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Abstract

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‘Ian Maclaren’s Scottish Local-Colour Fiction in Transnational Contexts: Networks of Reception, Circulation, and Translation in the United States and Europe’

This article analyses the early circulation, reception, and translation history of Ian Maclaren’s bestselling Scottish local-colour fiction in the United States, the Netherlands, France, and Switzerland. It sketches a comparative model which illuminates the agents of transnational cultural mediation crucial to the international popularity of local-colour fiction in the late nineteenth century. In the USA, key factors for Maclaren’s popularity were the interconnected transatlantic publishing world and audiences already receptive to dialect literature. In Europe, while the bestselling quality of his collections and readers’ previous familiarity with regional fiction played a significant role, additional factors included: in the Netherlands, Maclaren’s clerical background and the place of established religion in publishing; in France and Switzerland, periodicals attentive to international trends in fiction and to internal regionalist phenomena, along with the initiative of a translator with a flair for Breton regionalism and well connected to the Swiss and Parisian literary milieux.

Article

Ian Maclaren’s Scottish Local-Colour Fiction in Transnational Contexts: Networks of Reception, Circulation, and Translation in the United States and Europe

Giulia Bruna

Local-colour fiction, a mid- to late-nineteenth-century American phenomenon, was ‘devoted to capturing the unique customs, manners, speech, folklore, and other qualities of a particular regional community, usually in humorous short stories’. Its proponents included Mark Twain, Bret Harte, George Washington Cable, Kate Chopin, and Sarah Orne Jewett, with some ‘equivalents in European fiction’, notably ‘in the attention given by Zola and Hardy to the settings of their stories’.¹ The term is gaining currency in studies of European regional fiction. Josephine Donovan has drawn attention to the Irish and Scottish national tales of Maria Edgeworth and Walter Scott, German village tales or *Dorfgeschichten* by Berthold Auerbach, and French rural novels or *romans champêtres* by writers such as George Sand.² In the anglophone world, such works were often subtitled ‘provincial novel’, ‘studies’, ‘sketches’,

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¹ ‘Local Color Writing’, in *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, edited by Chris Baldick, fourth edn (Oxford, 2015). For scholarship on the British variety, see *The Regional Novel in Britain and Ireland: 1800–1990* (Cambridge, 1998), and *The Bibliography of Regional Fiction in Britain and Ireland, 1800–2000* (Abingdon, 2016), both edited by Keith D. M. Snell.

² Josephine Donovan, *European Local-Color Literature: National Tales, Dorfgeschichten, Romans Champêtres* (London, 2010).

‘(rural) scenes’, or ‘idylls’, the terms preceded by geographical modifiers. They were commercially very successful, widely published and translated, with editions in the United States and on the Continent.

Nineteenth-century local-colour fiction, or ‘regional fiction’ – this essay will use both terms interchangeably³ – is often read by today’s critics as entangled with discourses of nationalism and national identity formation. June Howard, for instance, notes that ‘many studies of regionalism in the large and powerful United States construe it as internal to the nation’. Similarly, Josephine Donovan registers the resistance of European regional writers to ‘the call for national homogenization and standardization’ that affected dialects, national languages, and the education system.⁴ Other scholars have drawn attention to the transnational and transatlantic contexts in which this fiction circulated both in its original language and in translation.⁵

Discussion about the reach of regional fiction beyond national borders also surfaced in late-nineteenth-century reviews and critical writing, which depicted the trend as a transnational phenomenon reacting to homogenizing global mechanisms of technological modernity, yet still connected with building a sense of national identity. In an essay of 1896 the Cornish local-colour writer and critic Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch describes the condition of the genre in Britain and the Commonwealth, creating a geography of British local colour embedded in the global project of the Empire:

With Mr. Barrie in the North, and Mr. Hardy in the South; with Mr. Hall Caine in the Isle of Man, Mr. Crockett in Galloway, Miss Barlow in Lisconnel; with Mr. Gilbert Parker in the territory of the H.B.C. [Canada], and Mr. Hornung in Australia; with Mr. Kipling scouring the wide world, but returning always to India when the time comes for him to score yet another big artistic success; it hardly needs elaborate proof to arrive at the conclusion that ‘locality’ is playing a strong part in current fiction.⁶

This ‘local fiction’, according to Quiller-Couch, is characterized by ‘the minutiae of dialect, folk-lore and ethnic difference’ as well as ‘more catholic principles of human conduct’. Admittedly it is not always skilfully practiced (p. 231). Quiller-Couch’s essay sets out to find an explanation for the proliferation of works in this genre. He advances his theory of regionalist writing as a reaction to the changes modernization had brought about in the nineteenth century, linking regionalism to global mechanisms of technological and imperial modernity, and to a sense of nostalgia for an idyllic past. Local-colour fiction, then, responded to these anxieties about modernization and an increasingly global interconnectedness, yet was at the same time a global phenomenon to be encountered in all the imperial territories.

An American commentator to whom Quiller-Couch is responding here, Brander Matthews, further elaborates on the connections between the local and the global in fiction, identifying ‘national spirit’ and ‘cosmopolitanism’ as significant aspects of the nineteenth-century legacy of European fiction into the twentieth century. While acknowledging that the assertion of national identities across the globe has been a fundamental characteristic of

³ In this I follow June Howard’s model, which dismisses qualitative distinctions between a supposedly high-brow form, ‘regionalism’, and a low-brow one, ‘local-colour fiction’, and instead sees each term as simply more current in different periods. Howard, *The Center of the World: Regional Writing and the Puzzles of Place-Time* (New York, 2018), pp. xi, 16.

⁴ Howard, p. 6; Donovan, p. 178.

⁵ In an Irish context, see Marguérite Corporaal, ‘Traveling Cabins: The Popularity of Irish Local-Color Fiction in Early Nineteenth-Century Europe’, in *Travelling Irishness in the Long Nineteenth Century*, edited by Marguérite Corporaal and Christina Morin (Basingstoke, 2017), pp. 103-18; ‘Relocating Regionalism: The Fin-de-Siècle Irish Local Colour Tale in Transnational Contexts’, *Irish Studies Review*, 28.2 (2020), 155-70.

⁶ Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch, ‘Externals’, in *Adventures in Criticism* (London, 1896), pp. 213-31 (p. 224).

literature in the nineteenth century, Matthews notes that ‘the segregation of nationality has been accompanied by an increasing interest in the several states out of which the nation has made itself, and sometimes even by an effort to raise the dialects of these provinces up to the literary standard of the national language’.⁷ This tendency, according to Matthews, is not to be read as antithetical to the national spirit, but rather ‘as a tribute to the nation, since it seeks to call attention again to the several strands twined in the single bond’ (p. 20). He describes this trend as characterized by ‘a wider liking for local color and ... an intenser relish for the flavor of the soil’, and enumerates some proponents of literary regionalism:

We find Verga painting the violent passions of the Sicilians, and Reuter depicting the calmer joys of the Platt-Deutsch. We see Maupassant etching the canny and cautious Normans, while Daudet brushed in broadly the expansive exuberance of the Provençals. We delight alike in the Wessex-folk of Mr. Hardy and in the humorous Scots of Mr. Barrie. We extend an equal welcome to the patient figures of New England spinsterhood as drawn by Miss Jewett and Miss Wilkins, and to the virile Westerners set boldly on their feet by Mr. Wister and Mr. Garland.

(pp. 20-1)

Matthews then discusses the trait of ‘cosmopolitanism’, which he reads as intertwined with the spirit of nationality. This is ‘revealed mainly in a similarity of the external forms of literature, while it is the national spirit which supplies the essential inspiration that gives life’ (p. 23). A significant example of cosmopolitan forms is the short story. In Matthews’ hypothesis, these cosmopolitan forms must draw sustenance from individual regional and national traditions. While acknowledging an international canon, however, Matthews’ model does not account for alternative, more complex constructs of transnationalism which may develop intra-nationally or supra-nationally such as diasporic or immigrant literatures. Matthews’ definition of cosmopolitanism is overly dependent on the nation construct, and does not further explore material mechanisms or historical causes. Nonetheless, his focus on the short story as a kind of transnational mould for local-colour fiction provides a useful premise for further investigation of the material conditions and infrastructures which enabled the genre to travel widely.

