

Section XIV

LIFE: JANUARY – JUNE, 1896

At the turn of the year Elizabeth's doctor, worried about her health, advised three months in a warm climate. In early January, Sharp accompanied her as far as Paris on her way to Florence where she stayed with an aunt before going on to Rome to meet her good friend Mona Caird. Sharp was back in London on January 6, but he was also ill. His doctor advised him to join his wife as soon as possible. Financially pressed to support Elizabeth and anxious to get away himself, he began a period of intense work. While writing Fiona stories and poems at a frantic pace and writing as many reviews as he could manage, he also became more involved in the Geddes publishing firm where money had been promised him. That work took him to Edinburgh for four days on 12 January. From there he sent Geddes, who was teaching in Dundee, letters from several Belgian writers whose stories Edith Rinder had included in *The Massacre of the Innocents*. They thanked her for copies of the book which the Geddes firm published the previous fall and praised the quality of her translations. Sharp also included for Geddes several favorable reviews of Fiona's *Sin-Eater*.

When Sharp saw the Grant Allens in London on January 9, they invited him for another visit to The Croft, their home in Hindhead, Surrey. He went down on January 18 for two nights, and in his thank-you letter told Nellie Allen he "had good news from Lill ... tho' she is still very far from well." On the 24th, he wrote what he called "a chronicle of woe" to Herbert Stone in Chicago. In Edinburgh he had found Miss Macleod ill and unable to work which meant *The Washer of the Ford* would not be ready for the Geddes and Stone firms until the middle of March, and that meant delaying its publication until early May. Back in London, he found Edith Rinder in bed with inflammation of the bowels and unable to work. She would not have the manuscript of *The Shadow of Arvor* ready until mid-March. Sharp had proposed to Stone on 4 January that he undertake United States publication of several books which were in preparation under his direction at the Geddes firm. They included not only Mrs. Rinder's

Shadow of Arvor, but also Ernest Rhys' *The Fiddler of Carne*, and Mrs. Sharp's anthology, *Lyra Celtica*. Everything except the anthology was delayed, including Sharp's romance, *Wives in Exile*, which Stone had accepted. He was also, he told Stone, "far from well" and "under a great strain of anxiety, as to which I can only hint to you." His financial worries and his relationship with Edith Rinder were each cause enough for a "strain of anxiety," but that term probably applied to the psychological traumas he described to Murray Gilchrist in late 1895. Ever anxious to present an optimistic face to publishers, he told Stone the "strain" was nearly over, and he hoped to complete *Wives in Exile* in February, thus obtaining an advance against royalties. Tapping all possible sources of money for his trip to Italy, he sent a statement to John Ross on January 28 which showed the firm owing him seventy-five pounds.

In the January 25th issue of *The Highland News* in Inverness a young reporter named John Macleay published the first of a two-part article on Fiona Macleod entitled "A Highland Novelist." He praised the first three Fiona Macleod books and called on other Highlanders to follow her lead. It is to be hoped, he said, that "Miss Macleod is but the first in a movement which shall bring the Highlands into line with the great band of young Irish writers who are at present attracting so much attention in the literary world." In the next issue of the *Highland News* (February 1), in a section called "The Highlands in Literature: A Symposium," Macleay printed letters dated January 28 from William Sharp and Fiona Macleod. Sharp called for the expansion of Gaelic — written and spoken — beyond the western isles of Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and Brittany. In the Fiona letter, Sharp envisioned "a new spirit of intellectual and spiritual life" going forth from "our ancient and beloved corner of Gaeldom." He supported the founding of "a Highland league, both as a racial bond and as a system for local union." Above all, contemporary highlanders must stay true to "the noblest of human ideals —Beauty and Simplicity." We must not only "love but revere Beauty in Nature, in Art, in Life, in the souls of men and women. ... We must not only praise Simplicity, we must practice it again." Encouraging Macleay in his "timely crusade," she thanked him "for the much too generous words you have for my own place and work in this movement." In four paragraphs, Sharp had Fiona set forth his expansive goals for the Celtic Revival, goals that arose from his experiences

as child in the Hebrides and from his contacts as a young adult with members and followers of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, chief among them Dante Gabriel Rossetti. There was also in the Fiona letter an echo of the semi-religious, apocalyptic rhetoric of several young Irish writers, chief among them W. B. Yeats and George Russell (AE), who would soon become his friends and colleagues in the Celtic cause.

