snell pen threaps that it maun be a sair fecht for the Edwart ane tae gang-round aw thae fremmit kintras, haein tae wine an dine, gauin tae plays an meetin in wi actresses an the lave. In the second o the twa airticles – *Mair Prejudeece* – Leatham threaps on the political state o Scotland an the want o a Scots pairlament. The idea o hame-rule wis ane that the early pairt-takars o Scots Labour wantit tae bring aboot an threapit in thair programmes an pairty ploys, but aince Scots Labour haed been swallaed up wi the new Breetish Labour Pairty steidit in Lunnon, in 1909, hame-rule wis affen gien a bye an drount in the politics o Westmaister. Leatham's dream wadna come aboot until 1997 efter mony years o fechtin, hummin an hawin on the pairt o Breetish pairties that's intress wisna tae steer for hame-rule. Letham haed an ee on politics hame-aboot, in the Broch an Peterheid, an maks comment on maiters thareawa forby.

Langage & Style

Leatham writes in North East Scots, affen cryed Doric nooadays, but in Leatham's time the word Doric cuid be used for Scots in ony airt. The'r a nummer o Norland Scots words that wis common tae the hail region atween Caitnes an Angus an Leatham spells a puckle words shared wi Scots in general (an Inglis) but wi a North East tuin in mind. For instance, he uses *dunsin'* (dancing), *rist* (rest) and *wint* (want) that's teepical o the North East wey o soondin thae words. Anither instance is the kintra name *Eetily* (Italy). In parteeclear we nicht tak tent o the follaein maks an spellings:

APOLOGETIC APOSTROPHE

This is the name gien tae the tradeetion that haed its oreeginal in the 18ct century whan fowk stertit eikin an apostrophe tae the mids an ends o words whaur the screivar jaloused a letter wis wantin. This haed grew oot the confusion o inbringin Inglis customs for the wrutten word. For instance, in Aulder Scots we hae the maks *gangand* (gauin) an *makand* (makkin) but noo fowk thocht that the Soothron *-ing* wis wantit an sae stertit tae write thir words as *gangan'* an *makin'* tae shaw that 'g' haed drappit aff, but, in actual fact, it haed never been there. This is whit wey nooadays we wad write *gangan* an *makkin* yet, tho screivars noo evites the 'apologetic apostrophe' but for abbreviates, sic as *intil't* (in til it) or *ye'll* (for ye will) or whaur it's uissfae tae shaw different soonds, sic as *dee'd* (the verb tae dee) instead o *deed* (the noun, act or document). Leatham wrate the follaein instances o this: *an'* (unstresst and), *'at* (that), *a'thing* (awthing), *drinkin'* (drinkin), *fitba'* (fitba), *hearin'* (hearin), *hin'er* (tae hinner),

'imsel (himsel), *makin'* (makkin), *o'* (unstressed of), *risin'* (risin), *shakin'* (shakkin), *tellin'* (tellin), *wi'* (unstressed with), *yersel'* (yersel).

COGNATES

Cognates is words that haes the same oreeginal an is sib ane anither. Sae, for an instance, the Inglis *home* an *stone* an Scots *hame* an *bane* is baith sprung oot the Auld-Angles *ham* an *stan*. Among this cless o words in Leatham's bit screivings we find a hail screed that mirras the staundart anes in Soothron: aneuch (Inglis *enough*), aul' (Inglis *old*), aw (A, Inglis *I*), awa (Inglis *away*), brocht (Inglis *brought*), cairds (Inglis *cards*), divvles (deils, Inglis *devils*), fae (Inglis *from*), fairm (Inglis *farm*), gin (Inglis *if*), gyang (gang, Inglis *go*), gyuan (gauin, Inglis *going*), hae (Inglis *have*), hing (Inglis *hang*), hunners (Inglis *hundreds*), *ither* (Inglis *other*), keeng, (Inglis *king*), ken (Inglis *know*), lang (Inglis *long*), lawd (Inglis *lad*), maitter (Inglis *matter*), maist (Inglis *most*), muckle (Inglis *much*), *naething* (Inglis *nothing*), necessar (Inglis *necessary*), *owre* (Inglis *over*), pairty (Inglis *party*), railwye (Inglis *railway*), *richt* (Inglis *right*), rocht (wrocht or wirkit, Inglis *wrought*), *sair* (Inglis *sore*), Tammas (Inglis *Thomas*), ti (tae, Inglis *to*), war (Inglis *were*), wark (Inglis *construction/work*), *weel* (Inglis *well*), wid (wad, Inglis *would*), wiz/wuz (wis, Inglis *was*), wye (wey, Inglis *way*). Leatham spells the word *water*, as whiles ither screivars did, but dootless watter wis the ettle.

-NA ENDINGS

The screivar uses the staundart gait in Scots for shawin 'na' an 'didna' at the ends o words. Sae, for instance, we find *canna*, *dinna* (daena), *disna* (daesna), *sidna* (shuidna), *widna* (wadna), and *wizna* (wisna). Tak tent that in Norland Scots the *-na* is soondit as it looks, but in Midland Scots it is soondit as 'nae'. This means that *daena* in Norland Scots is soondit as 'din-ah' but in Midland Scots as 'dinnny'.