Using the local-colour stories of the now lesser-known Scottish writer Ian Maclaren as a case-study, what follows will examine some of the enabling factors for this ‘cosmopolitanism’ and its ‘external forms’. It historicizes the reception of Maclaren’s regionalist work within transnational material networks of print culture during the fin-de-siècle. Maclaren, a clergyman whose real name was John Watson (1850-1937), was one of the best-selling late-nineteenth-century Scottish writers of what critics of the time ironically called ‘the Great Kailyard Movement’.⁸ Maclaren’s first short story collection *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* (1894) reportedly sold 60,000 copies in its first year of publication; his second, *The Days of the Auld Langsyne* (1895), also sold outstandingly in Britain and America.⁹ The early translation and reception contexts of Maclaren’s Scottish village stories in the United States, the Netherlands, France, and Switzerland offer a comparative model for understanding the international workings and adaptability of the genre of regional fiction, as well as its inherent transnational transferability. With this model, I hope to illuminate further the agents of

⁷ Brander Matthews, *Inquiries and Opinions* (New York, 1907), p. 20.

⁸ See Andrew Nash, *Kailyard and Scottish Literature* (Amsterdam, 2007), p. 12. Nash highlights how the phrase ‘the Great Kailyard Movement’ - with the word ‘kailyard’ deriving from a line in a ballad popularized by Robert Burns quoted in Maclaren’s *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* and meaning ‘cabbage patch’ - was first used by the critic J. H. Millar in 1895 to deride the sentimentality and parochialism of Scottish local-colour writers.

⁹ Nash, *Kailyard and Scottish Literature*, p. 182.

transnational cultural mediation which contributed to the international popularity of local-colour fiction at the end of the nineteenth century. These agents include transnationally interconnected publishing firms and periodicals in their respective national literary marketplaces, which exposed readers to regional fiction in several languages and across several national traditions. They include translators, who operated across different languages, national traditions, and regional cultures; and they extend to other important literary players such as editors, illustrators, photographers, journalists, and travel writers, who also facilitated this transnational mediation.

The first part of the essay analyses the transatlantic connections between Maclaren's London publishers Hodder and Stoughton and their American counterparts, stressing how these publishers exploited an already receptive market for local-colour fiction and dialect literature in the USA. Translation into another language, of course, is not involved in this particular case, but these American connections are a very important aspect of the global circulation of regional fiction. Once Kailyard works had become popular, American publishers capitalized on it by printing illustrated travelogues documenting Americans' tourist journeys to the Scottish villages of Barrie and Maclaren. In the next section I focus on such a travelogue by the American author and artist Clifton Johnson (1865-1940), who also illustrated the American editions of Maclaren's work. In the second part of the essay I examine the European translation and reception contexts of Maclaren's collections with specific attention to the Dutch and francophone contexts. Conditions that stimulated interest in a Scottish literature of locality included, in the Netherlands, Protestant-Christian publishers who also printed Maclaren's sermons and other religious writings; in France and Switzerland, a literary periodical culture attentive to international trends in fiction and to internal regionalist phenomena. In both contexts, I draw attention to Maclaren's translators, who, albeit working in slightly different publishing environments, turn to local modes of regionalism and regional fiction in connection with their work on Maclaren.

* * *

In *Kailyard and Scottish Literature*, Andrew Nash has extensively documented the dissemination and reception via American periodicals of both Barrie's and Maclaren's work, highlighting how the interconnected British and American publishing worlds created the best-selling Kailyard phenomenon. Nash elsewhere draws attention to the critical and popular acclaim accorded Maclaren's work in the United States through the good offices of William Robertson Nicoll, a Scottish journalist and Free Church minister, who was appointed by Hodder and Stoughton as the editor of their magazine *British Weekly* and literary advisor to the firm.¹⁰ The *British Weekly* was a tremendous success, and not long afterwards Nicoll funded two other major outlets: *The Bookman* (1891-1934) and *The Woman at Home: Annie S. Swan's Magazine* (1893-1920). Nicoll's *British Weekly* and the monthly *Woman at Home* featured the short stories and serial fiction of many Scottish local-colour writers, including Maclaren, Barrie, and S. R. Crockett, and also the Irish writer Jane Barlow. Some of these works were then collected in book form and published by Hodder and Stoughton. In addition to the promotion of Barrie and Maclaren in the USA, Nicoll was instrumental in establishing an alliance with American publisher Dodd, Mead, and Company in 1895 for the publication of the American version of *The Bookman*.¹¹ During a three-month trip to the United States in 1896, Nicoll met with figures from the American literary world including the publisher Frank Dodd. Maclaren (as the Reverend John Watson) also took part in a few social events before

¹⁰ Andrew Nash, 'William Robertson Nicoll, the Kailyard Novel and the Question of Popular Culture', *Scottish Studies Review*, 5.1 (2004), 57-73 (p. 58).

¹¹ Marie Alexis Easley, 'Bookman (1891-1934)', in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland*, edited by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Ghent, 2009).

continuing with speaking and preaching engagements on the West Coast.¹²

The internationalization of the publishing industry has been deemed one of the most important phenomena in nineteenth-century British, German, French, and American publishing. David McKitterick highlights, for example, the success of German publisher Tauchnitz in printing and distributing English-language books in Europe; he also notes that ‘London and American East-Coast publishing were intertwined’, with British publishers opening offices on the East Coast and American publishers establishing branches in London.¹³ Links strengthened between British and American publishers after the 1891 International Copyright Act, which formally granted British authors copyright in the United States on the simultaneous publication of their work in Britain and the US by an American publisher. Well before Nicoll’s appointment in 1884, Hodder and Stoughton had established contacts with American publishers from 1869, regularly keeping in touch in the following decades. Nicoll’s 1896 American trip and his fostering of business connections with other publishers and writers was part of his firm’s long-term internationalization strategy.¹⁴

The American trip of 1896 also reveals Nicoll’s personal interest in local-colour fiction and additional transatlantic connections among regional writers. In the USA, both Nicoll and Barrie were hosted by American regionalist George Washington Cable in Northampton, Massachusetts. In a letter of 6 October 1896 Nicoll mentions his interest in Cable’s *Old Creole Days* (1879), a collection of stories about the Creole community in New Orleans.¹⁵ Cable, who was born in New Orleans and lived there until 1885 before moving to Massachusetts, entertained Nicoll and Barrie for a few days, organizing a reception and even singing ‘many of the old creole songs ... accompanying himself on the violin’.¹⁶ Two years later, Nicoll and Barrie returned the hospitality when Cable visited London by organizing three public readings from Cable’s *Old Creole Days* which were also accompanied by Cable’s performance of Creole songs, ‘songs which he had learnt from people who still talked and sang the gay French patois of the eighteenth century, when New Orleans belonged to France’.¹⁷ While Cable’s work had already penetrated the British market in the 1880s and was published by David Douglas, John Murray, Sampson Low and Co. (among others), Hodder and Stoughton would eventually publish his *Old Creole Days* in 1902.

In addition to the endeavours of British editors and publishers in the transatlantic promotion of local-colour fiction, the US market was extremely receptive to the genre, with audiences already familiar with and passionate about dialect literature from the Civil War onwards. In describing the milieu in which this ‘cult of the vernacular’ thrived, and the range of expressions and modes of engagement, Gavin Jones mentions canonical writers such as Mark Twain and William Dean Howells, who ‘were reported to converse with their wives in a strange French-English dialect from Louisiana, learned from the writings of George Washington Cable’, or writers who ‘undertook special missions to remote districts in an effort to learn and record the *lingua rustica*’; this craze was also associated with a number of popular phenomena such as ‘dialect humourists [who] packed theaters and grossed tens of thousands of dollars’.¹⁸

¹² T. H. Darlow, *William Robertson Nicoll: Life and Letters* (London, 1925), pp. 138-9.

¹³ David McKitterick, ‘Introduction’, in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, Vol. VI: 1830-1914, edited by David McKitterick (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 1-74 (pp. 20, 42).

¹⁴ See Dorothy W. Collin’s two-part entry for ‘Hodder and Stoughton’ in *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, Vol. 106: *British Literary Publishing Houses, 1820-1880*, edited by Patricia J. Anderson and Jonathan Rose (Detroit, MI, 1991), p. 143.