In this January 28 Fiona letter, Sharp accepted for her the leadership role in the Scottish contingent of the Celtic Literary Revival which Macleay had assigned her in the previous issue of *The Highland News*. In Macleay, Sharp found the champion he needed for his Celtic writings. Published in Inverness and read throughout the highlands and elsewhere in Scotland, *The Highland News* was a perfect venue. He sent copies of the paper to Elizabeth in Italy, confident she would be delighted. He told Murray Gilchrist that “the chief North of Scotland paper ... is printing two long articles devoted in a most eulogistic way to F.M. and her influence ‘already so marked and so vital, so that we accept her as the leader of the Celtic Renaissance in Scotland.’” Sharp “welcomed the opportunity of appearing in print in two guises for he believed that would help shield the true identity of Fiona” (*Memoir*, 258). Before long, however, as Macleay repeated rumors and engaged in speculation, Sharp began to worry he had bitten off more than he could chew.

After a hectic month of January — trips to Paris and Edinburgh, illness, both physical and mental, dealing with the affairs of Patrick Geddes and Colleagues, trying to keep track of the progress of his publications with Stone and Kimball in Chicago, financial worries, and the need to keep writing essays, reviews, and stories as two different people — Sharp went north to the Pettycur Inn on the Firth of Forth for two weeks in a relaxing environment. Elizabeth had written to advise that he focus on his creative work rather than articles, reviews, and essays. He responded positively to her suggestion, promising to concentrate in February on “finishing *Wives in Exile* and *The Washer of the Ford*.” But he did not want to worry Elizabeth with his financial problems, and his diary for the first ten days of February shows him still balancing both kinds of work. On the 3rd, he wrote a lengthy “Preface” to *The Washer of the Ford*, but on

the 7th he dictated a 1750 word article for the *Glasgow Herald* on “Modern Romantic Art.” On the 9th, he wrote “The Festival of the Birds,” but on the 10th he produced another article for the *Glasgow Herald* on “The Art of the Goldsmith.” He also wrote a long Fiona letter to Herbert Stone regarding publishing problems. She had been ill, though not as seriously as Mrs. Sharp, or her “dear friend Edith Rinder,” or William Sharp who had influenza and “a superadded dangerous chill.” They were all plagued by illness in that damp January.

Returning to London at mid-month, he finished the introduction and notes to Matthew Arnold’s *The Strayed Reveller, Empedocles on Etna, and Other Poems* which appeared in Walter Scott’s Canterbury Series (1896) under his own name and wrote tales for Fiona’s *Washer of the Ford* which was published in Edinburgh by the Geddes firm on 12 May and by Stone and Kimball in New York on 10 June. On February 21, Mrs. Sharp’s poetry anthology, *Lyra Celtica: An Anthology of Representative Celtic Poetry*, was published in Geddes’ “Celtic Library” series. For that volume, Sharp had written a substantial introduction and extensive biographical and critical notes.

Despite illness and depression, Sharp continued working, but a letter to Geddes early in March provides an insight into his condition. He had come to rely heavily on an American woman, Lillian Rea, for assistance in his work for the Geddes firm. Geddes had hired her on Sharp’s recommendation, and she was based in Edinburgh where Geddes and others in the firm thought she belonged since they were paying her. Now Sharp needed her in London. He wrote, “I neither feel well nor *am* so well, if quite alone just now — particularly in the evenings. In fact, I have medical injunctions not to be alone. Circumstances have so concurred that there is *no one* at present who can suitably come here just now except L. H. R.” He was trying to finish *The Washer of the Ford*, F.M.’s *Green Fire* for Archibald Constable, W.S.’s *Wives in Exile* for Stone and Kimbal, dealing with distribution issues and correspondence regarding *Lyra Celtica*, keeping up Elizabeth’s reviewing for the *Glasgow Herald*, corresponding with Stone and Kimbal regarding publication of his books in America, all the while physically and mentally ill but under great pressure to continue earning money. His need

was such, he told Geddes, that his doctor ordered him to obtain the help and companionship of Miss Rea or “give up at once my connection with P.G.& Co. & do *nothing* except my own *imperative* work.” He then told Geddes why he “*must not be alone.*” It “is not only the terrible (& to me novel) depression I then experience, but the paralysis that comes upon my writing energy.” The operative word is “depression.” It was this condition he tried to describe to Murray Gilchrist at the close of 1895. It was this condition he could only hint at in the “chronicle of woe” he sent Herbert Stone in January. And it was this condition that caused his wife and Edith Rinder to agree that one or the other or a suitable substitute must be with him at all times. There was the fact that he could not work — and thus maintain necessary income — when he was alone, but an even greater worry must have been the possibility that his depression would lead to his suicide.