NORTH EAST MAKS

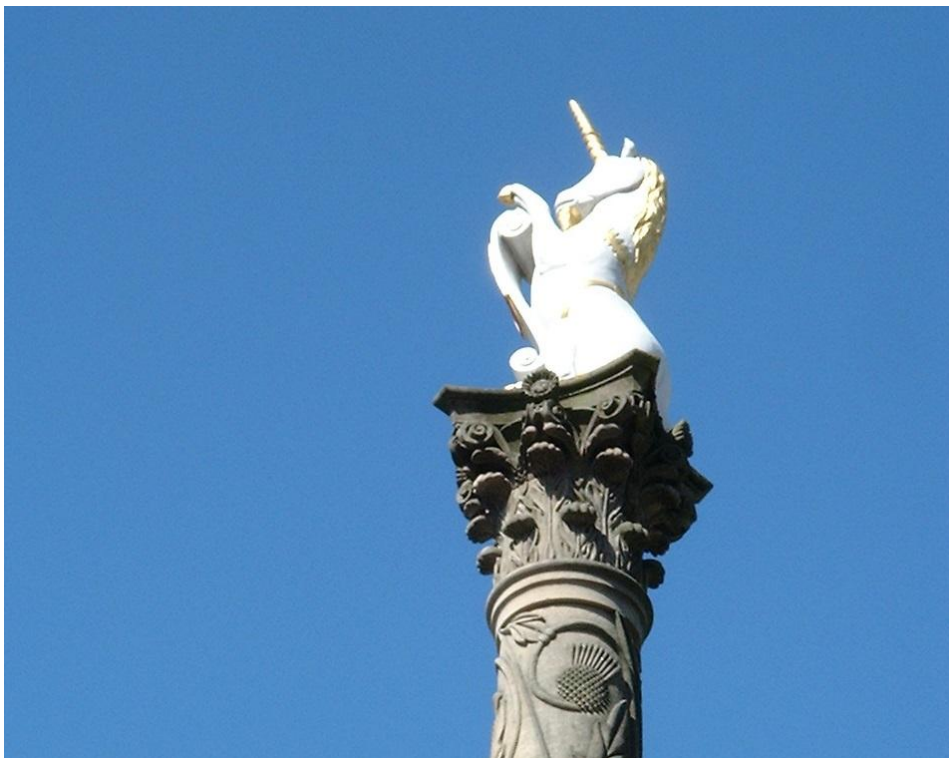
Leatham uses the follaein North East maks in his airticles: *nae* – used aw gaits as Norland Scots daes, while ither Scots maks a distinction atween *nae* an *no*. For instance, Leatham writes ‘*nae ti be*’ an ‘*nae reddy*’, whaur Scots in ither airts wad write ‘*no tae be*’ an ‘*no reddy*’. Ither Norland or North East maks is – *dee* (for *dae*, Inglis *do*), *een* (*ane*, Inglis *one*), *eesfi* (*uissfae*, Inglis *useful*), *fat* (*fit* or *whit*, Inglis *what*), *fin* (*fan* or *whan*, Inglis *when*), *foo* (*hoo*, Inglis *how*), *gweed* (*guid*, Inglis *good*), *teen* (*taen*, Inglis *taken*), *tyauvin*’ (*dargin*, *trauchlin* or *warslin*).

OO/OU/OW

We ken fae earlier airticles that the letters *o/u/w* cuid be interchANGED in wrutten Scots but wis soondit as ‘*oo*’ in general. In the 18ct an 19t centuries screivars haed for the maist pairt spellt words in common wi Inglis the same gait, as in *about*, *out* an *now*, but pronoonced the words as *aboot*, *oot* an *noo*. Leatham spells thir words as thay soond, as in *about*, *coonsl* (*cooncil*), *hoose*, *pooches* (Inglis *pockets*), *roon*, *thoosan* an *toon*.

VOCABULAR & THE LAVE

The text haes intil’t a when words that’s parteclar tae Scots, or maistly ordnar tae Scots. Comprehendit amang them is a’body (Inglis *everyone*), aivn-doon (Inglis *absolutely/completely*), *aye* (Inglis *always*), *biggit* (Inglis *built*), Breetisher (Inglis *Briton*), *gey* (Inglis *very*), *ilky* (Inglis *every*), *limmer* (Inglis *loose person/rascal*), *ordinar* (Inglis *usual*), an *siller* (Inglis *money*). Leatham uses the mair hame-aboot name for touns, sic as The Broch (*Fraserburgh*) an Peterheid. The’r a puckle words sprung fae Greek an Latin that Leatham spells a Scots gait for tae shaw the soond o the leid, sic as *fack* (*fact*), *mizzhurs* (*measures*), *parlymint* (*pairlament*), *polateeshin* (*politeecian*), *prejudeece*, an *suspeeshin*. Ae word, *tiddlyvinkin*, appears parteclar tae Leatham his ainsel, wi the sense o fouterin wi a thing a sleekit wey.