¹⁵ Darlow, p. 136.

¹⁶ Darlow, p. 139.

¹⁷ Darlow, p. 159.

¹⁸ Gavin Jones, *Strange Talk: The Politics of Dialect Literature in Gilded Age America* (Berkeley, CA, 1999), p. 1.

The ubiquitous presence of dialect literature in US society, and its key proponents (including Maclaren), are satirized in a contemporary magazine piece by American writer Charles Battell Loomis. In 'The Dialect Store', two fictional characters named 'newspaper man' and 'magazine-writer' talk about the latter's dream-like experience of walking into a dialect shop on Fifth Avenue in New York, where shop assistants entice clients into buying dialect 'by the yard, the piece, or quantities to suit'.¹⁹ Customers can purchase the Scotch dialect from 'a man who looked as if he had just stepped out of one of Barrie's novels'; the 'negro' dialect from South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia bought also by writer Thomas Nelson Page; the Western dialect of James Whitcomb Riley; the German dialect, whose imitation falsely 'made in Chairmany' is sold in bulk; the 'French-Canadian' dialect which has all been purchased by Montreal writer William McLennan; the 'Jew' dialect; the 'Yankee' dialect; the Irish dialect sold by 'a twinkling-eyed young Irishman, not long over', who comments on his clients ranging from writer Jane Barlow to the 'funny papers'; the English dialect in its 'Coster', 'Lancashire', and 'Yorkshire' varieties; and finally the 'tough-dialect' sold by 'a regular Ninth-Warder' (pp. 958-9). The piece ends with 'magazine-writer' wishing it hadn't been all just a dream so that he could really purchase dialect 'goods' to become 'the greatest dialect-writer' of the age (p. 959).

Aside from satirizing the craze for dialect writing in the USA, Loomis' piece offers a snapshot of the transatlantic state of the genre. In particular, three of the writers mentioned in his piece - the Scottish Barrie and Maclaren, and the Irish Barlow - were published by Hodder and Stoughton in the UK and by Dodd, Mead and Company in the USA. Moreover, Loomis' remarks on the popularity of Scottish writing in America satirically link the success of Barrie and Maclaren to the 1897 election of the American president William McKinley, who was of Scots-Irish descent:

'I've a laige stock o' gude auld Scotch wi' the smell o' the heather on it; or if ye're wantin' some a wee bit shop-worn, I'll let ye hae that at a lower price. There's a quantity that Ian Maclaren left oot' of his last buke'. I expressed surprise that he had let any escape him, and he said: 'Hec, mon, dinna ya ken there's no end to the Scots?' I felt like telling him that I was sorry there had been a beginning, but I refrained, and he went on: 'We're getting' airders fra the whole English-sp'akin' world for the gude auld tongue. Our manager has airdered a fu' line of a soorts in anticipation of a brisk business, now that McKinley - gude Scotch name that - is elected'

(p. 958)

Though certainly not the only significant socio-historical reason for the circulation and popularity of Scottish writing in the US. at the end of the nineteenth century, the presidential connection sheds additional light on the favourable circumstances encountered by British publishers of local-colour fiction in America and on the perceived timeliness of Scottish local colour.

Another way in which American publishers capitalized on the vogue of dialect literature and the success of British dialect writers was through the publication of ancillary titles such as travelogues to British and Irish regions penned by authors on the trail of their literary precursors.²⁰ The publication of Maclaren's American edition of *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* is a case in point. Maclaren's work appeared in a lavish edition issued by Hodder and Stoughton's transatlantic partner Dodd, Mead and Company with illustrations from American

¹⁹ Charles Battell Loomis, 'The Dialect Store', *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* 53.31 (1896-7), 958-9 (p. 958).

²⁰ While Nash has partly drawn attention to some of these contemporaneous travel articles and books in relation to Barrie's work (*Kailyard and Scottish Literature*, pp. 87-9), he does not mention Clifton Johnson's work.

artist, photographer, and writer Clifton Johnson. Johnson, who travelled to Scotland in the footsteps of both Maclaren and Barrie, made the illustrations from photographs he took personally, intended to recreate significant moments from the stories in their original location (Figs 1 and 2).²¹ A Publisher's Note drew attention to this faithfulness to text, place, and characters. On his travels around Scotland and his visits to Barrie's and Maclaren's villages, Johnson wrote a number of articles for periodicals which were later collected in a travelogue entitled *The Land of Heather* published by Macmillan in 1903. The book, which he also illustrated, contains both photographs and pen-and-ink drawings; the articles related to his literary tourism include insights into the way these Scottish villages had become tourist destinations (popular especially with American tourists) and the locals' sardonic reaction to the recent notoriety. With regard to Maclaren, Johnson mentions that Drumtochty villagers were left almost indifferent by the publication of the stories; 'his

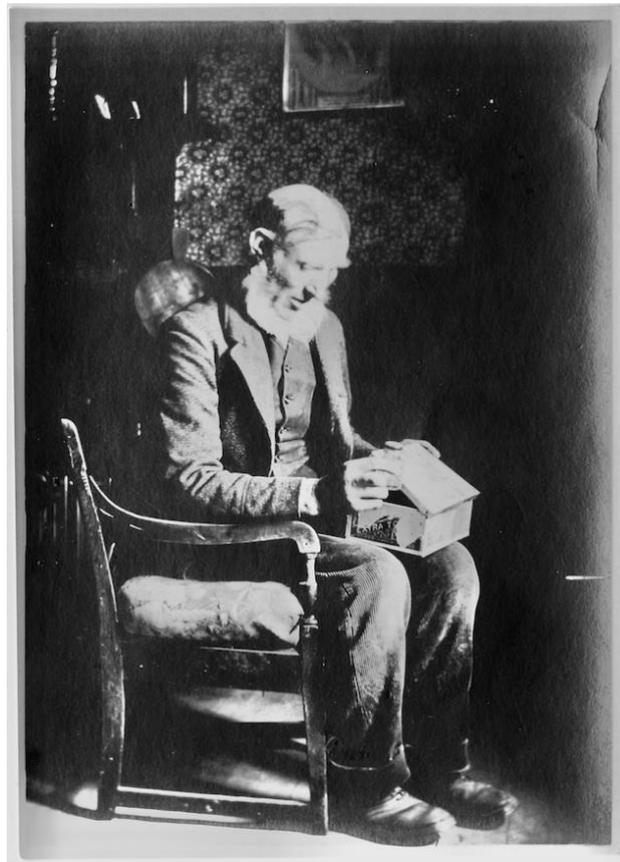


Fig. 1. Clifton Johnson, 'Reminiscences', *Digital Amherst*, Clifton Johnson Collection, Courtesy of The Jones Library, Inc., Amherst, Massachusetts.

descriptions of character, and the humor and the pathos, were largely lost on them'.²² Johnson then compares Maclaren's depictions in the book with the real inhabitants, considerably to the disadvantage of the latter. For example, while Maclaren describes the character of the local physician (the subject of Fig. 2) as a sort of local hero riding through snowstorms to reach patients in isolated farms and working miracles with little resources, Johnson highlights that

²¹ Ian Maclaren, *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* (New York, 1896). Figure 2 (the local doctor from the story 'A Doctor of the Old School') has been retouched from Johnson's photograph in Figure 1: the corduroy trousers and shoes have been transformed into Scottish plaid trousers and riding boots to match the character's attire in the story (see p. 244).

²² Clifton Johnson, *The Land of Heather* (New York and London, 1903), p. 11.

the real doctor was often seen at the public house ‘exuberant with the “mountain dew” and riding ‘like a mad man, swinging his hat on his stick and singing, “Scots wha ha’e wi’ Wallace bled”, at the top of his voice’.²³

In sum, Maclaren’s work in the United States achieved popularity thanks to the acumen of publishers and literary impresarios such as Nicoll, who knew how to exploit pre-existing transatlantic business connections as well as an American market highly receptive to European local colour because of its familiarity with dialect fiction.