It becomes ever more clear that Sharp was manic-depressive, a condition augmented and perhaps partly caused by the precarious condition of his heart and other physical ailments, including diabetes. In this letter to Geddes, he summarized his situation as follows:

If I find myself unable to do my F.M. work — & it is imperative that for the next six weeks F.M.’s work should prevail — I must sever my connection with the firm. At all hazards, F.M. must not be ‘killed’. *But this is sure:* she cannot live under present conditions. Leaving aside then the Doctor’s & E’s urgent requests as to my not being alone (partly because of my heart, & partly because of a passing mental strain of suffering and weariness) it comes to this: (1) I have help (& mind you an ‘outsider’ is absolutely worthless to me just now, & probably at any time) & stay here, and do both F.M. & W.S. & P.G. & Co. — each in proportion and harmony: or else I definitely sever my connection — at any rate pro: tem: — before all correspondence: & go away somewhere where F.M.’s funeral wd. not be so imminent, & W.S.’s nervous health could not be so drained.

My plans all hang upon ... how much I can get done before the end of March, (2) and at what mental cost.

God need not send poets to hell: London is nearer, & worse to endure.

Needless to say, Geddes responded positively to this appeal and sent Lillian Rea to London. Not a frugal person himself, he also responded as far as he could to Sharp’s need for money.

At the same time, after receiving this letter and in light of Sharp's collapse at the Celtic summer session the previous August, Geddes must have begun to realize that just as working for the firm was not good for Sharp, Sharp was not good for the firm.

By early April, his need for money reached crisis level. What he had on hand, he told Geddes, would only carry him until April 25th or 20th. It was absolutely essential that he receive £100 from Geddes before the end of the month. He would be due that much for managerial fees and book contracts, but he also had £100 invested in Geddes's Town and Gown Association. Failing money from the firm, he wanted his investment which was all he had. With it, he would be able to borrow the rest to cover his expenses in London and those of his trip to Italy in May. Stone and Kimball had not sent the money promised for his books, and he was now writing books that would bear no fruit until summer. He had to go abroad, not only to join Elizabeth, but because he had "come to the end of his tether. It is no longer a case of an *advisable* complete rest and change — but of that being imperative." Shocked at his "startling loss in vitality," his doctor ordered him not to travel far at a time. Consequently, "it will be at least a week or 10 days after I leave Paris before E. & I meet — as I am told to go by the Riviera, & stay somewhere 3 or 4 days on the way, at least — This for the head." He will spend the next three weeks making "the cauldron boil," but that will produce money only after they return.

Somehow he managed to put enough money together to leave for Italy in early May. One wonders whether the doctor, in fact, ordered him to go by way of the French Riviera or if he was attracted there by an invitation from his American friends, the Janviers, who had a home near-by. In any case, the Riviera turned into a profit center. In a May 6th note to Murray Gilchrist he claimed to have made £40 on the gaming tables the previous night, nearly half as much as he had begged Geddes to provide for his trip. From the Riviera, he went on to Venice to meet Elizabeth. By the 28th they were in Belagio on Lake Como on their way home. A card informed Gilchrist they would be in England on 4 June. Elizabeth would go directly to London, but he, having to break up his journey, would spend a few days — as it turned out a

week — in Dover. The need for this break in travel arose, I suspect, from his desire to be with Edith Rinder immediately upon returning to England. After a week in Dover, probably in the remote seaside hotel at St Margaret's Bay where he frequently stayed with Edith, Sharp spent a week in London and then went north to the Pettycur Inn near Edinburgh where he stayed until the end of the month.

After he left for the north, Elizabeth wrote a poignant letter, included here, to Geddes to thank him for his friendly welcome home, to tell him she felt stronger and better than she had for years after spending the winter in Italy, and to express her deep concern about the state of her husband's health. When she met Sharp in Venice, he "was so weak and feeble I was very alarmed. He had long fainting fits which at first I thought were heart attacks." Geddes had offered the Sharps his seaside cottage, but Elizabeth could not go north right away because of her work for the *Glasgow Herald*. And Will had to be near Edinburgh. She asked Geddes not to allow her husband, when he sees him, "to discuss business matters for any length of time at one sitting. He needs all his time and strength to get well." Each spring her husband gets worse, she told Geddes, and she "can see that if he works at the present speed & with the present complications, he will not see many more springs. The dual work of F.M. and W.S. is a great drain on his strength, at the present moment too great a drain; & his state at present is unsatisfactory." Despite Elizabeth's concern, Sharp, at the Pettycur Inn, continued to involve himself in the affairs of the Geddes firm.