(21 November 1903) Hingin' In

The fack is, the average Breetisher's gotten e's bellyfi o' wark. He disna believe in't. His father an grandfather rocht hard, an' he 'imsel wiz born tire't. He sees that roon' about 'im the fowk that's made siller an' that's makin' siller is nae the hard-workin, early risin', plain-livin' lawds, but the "fly" divvles that can get their fowk to work for them.

There wiz a time fin hingin' in wiz crackit up. There wiz a time fin a'body spoke about "the dignity o' labir," an' maybe believe't some in't. Aw say they maybe believe't some in't, but Aw hae mi doots. The lawd that spak (or rote) maist aboot it wuz aul' Tammas Carlyle. I dinna exactly set up for a leeterary creetick; bit Aw've read aneuch aboot Tammas ti be able ti say that he wizna as gweed at hingin' in as he wid hae likit ither fowk tae be. Wark – hingin' in – is a fine thing ti recommaind ti ither fowk; bit the last kin' o' dignity in the worl' that a man wints for 'imsel' is the dignity o' labour. He'll lat ither fowk get it a' – baith a' the labour an' a' the dignity that come's o't. Labir's oot o' the fashion. Ye ken that yersel', sir. Aw ken that ye ken't because ye're aye tellin' fowk ti hing in, an' it widna be necessar' ti tell fowk ti dee fat they war already deein', wid it?

I believe some misel' in hingin' in gin ye're biggit that wye. Fat I notice is that a'body hings in at cairds, or tennis, or cricket, or fitba', or the dunsin' accordin' ti the sizzin; bit fin it comes ti aivn-doon eesfi wark it's "Wa, wa, Roger!"

Tak wir aul' keeng, peer stock. He's hid a gey lang rist. He sid hae been like a giant refresh't wi' new wine fin he cam inti the rulin' show. An' faith he's been deein' fine. Jantin aboot, suppin' broth, drinkin' drams, an' shakin' han's wi' the bosses o' Eetily an' France is the verra best thing a keeng could dee. Bit ye canna preten' that it's hard wark. Na, na, aul' Edwirt can tak a hoaliday fin he likes. He can ait the best, drink the best, see the best plays an' the best limmers o' actrisses, hear the best pipers, an' fiddlers, an' singers, an' the time he's hearin' them an' haein' jist a rollickin' gweed time, that's the time he's maist spokkn an' maist pop'lar. Ye nivver ha'rd o''im deein' a richt hard day's wark in yer life – ay, nae richt aivn-doon tyauvin' like. Nivver you.

(26 August 1905) Mair Prejudeece

I hiv a programme, 'at I believe in, as lang's a bull's pedigree – the Newcastle Programme's naething tull't. It taks in the Newcastle Programme an' hunners o' ither things 'at the ordinar Leebral never sae muckle's thinks aboot.

Til lat's get oor ain aul' Parlymint back in Edinburgh that was teen awa fae's bi gross corruption; ti gie the Irish a Parlymint an' lat them be free ti tak aboot their ain affairs in their ain wye; ti abolish the Hoose o' Lords; ti exten' the Crafters Ack an' gie men a chance o' bidin i' the parish they war born an' brocht up in – Aw'm soun upon a' that an' a lot mair. I've teen in owre mony awcres o' bog nae ti be a believer in the nationalization o' the lan'. I dinna believe in the Great North Railwye takkin deviden's for bad-usin the public, an' I wid hae a' the railwyes teen owre bi Parlymint. I think the toon coonsl o' the Broch micht rin a fairm i' the ootskirts an' sell mulk i' the toon; an' syne there wid be nae suspeeshin o' tiddlyvinkin wi' the pump. The Broch gaswark's cryin oot ti be teen owre bi the toon; an' if a toon sells gas an water I kenna foo it sidna sell coal am' mulk, an lat the profits gyang ti the common good instead o' gyuan inti private pooches. Foo sid the Brochers hae ti pey five shullins the thoosan for their gas fin you Peterheid fowk gets for three an' saxpence?

Weel, Aw'm thinkin it's nae ilky een o' yer ain pairty men 'at wid be ready for mizzshurs o' that kin'. So that if Aw'm reddy for the ord'nar pairty programme, an' the pairty men's nae reddy for my programme, they've naething ti say ti me, like, hiv they?

That gies me the courage ti say ‘at Aw’m nae a pairty man. There’s some things I want, an’ Aw’ll tak them fae ony pairty, an’ for the maitter o’ that, work wi’ ony pairty ti get them; bit yer ordinar’ polateeshin blesses a’thing ‘at comes fae his ain side an’ bans a’thing ‘at comes fae the ither. I canna oonerstan’ that wye o’t, an’ it’s a sair hin’er ti progress.



Springheid: Newspaper airticles fae the *Peterhead Sentinel*, 21 November 1903, 26 August 1905, that wis waled an kythed in William Donaldson (ed), *The Language of the People: Scots Prose from the Victorian Revival*, (Aberdeen University Press, 1989), pp.197-198, 191-192.