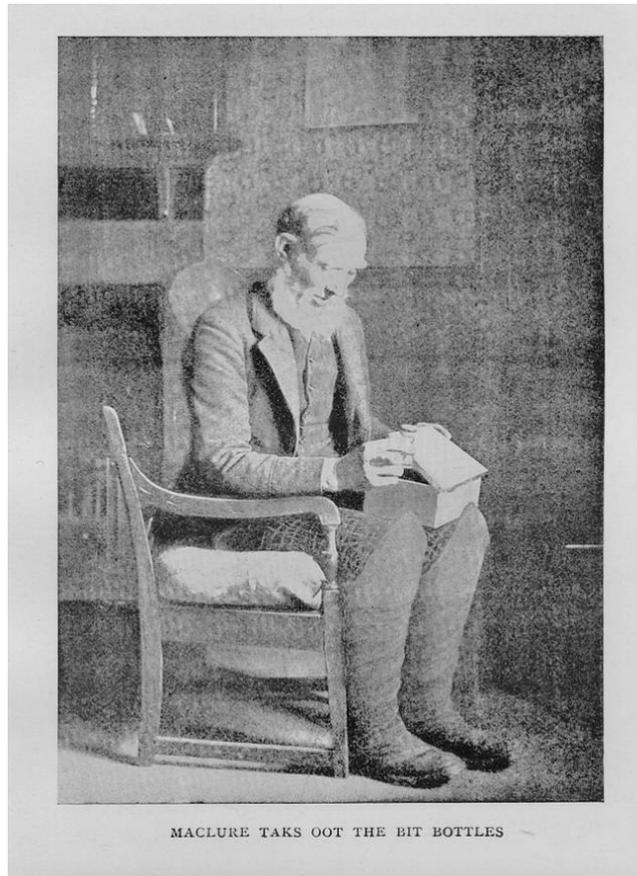


Fig. 2. Clifton Johnson, ‘Maclure taks oot the bit bottles’, *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* (New York, 1894), p. 244. Courtesy of The Jones Library, Inc., Amherst, Massachusetts.

* * *

I now turn to the wider world beyond the English-language publishing trade. At the turn of the twentieth century, Scottish fiction by J. M. Barrie, S. R. Crockett, and Ian Maclaren was disseminated on the Continent too, and enjoyed some popularity in translation. Barrie’s novels, in particular, were widely translated: *The Little Minister* (London, 1891), for instance, was translated into German, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian, Czech, and Polish in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Barrie’s biography of his mother, *Margaret Ogilvy by his Son* (1896), was translated into French and reviewed in periodicals.²⁴ His short story collections with Hodder and Stoughton, however, appear not to have been translated. With regard to Crockett’s stories, the only European translation I have discovered was a 1917 Dutch edition of *Bog Myrtle and Peat* (1895).²⁵ Maclaren’s short stories, on the other hand, circulated on the Continent in English in editions by Tauchnitz, and were translated in Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands,

²³ Johnson, p. 12.

²⁴ See note 61, below.

²⁵ S. R. Crockett, *Het stapelen van de turf* (Utrecht, 1917).

Switzerland, and France.²⁶

I concentrate next on Maclaren's Dutch and French translations to present two different modes of transnational cultural mediation of local colour and the literary networks respectively involved. In both Dutch and francophone contexts, Maclaren's previous success in anglophone countries, together with European audiences' pre-existing familiarity with long-standing traditions of regional fiction, were substantial factors ensuring the viability of the translations. Significantly, both Dutch and French translators referred to both things in their prefatory material, as well as trying to justify their lack of engagement with Maclaren's Scottish dialect in their renderings. However, the early Dutch and French translations belong to two slightly different literary milieux. Whereas in the Netherlands Maclaren's stories were published within Protestant networks by firms which also printed his homiletic writings, in France and Switzerland his fiction appeared in connection with established literary periodicals such as the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and during times of heightened receptivity to French regionalist expressions, such as the Breton folk Revival and the rise of popular fiction about Brittany.

In the Netherlands, J. M. Bredée in Rotterdam, a Christian publishing firm specializing in sermons and edifying children's literature, printed translations of *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* in 1897, *The Days of the Auld Langsyne* in 1899, and, it would seem, *Afterwords and Other Stories* in 1902. Maclaren's stories were translated for Bredée by W. van Nes, who also translated a biography of the evangelical American publisher Dwight Lyman Moody.²⁷ Van Nes is referred to as the official translator ('vertaler') of Maclaren's short fiction.²⁸ His prefaces shed some light on the networks which enabled the translation project, and on the early reception of Maclaren's work. Van Nes compares Maclaren's work to the mid-nineteenth-century sketches by Dutch writer and preacher Cornelis Eliza van Koetsveld, who wrote about rural life from the point of view of a village schoolteacher and clergyman. He justifies his decision to translate Maclaren's Scottish dialect into standard Dutch - instead of a regional vernacular - as the best way to do justice to the original text and its Scottish locale. 'For the most part', he observes, 'the Writer used the Lowland dialect for his dialogues, which added to his work a special charm. The translator obviously lacked that privilege: although he might have succeeded in choosing a dialect ... it would have done the greatest possible injustice to the writer's work. The Scottish landscape cannot be rendered with Frisian grass, and Scottish inner life cannot be tinted with Zeeland words.'²⁹ He also mentions availing himself of a dictionary of Lowland Scots in his task, and of the assistance of a Scottish clergyman based in Rotterdam, the Rev. Irwin Brown. Throughout his notes, he never forgets to thank God.³⁰

The parallel between Scottish and Dutch religious cultures has an interesting antecedent in the English translation of Van Koetsveld's sketches by Irish folklorist and critic Thomas Keightley in 1860. In his Preface to the translation, Keightley explains that because of the presbyterianism the Scottish and Dutch peoples shared, he decided to render some Dutch terms pertaining to the established Church in Holland by using 'the terminology of the Scottish

²⁶ William B. Todd and Ann Bowden, *Tauchnitz International Editions in English 1841-1955: A Bibliographical History* (New York, 1988), pp. 445, 458-9. For the German translations see *Beim wilden Rosenbusch*. 'Lang, lang ist's her', translated by Luise Öhler (Stuttgart, 1898, 1904); *Altes und Neues aus Drumtochty. Aus der Großstadt*, translated by Luise Oehler (Stuttgart, 1900, 1907); *Ein Dienstmädchen und andere Erzählungen Aus d. Schottischen Erzählungen*, translated by Luise Oehler (Stuttgart, 1914). For the Swedish translations see *I den gamla goda tiden*, translated by Vendela Emanuelsson (Stockholm, 1899) and *Vid den blommande rosenbusken*, translated by Märta Lindqvist (Uppsala, 1914).

²⁷ W. R. Moody and A. P. Fitt, *Het Leven van D. L. Moody*, translated by W. van Nes (Rotterdam, 1900).

²⁸ W. van Nes, *Jochem Theunissen en Zijn Tijdgenooten* (Deventer, 1914), title page. See also W. van Nes, *Ernst Des Levens* (Rotterdam, 1897); *Verwoeste Levens* (Nijkerk, 1902).

²⁹ W. van Nes, 'Voorbericht van den Vertaler', in *Harten van goud* by Ian Maclaren (Rotterdam, 1897). All translations from van Nes are mine unless otherwise stated.

³⁰ W. van Nes, 'Von der Tweeden Druk', in *Harten van goud* by Ian Maclaren (Rotterdam, 1897).

Church'.³¹ This mid-nineteenth-century precedent shows how common ground enabled cultural transfer between the Netherlands and Scotland, affecting also subsequent cultural transfers of local colour in the opposite direction too.

Maclaren's effective breakthrough into the Dutch book market is further exemplified by the elegantly bound and illustrated Dutch editions of his works. The 1899 Dutch edition of Maclaren's *The Days of the Auld Langsyne* is graced with ten pen-and-ink drawings by popular Scottish illustrator Alexander Stuart Boyd. As van Nes mentions in another introductory note, the first edition sold out in four months, prompting this second Dutch illustrated edition.³² It followed Hodder and Stoughton's Boyd-illustrated British edition of 1898, and it is likely that the London publisher sold the plates to J. M. Bredée for use in the Dutch edition, alongside translation rights (the captions for Boyd's illustrations were also translated into Dutch).

The publisher's religious interests, van Nes' references to clerical figures, and van Nes' translation of Moody's biography link the circulation of Maclaren's fiction to his status as a minister of religion. Maclaren's writings in this capacity (as John Watson) were issued in Dutch translations by other publishers too.³³ The early circulation and reception of Maclaren's fiction in the Netherlands resembles the model sketched by Jan Oosterholt for the Dutch reception of George Eliot's first novel *Adam Bede* (1859). Oosterholt points out that, with Dutch literary criticism dominated by clergymen in the mid-nineteenth century, the shared Protestant heritage meant translations of foreign fiction were taken mostly from the German and British traditions, rather than from French literature, which had a reputation for raciness and questionable morals, and, especially after the 1848 revolutions, was felt to be a potential cause of social unrest.³⁴ According to Oosterholt, Dutch critics approved *Adam Bede* (1859) because they found it portrayed an idyllic world in which political and social turbulence did not arise (Eliot's novel would also have appealed to Dutch readers for Eliot's references to the paintings of the Dutch Golden Age).³⁵ Similarly, Maclaren's fiction found a receptive audience on account both of the religious common ground, and more specifically of Maclaren's resemblance to the theologian-turned-writer Van Koetsveld and his Dutch local-colour work.

In France and Switzerland, periodicals played a central role in the circulation of Maclaren's texts as his stories were first translated into French for literary periodicals. They next appeared in book form in translations by Swiss writer and journalist Louis-Édouard Coulin (1869-1948). Translators such as Coulin have always been crucial not only for their interlinguistic and intercultural competence, but also for their lived experience and their connections with writers, editors, and various transnational literary groups. Recently Raphaël Ingelbien has explored the way Franco-Irish translator Louise Swanton Belloc (1796-1881) negotiates her Irish identity and heritage from her father's side (he was a French army officer born in Ireland, but living and working in La Rochelle, France, where she grew up) in her early translations of works by Irish authors Thomas Moore and Oliver Goldsmith. Even though her fame as a translator was built on her French translations of Elizabeth Gaskell's *Cranford*, Charles Dickens' Christmas stories, and Harriet Beecher-Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ingelbien poignantly draws attention to her position as a diasporic translator of Irish texts and her negotiations of both Irishness and Englishness, 'sometimes flagging her Irishness, and sometimes embracing a wider anglophone

³¹ C. E. van Koetsveld, *The Manse of Mastland. Sketches, Serious and Humorous, from the Life of a Village Pastor in the Netherlands*, translated by Thomas Keightley (London, 1860).

³² W. van Nes, 'Voorbericht', in *Van lang vervlogen dagen: schetsen uit Schotland* (Rotterdam, 1899).

³³ See, for instance, the Dutch translation of John Watson's *The Cure of Souls* (1896), *Zielszorg en Herderlijk Ambt* (Leiden, 1897), and of *The Mind of the Master* (1896), *Het Leven van Jezus*, translated by S. A. Baljon (Utrecht, 1902).

³⁴ Jan Oosterholt, "'De Kapitaalste Dorpsvertelling": George Eliot's *Adam Bede* in Nederland', *TNTL (Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal en Letterkunde)*, 133.4 (2017), 227-38 (p. 230).

³⁵ Oosterholt, pp. 235, 236.

identity'.³⁶ In a similar way, Coulin seems to have operated across languages (French and English) and engaged with multiple regional cultures and contexts (Parisian-French, Swiss, and Breton) in both his translations and his original literary productions (realist fiction and ethnographic sketches, both set in Brittany). He was connected to the circles of the prestigious French periodical *Revue des Deux Mondes* and to other periodicals in France and Switzerland, where he also introduced Maclaren's work.

Both because of the substantial individual part he played in bringing Maclaren's and related work to the francophone market, and because of his representative status as a translator in the European publishing world of his time, we will stay with Coulin for most of the rest of this discussion. He was born in Switzerland, his father a pastor in a parish near Geneva who authored a number of religious texts. Louis Coulin started as a public speaker on religious matters in the early 1890s, and around this time also began contributing to Swiss periodicals such as *Le Journal de Genève*, *L'Impartial*, *La Revue Maurice*, *La Revue Verte*, and *La Semaine Littéraire*, both as a translator of British novelists and as a short fiction and feature writer. In France, his translations of Maclaren and British novelists Ouida (Marie Louise de la Ramée) and Mrs Humphrey Ward (Mary Augusta Ward) appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* in 1896-7; some of his creative work was featured in *La Revue Illustrée*. In addition Coulin translated stories by Arthur Morrison and Arthur Conan Doyle, as well as some work by French-based Hungarian writer Deszö Malonyay.³⁷ From the late 1890s, Coulin lived and worked in Paris, where he also took on administrative roles within the milieu of the literary journals. In a 1902 letter from the Dutch publisher De Erven F. Bohn, for example, the firm addresses 'Monsieur Louis-Ed. Coulin représentant de la Société d'affiches artistiques, Paris',³⁸ and enquires about the possibility of employing the Parisian agency to take out advertisements in a number of Dutch medical journals. As well as Switzerland and Paris, Coulin spent significant time in Brittany, where, according to his obituary in the *Journal de Genève*, he had moved on a permanent basis from 1905 or before, after developing an interest in Breton folklore as well as a friendship with Breton revivalist and folklorist Anatole Le Braz.³⁹ Some earlier Breton connections (a holiday in Brittany), however, are mentioned by Coulin himself a letter to fellow *Revue des Deux Mondes* contributor and literary critic Arvède Barine.⁴⁰

The 1948 obituary enumerates other areas of expertise, describing Coulin as an 'intrépide chasseur, adroit pêcheur, entomologiste de mérite ... excellent écrivain' ('intrepid hunter, dexterous fisherman, entomologist of merit ... excellent writer').⁴¹ In a profile in an angling magazine in 1942, journalist Tony Burnand confirms Coulin's polymathy, multiple regional affiliations, and a connection with Scotland via his angling activity. Burnand writes that his sportsman idol Coulin had lived in the Breton village of Gouarec for over forty-five years, entertaining anglers from France and England, and had also fished along Scottish rivers

³⁶ Rafaël Ingelbien, 'An Irish diasporic translator: Louise Swanton Belloc and the diffusion of Irish writing in nineteenth-century France', in *Translation in Ireland: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, edited by Ríona Ní Fhrighil, Anne O'Connor, and Michelle Milan (= *Translation Studies* 13.2 (2020)), 138-52 (p. 140).

³⁷ See Noémie Gurvend, 'Destins Croisés: Arthur Morrison, Ouida et Sir Arthur Conan Doyle', in *La Force Inconnue suivi de Terrifiant Mystère (Nouvelle Fantastique)* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Saint-Xandre, 2018), pp. 7-16 (pp. 9, 11).

³⁸ Leiden, Leiden University Library, MS BOH C15, Copybook, fols. 69-70, containing the outgoing letters of the publishing house De Erven F. Bohn to suppliers and booksellers 20 March 1902 to 9 September 1903. Online at <<http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:1814641>> (accessed 12 January 2021).

³⁹ Be., 'Louis-Ed. Coulin', *Journal de Genève*, 29 July 1948, p. 6.

⁴⁰ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (BN) de France, Manuscripts Departments, NAF 18341, fol. 231^v; letter of 4 June 1897.

⁴¹ Be., 'Louis-Ed. Coulin', p. 6. During and after World War I, his contributions to literary periodicals wane and his signature is found more often in hunting and angling magazines (see Gurvend, p. 10). All translations from French are mine unless otherwise stated.

and on Lake Geneva. He further comments on Coulin's intellectual and journalistic background in Paris at the *Revue des Deux Mondes* under the mentorship of Paul Bourget, and describes him as possessing the charm of an English lord, dressed in 'culotte anglaise et bas anglais, veston du grand faiseur, gilet de laine et cravate de chasse, béret écossais de laine épaisse' ('English breeches and stockings, a jacket made by a master tailor, a woollen waistcoat and hunting cravat, and a Scottish beret made of thick wool'). Figure 3 shows a photograph of Coulin which illustrates Burnand's article.⁴² This description, then, gestures towards connections with the anglophone world and with Scotland through Coulin's angling activity. His links with Brittany, moreover, extend beyond the residency and the angling, since Breton folklore and customs are also the subject matter of his



Fig. 3. Photograph of Louis-Édouard Coulin (left) as part of Tony Burnand's article 'Louis Coulin' in *Au Bord de L'Eau: Plaine et Bois*. March 1942, March 1942, pp. 8-10. Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

stories for Swiss and French periodicals at the turn of the twentieth century. Maclaren's French translations were thus undertaken in the context of a sophisticated Parisian, yet internationally oriented, periodical milieu, by a translator with multiple regional attachments, aware of internal regionalist trends, and who practiced forms of realist writing with a local-colour focus.

Before looking at his translations of Maclaren, it is worth dwelling on Coulin's Breton writings. They coincide with a time of heightened cultural regionalism in France (for example, Le Braz's Breton Revival). As Anne-Marie Thiesse has thoroughly documented, during the fin-de-siècle various provincial revivals attempted to decentralize French literature from the cultural hegemony of the capital through events, literary societies, associations of uprooted

⁴² Tony Burnand, 'Louis Coulin', *Au Bord de L'Eau: Plaine et Bois*, March 1942, pp. 8-10 (p. 9).

provincial students in Paris, and many provincial magazines offering a voice to local artists.⁴³ Among the regions, Brittany had been perceived as ‘le musée et résumé du pays tout entier’ (‘the treasure-house and epitome of the country as a whole’) and had been ‘chargée et surchargée de représentations’ (‘supplied and oversupplied with depictions’), Breton writers competing with external representations of the region made by outsiders.⁴⁴ The Breton stories by [323] Coulin - a Swiss journalist who operated in the Parisian literary world, translated British and Scottish literature, had made Brittany his home, and was interested in Breton folklore - could therefore be considered as part of this abundance of Breton representations and attempts at writing local colour more or less directly influenced by contemporaneous discourses of militant and ethnographic regionalism, and, more broadly, by an international interest in regional literatures evident across European national traditions. Moreover, fin-de-siècle regionalist movements such as the Breton revival had wider transnational reach, and European cross-currents among regionalist revival projects were not uncommon. For example, Breton revivalists had contacts with writers of the Irish Literary Revival.⁴⁵ Similarly, personalities belonging to Patrick Geddes’ Scottish Renaissance and publishing in his periodical *The Evergreen* (1895-7) demonstrated a specific interest in Breton folklore as part of a common Celtic identity. Edith Wingate Rinder, for example, translated and adapted Breton legends from popular nineteenth-century writers and folklorists such as Paul Feval and Anatole Le Braz.⁴⁶ Interestingly, Geddes also read the local-colour fiction of Kailyard, Irish, and Welsh writers as compatible with his trans-Celtic and Scottish project of revitalization, describing his Scottish ‘Renaissance’ as contributing ‘a fresh page to that widely reviving Literature of Locality to which the kindly firesides of Thrums and Zummerzset, the wilder dreamlands of Galway and Cader-Idris, of Man and Arran and Galloway are ever adding their individual tinge and glow’.⁴⁷ Hence the European outreach of Breton regionalism is an important example of transnational circulation, adaptation, and transculturation processes facilitated by a sophisticated and transnationally connected print and periodical culture.

Coulin’s sketches and short stories about Brittany published in mainstream publications such as the French *Revue Illustrée* and the

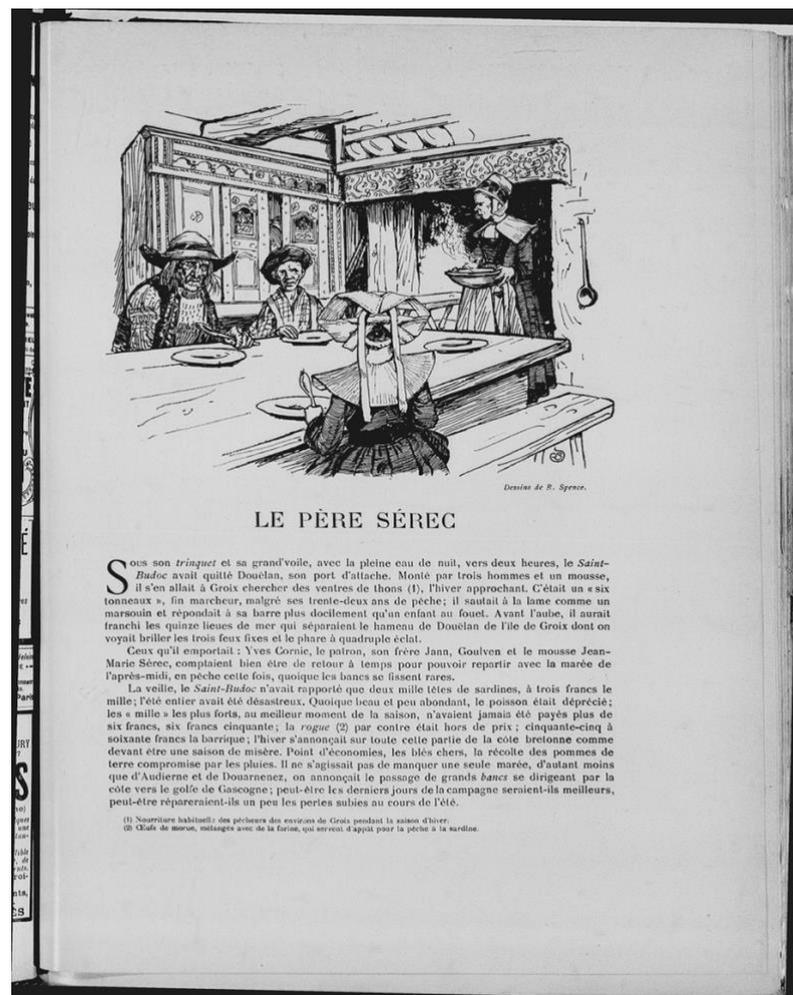
⁴³ Anne-Marie Thiesse, *Écrire la France: Le mouvement littéraire régionaliste de langue française entre la Belle Époque et la Libération* (Paris, 1991).

⁴⁴ Thiesse, pp. 41, 40.

⁴⁵ Le Braz travelled to Dublin in 1905 and met various Irish literary revivalists including Augusta Gregory, George Russell, Synge, and Yeats: see Anatole Le Braz, *Voyage en Irlande au Pays de Galles et en Angleterre*, edited by Alain Tanguy (Rennes, 1999), pp. 68-97. Moreover, Synge studied comparative folklore in Paris, and his travels to Brittany informed his approach to ethnographic writing about the West of Ireland. See Catherine Wilsdon, ‘Daring to be European: J. M. Synge’s Transformative Travels’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University College Dublin, 2015).

⁴⁶ Edith Wingate Rinder, ‘Amel and Penhor’, *The Evergreen: A Northern Seasonal*, 2 (Autumn 1895), 93-8; ‘Telen Rumengol’, *The Evergreen*, 3 (Summer 1896), 90-7.

⁴⁷ Patrick Geddes, ‘The Scots Renaissance’, *The Evergreen*, 1 (Spring 1895), 131-9. Thrums is a reference to Barrie’s village where most of his stories are set; Galloway refers to the setting of S. R. Crockett’s fiction; Galway could reference the setting of Jane Barlow’s Irish stories. For an exhaustive analysis of the Scottish Revival see Michael Shaw, *The Fin-de-siècle Scottish Revival: Romance, Decadence and Celtic Identity* (Edinburgh, 2020).



LE PÈRE SÉREC

Sous son trinquet et sa grand'voile, avec la pleine eau de nuit, vers deux heures, le *Saint-Budoc* avait quitté Douélan, son port d'attache. Monté par trois hommes et un mousse, il s'en allait à Groix chercher des ventres de thons (1). L'hiver approchant, c'était un « six tonneaux », fin marché, malgré ses trente-deux ans de pêche; il sautait à la ligne comme un marsouin et répondait à sa barre plus docilement qu'un enfant au fouet. Avant l'aube, il aurait franchi les quinze lieues de mer qui séparent le hameau de Douélan de l'île de Groix dont on voyait briller les trois feux fixes et le phare à quadruple éclat.

Ceux qu'il emportait: Yves Gornic, le patron, son frère Jann, Gouiven et le mousse Jean-Marie Sérec, complaient bien être de retour à temps pour pouvoir repartir avec la marée de l'après-midi, en pêche cette fois, quoique les lances se fissent rares.

La veille, le *Saint-Budoc* n'avait rapporté que deux mille têtes de sardines, à trois francs le mille; l'été entier avait été désastreux. Quoique peu et peu abondant, le poisson était déprécié; les « mille » les plus forts, au meilleur moment de la saison, n'avaient jamais été payés plus de six francs, six francs cinquante; la rogne (2) par contre était hors de prix; cinquante-cinq à soixante francs la barrique; l'hiver s'annonçait sur toute cette partie de la côte bretonne comme devant être une saison de misère. Point d'économies, les blés chers, la récolte des pommes de terre compromise par les pluies. Il ne s'agissait pas de manquer une seule marée, d'autant moins que d'Audierne et de Douarnenez, on annonçait le passage de grands bancs se dirigeant par la côte vers le golfe de Gascogne; peut-être les derniers jours de la campagne seraient-ils meilleurs, peut-être répareraient-ils un peu les pertes subies au cours de l'été.

(1) Nourriture habituelle des pêcheurs des environs de Groix pendant la saison d'hiver.
(2) Odeur de morue, mélangée avec de la farine, qui sert d'appât pour la pêche à la sardine.

Fig. 4. First page of Coulin's short story 'Le Père Sérec' in the *Revue Illustrée*, 1 October 1899, with illustrations by Robert Spence. Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Swiss newspapers *Journal de Genève* and *L'Impartial* testify to this wider European penchant for Breton regionalism in its various genres (including local-colour stories and adaptations of Celtic legends and folklore) and for different audiences (popular and middlebrow as well as niche and highbrow). One of his first contributions for *L'Impartial* is a story entitled 'Le Père Sérec', published in two instalments in 1898 and reprinted in 1899 with drawings by Robert Spence.⁴⁸ The story dramatizes life in a Breton village drawing on familiar tropes à la Pierre Loti's *Pêcheur d'Islande*, such as the dangers of the sea and the tragic life of Breton fishermen, with documentary attention to the setting, typical foods, and traditional fishing bait - all details diligently explained in footnotes. Spence's drawings in the *Revue Illustrée* further underline Breton localism in his careful depiction of traditional costumes (particularly women's clothes and bonnets) and environment (the thatched cottages and their interiors): see Fig. 4.

Between 1905 and 1915 - after his early Breton story and his translations for the *Revue des Deux Mondes* - Coulin published a series of ethnographic sketches about Brittany in the *Journal de Genève*. Written in lively prose interspersed with dialogue and some characterization, and sometimes being subtitled 'feuilleton' or 'nouvelle', they almost all involve a first-person ethnographer-narrator (Coulin) who reports his interactions with the local people in the Breton village where he is staying. He recounts anecdotes about local beliefs

⁴⁸ *L'Impartial*, 7-8 May 1898; *Revue Illustrée*, 1 October 1899.

(such as brushes with the devil, followed by vows to the Virgin) and offers accounts of ceremonies such as open-air masses and wakes in which he has joined the villagers. Readers encounter characters such as an illiterate old woman who works as a ‘casseuse de pierres’ or stone breaker.⁴⁹ Similarly to ‘Le Père Sérec’, Coulin displays a sharp ethnographer’s and linguist’s mind as he translates Breton expressions into French and explains idiosyncratic customs and turns of phrase in footnotes.

For the *Revue des Deux Monde*, from 1897, Coulin translated three of Maclaren’s short stories. They appeared alongside other international works of realist fiction and *romans des mœurs* of the late nineteenth century. Maclaren’s first story to appear in French in the *Revue* was ‘For Conscience Sake’ from *The Days of Auld Langsyne*, translated in 1897 as ‘Cas de Conscience’ and published in two parts.⁵⁰ In 1899 Coulin translated ‘Drumsheugh’s Love Story’ (‘L’Idylle de Drumsheugh’), another piece in *The Days of the Auld Langsyne*.⁵¹ In 1901, ‘The Transformation of Lachlan Campbell’ from *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* appeared as ‘Lachlan’.⁵² In Switzerland, a couple of Coulin’s translations appeared in *La Semaine Littéraire*. The novella ‘Un Docteur de la Vieille École’ was serialized in four parts in April 1898, preceded by an essay on Maclaren written by Coulin.⁵³ In December 1900 and January 1901 there appeared the two-part ‘Fille de Champs’ (‘A Servant Lass’) and the three-part short story ‘Domsie’ (‘Domsie’).⁵⁴ Coulin’s translations for these periodicals together with additional translations from Maclaren’s two collections were published in book form in Geneva [326] by Maurice Reymond, also the publisher of *La Semaine Littéraire*.⁵⁵ In 1910, another Swiss publishing house, G. Bridel, published another volume with Coulin’s translations of five stories exclusively from *The Days of the Auld Langsyne*.⁵⁶

The translation and publication of Maclaren’s stories in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* aligns with the periodical’s consistent attention to fiction across the Channel in the context of continuous business and cultural exchanges between periodical editors and writers in Britain and France throughout the nineteenth century. As Juliette Atkinson remarks, since its early decades the *Revue* had sought to ‘build an international brand’, one of its first directors, François Buloz, forging connections through his wife’s salon in Paris and sending representatives such as critic Emile Montégut to Britain to acquire a first-hand understanding of the local publishing industry and cement contacts with writers and subscribers.⁵⁷ Atkinson also notes that both French and British publishers in the mid-nineteenth century - considering also the 1851 Anglo-French copyright treaty and the 1852 International Copyright Act which further facilitated cross-channel business - were ‘moving away from an older business model that had relied on familial networks within the bookselling business, and were now keen to cultivate professional relationships based on commercial acumen, and which relied heavily on networking in person’.⁵⁸ In the 1890s, under the direction of Ferdinand Brunetière, the *Revue*

⁴⁹ Coulin, ‘La Casseuse de Pierres: Nouvelle’, *Journal de Genève*, 3 June 1907, p. 1; ‘La Dame Des Morts’ Croquis Breton’, *JDG*, 7 June 1909, pp. 1-2.

⁵⁰ Ian Maclaren, ‘Cas De Conscience: Première Partie’, translated by L.-E. Coulin, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 141. 4 (1897), 837–62; ‘Cas De Conscience: Dernière Partie’, *RDDM*, 142.1 (1897), 100-31.

⁵¹ *RDDM*, 153.3 (1899), 509-42.

⁵² *RDDM*, 2.1 (1901), 155-87.

⁵³ *La Semaine Littéraire*, 6.223 (1898), 170–6; 6.223 (1898); 6.224 (1898), 183–7; 6.225 (1898), 195–9; 6.226 (1898), 210–13.

⁵⁴ *La Semaine Littéraire*, 6.257 (1898), 579–83, 6.258 (1898), 594–8; 8.364 (1900), 605–7, 8.365 (1900), 622–4, 9.366 (1901), 6–8.

⁵⁵ Ian Maclaren, *Veilles Idylles*, translated by Louis-Ed. Coulin (Genève, 1899); *Ceux D’Autrefois*, translated by Louis-Ed. Coulin (Genève, 1901).

⁵⁶ Ian Maclaren, *Aux Jours du vieux jadis: Nouvelles Écossaises*, translated by Louis-Edouard Coulin (Paris, Lausanne, 1910).

⁵⁷ Juliette Atkinson, *French Novels and the Victorians* (Oxford, 2017), p. 130.

⁵⁸ Atkinson, pp. 57, 131.

had consolidated his national and international reputation and had become an institution of French letters, albeit facing increasing competition from other literary periodicals which proliferated during the Belle Époque.⁵⁹

The correspondence between Coulin and fellow *Revue* contributor Arvède Barine suggests something of how editorial decisions at the *Revue* were made and could be influenced. In one letter Coulin discusses Barrie's recent work *Margaret Ogilvy by his Son* and his own failed attempts at eliciting a copy from the author, 'le plus paresseux' ('laziest') of correspondents.⁶⁰ He enquires whether Barine's review of Barrie's biography has been published, so that he can use it to pitch a translation of the book to his editor, Brunetière: 'Cet article signé par vous, Madame, influencerait beaucoup, j'en suis convaincu, sur la décision de M. Brunetière. Votre nom suffit en effet pour faire accepter des travaux qui de but en blanc seraient refusés au débutant très humble que je suis' ('An article signed by you, Madame, would exert a lot of influence - I am convinced - on Mr. Brunetière's decision. Your name is actually sufficient to get work accepted, work that otherwise would be turned down flat from very humble beginners such as I am).⁶¹ In the same letter, he asks whether he could mention their acquaintance when presenting the translations of one of Maclaren's stories due to appear in the *Revue* on 15 June and 1 July 1897.

Coulin's explicit attempts to use Barine's influence to promote his career attest to Barine's stature as a literary critic and her decades-long career. Barine was a critic, scholar, and translator who had published extensively on English, American, Russian, and European literature and history in leading French periodicals and in book form. She had established herself as a writer on literary women and on women's social issues: one of her earlier works, *Portraits de Femmes* (1887), includes an essay on George Eliot. Coulin also mentions her influential *Névrosés: Hoffmann, Quincey, Edgar Poe, G. de Nerval* (1898), a study of these writers' relationships with addictions and pathologies, whose earlier drafts had appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* between 1895 and 1897.⁶² Coulin's deference to the more established critic helps us understand the dynamics of placing literary translations in periodicals as he tried to build a career in the more competitive French literary world after making a name for himself in the Swiss periodical milieu from the early 1890s.⁶³

In addition to the Barine letters, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France holds one letter by Coulin addressed to *Revue* editor Brunetière of 5 June 1902. Here Coulin reminds him of the promise to put in a good word for his translations of Maclaren at the Académie Française's annual literary and translation awards. Coulin alludes to the interest Brunetière has personally taken in Maclaren's work, and outlines the vicissitudes of his career as a translator, including 'les ennuis que m'ont coûtés mes rapports de traducteur à auteur avec Ouida' and 'l'insuccès de mes démarches auprès d'éditeurs qui refusaient les ouvrages' ('the trouble my translator-author relationship with Ouida has cost me' and 'the failure of my initiatives with publishers who refused the works').⁶⁴ Once again, as his letters testify, Coulin's work as a translator in France required constant negotiations with key players in a more competitive publishing and

⁵⁹ See Gabriel de Broglie, *Histoire politique de la «Revue des Deux Mondes» de 1829 à 1979* (Paris, 1979) pp. 337–40.

⁶⁰ BN, MS NAF 18341, fol. 231^r; letter of 4 June 1897.

⁶¹ BN, MS NAF 18341, fol. 231^r. Barine's review of Barrie's *Margaret Ogilvy* appeared in the *Revue des Débats* on 2 February 1898. *Margaret Ogilvy* was not featured in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* (nor were any of Barrie's local-colour stories), and its first French translation appeared in 1907.

⁶² Barine's study was published in book form by Librairie Hachette et Cie in 1898. Coulin praises this work in a letter to Barine dated 30 January 1899 (BN, MS NAF 18341, fols. 232^r-233^r).

⁶³ Coulin's first journalistic contributions I have traced are reviews of art exhibitions held in Geneva by Swiss painter Ferdinand Hodler: 'Lettre de Genève', *Feuille d'Avis de Vevey*, 7 January 1893, p. 7; 'Exposition de Ferdinand Hodler', *La Tribune de Genève*, 18-19 March 1894.

⁶⁴ BN, MS NAF 25035, fol. 447^r.

periodical industry.

When Coulin's translations of Maclaren appeared in book form, his Swiss origins and contacts with local periodicals proved significant in securing some positive reviews of these collections. For example, *L'Impartial* and the *Journal de Genève*, to both of which Coulin contributed, featured glowing reviews of *Vieilles Idylles*. In *L'Impartial*, the reviewer pays a compliment to Coulin's endeavour, but does not provide an in-depth analysis of his approach: 'le style anglaise de Maclaren est d'une saveur d'autant plus originale qu'il est tout imprégné des formes vigoureuses de la vieille langue que parlent encore les personnages de l'auteur, mais qu'à notre avis celui du traducteur ne le cède en rien, en grâce naïve autant qu'en force, à l'original' ('Maclaren's English style is all the more original in flavour as it is imbued with the vigorous forms of the old language that the author's characters still speak, but in our opinion, the language of the translator does not concede anything to the original, neither in grace nor in strength').⁶⁵ In the *Journal de Genève*, the reviewer is more specific on Maclaren's language and deems the Scottish dialect of the original 'difficile à lire et impossible à rendre', 'une vérité perdue, un parfum évaporé' ('difficult to read and impossible to translate', 'a lost truth, an evaporated perfume'), making Coulin's conscientiousness in completing his task the more praiseworthy.⁶⁶ As with Maclaren's Dutch translations, the dialect is an insuperable challenge in local-colour writing.

In 1898 *La Semaine Littéraire*, the Swiss periodical where Maclaren's translations first appeared, published an essay Coulin wrote to introduce the serialization of 'Un Docteur de la Vieille École'. Coulin underlines Maclaren's recent fame in the UK and his bestseller status, comparing his celebrity to that of the young Dickens.⁶⁷ He analyses Maclaren's style, and describes him as 'un réaliste dans toute la force du terme' ('a realist in the full sense of the term'), his merits being curiosity towards all types of personalities and the study of 'ces évolutions lentes qui prennent des années à s'accomplir ... presque imperceptibles au premier abord, qui élèvent ou abaissent une nature' ('these slow evolutions which take years to occur ... almost imperceptible at first, which raise or abase a nature', p. 171). This appraisal of Maclaren's version of realism can be linked to Coulin's own ethnographic approach to recording Breton ways of life discussed above. In his introduction to the translations, Coulin touches on Maclaren's use of Scots dialect, another of his realist strategies, and admits the impossibility of rendering it literally in French (p. 171). Despite the loss of this feature in his translations, Coulin is positive that the vibrancy of Maclaren's work survives, partly thanks to his being a 'philosophe chrétien' ('a Christian philosopher'), who believes in 'la durée et ... la noblesse de quelques-uns de nos sentiments' ('the durability and nobility of some of our feelings', p. 171). Even if Maclaren's French translations are not strictly linked to religious publishers or Protestant networks as with the Dutch transculturation, this remark highlights the piety and meditative quality of Maclaren's short fiction, which gave it cross-cultural appeal and helped enable its absorption in foreign contexts.

Analysing the early reception and translation history of Ian Maclaren's bestselling Scottish fiction in the United States, the Netherlands, France, and Switzerland, this essay has sketched a comparative model to help explain the supra-regional and transnational characteristics of nineteenth-century local-colour writing. Transcending the localism of its subject-matter, nineteenth-century regional fiction is a complex global phenomenon whose cross-cultural mediation is enabled by agents such as publishers, periodicals, editors, and translators. Publishing firms and periodicals, in particular, despite targeting their own national audiences and generally operating within one national language, extensively exploited transnational

⁶⁵ *L'Impartial*, 31 December 1898, p. 1. The review is signed 'Ed. B.'

⁶⁶ *Journal de Genève*, 15 January 1899, pp. 2-3. This review is signed 'A.S.'

⁶⁷ Louis-Ed. Coulin, 'Ian Maclaren', *La Semaine Littéraire*, 6.223 (1898), 170-3 (p. 170).

infrastructures and networks of literary professionals. In the United States, Maclaren's extensive circulation was fostered by the highly interconnected transatlantic publishing world, and by audiences already receptive to dialect literature at home. In Europe, though an interconnected publishing world was also significant, in both the Dutch and francophone literary markets the bestselling quality of Maclaren's collections was a sufficient incentive to undertake translations, and their readership possessed an existing tradition of regional fiction and experience of several varieties of realism. In addition, in the Netherlands, Maclaren's clerical background and the place of established religion in the publishing world made him an ideal candidate for translation and marketing. In France and Switzerland, the initiative of a young translator with a flair for ethnographic regionalism and closely connected with different regional locales (Switzerland, Paris, and Brittany), coupled with the reputation of established literary periodicals attentive to British literary trends, were additional factors facilitating a positive reception for Maclaren's work.

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