LETTERS: JANUARY – JUNE, 1896

To Mrs. William Rossetti, January 6, 1896

. . . Just back from France where I went so far with my wife on her way to Central Italy. Her health has given way, alas, and she has been sent out from this killing climate for 3 or 4 months at any rate. . . .

Memoir 259-60

*To Dr. Tebb, [January 6, 1896]*¹

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead

My dear Dr. Tebb

I wonder if perchance you have either or both of Matthew Arnold's early vols, "*The Strayed Reveller*" (1849) and "*Empedocles on Etna*" (1852)

If so, could you entrust one or both to me — for a special purpose of collation of the text. All care would be taken & prompt return.

Just came back from France, where I went so far with my wife. I have to go to Edinburgh for a few days shortly - but soon after my return I hope to see you.

With Cordial Regards | Sincerely yours | William Sharp

ALS UWM Library

To Richard Garnett, [January 6, 1896]

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead

My dear Garnett,

¹ This letter and the next were probably written on the same day he wrote to Mrs. Rossetti. In all three he had just returned from France. Dr. Tebb may have been the W. Scott Tebb who wrote *A Century of Vaccination and What it Teaches* (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co, 1898). He must have been a collector of Arnold's works. Sharp's critical introduction to the *Canterbury Poets* edition of Matthew Arnold's poems was published in spring 1896.

Cordial thanks for “The Age of Dryden”² — which I have read with keen appreciation of your sane, sure, & well-balanced judgment & style. It is in every way a serviceable book — as I hope to be able to point out.

Can you do me a great favour, and lend me (if you have the books) either or both the two early vols. of Matthew Arnold: & by ‘lend’ I mean lend me for a few days only — with great care taken & prompt return. I want them for purpose of a rigorous collation of his variant texts. It occurs to me that you are probably owner of *The Strayed Reveller* (1849) and *Empedocles in Exile* (1852).

If you can oblige me, I could call at the B/M³ on Friday, for the book or books. Just back from Calais, where I went so far with my wife, invalided south for some months I am sorry to say.

In greatest haste | Cordially yours | William Sharp

I am sure no one reading “The Age of Dryden” will fail to realise what range of sympathy & insight you have — a delight in itself

ALS University of Texas at Austin

To Richard Le Gallienne, [January 6, 1896]

Monday

My dear LeGallienne

Thanks for your friendly and cordial letter. After all, I could not have joined you yesterday — for I went over to France so as to see my wife so far *en route*. We are both hopeful of her complete recovery in the air of central Italy — but her going was, alas, imperative. It is hard upon us both of course, this 3 or 4 months separation in peculiarly trying circumstances — but it might well be worse, so we look at things hopefully and I may add ungrudgingly, & see what after all is evident — the sunny side.

² Garnett’s *The Age of Dryden* was published by Bell in December, 1895.

³ Garnett worked in the Department of Printed Books at the British Museum.

It will give me very great pleasure indeed to come down to stay with you over a night — sometime after the 20th.

Would Sunday, the 26th suit you?

I am sure you have made a wise move every way —

Affectly yours, | William Sharp

ALS University of Texas at Austin

To Mrs. Grant Allen, January 10, 1896

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead | 10/1/96

Dear Nellie

(I am sure it sounds ever so much nicer than Mrs. Allen, tho' I shan't feel sure of it till you honour me with "Will") — I find I can manage Sunday of next week (i.e., the 19th) — tho', I fear, only for that day and Monday, & probably with need to return on Monday night. I think, however, I might be able to get to you on Saty by the train due at Haslemere at 5:32 (from Waterloo at 4:10). Will you please send me a line to say if you are to be alone, & if this arrangement will suit you: and please address it to me C/o Miss Lilian H. Rea | Crudelius House | The Lawnmarket | Edinburgh | It was a great pleasure to me to see you and Grant yesterday. If I were Fiona Macleod, as Grant seems to "hanker after believing", I would call you *Deo-Grein'*, for you are of the Sunbeam kind. I go to Edinburgh on Sunday, and hope to return by Thursday.

What a fine woman Mrs. Bird seems to be: I would gladly see more of both, if they care to see more of

Your friend, | Will

ALS Pierpont Morgan

To Patrick Geddes, [?14 January, 1896]⁴

⁴ Sharp probably wrote this letter during his brief trip to Edinburgh in January, 1896. He went to Edinburgh from London on Sunday January 12 and returned on Thursday, January 16. The letter is written on the stationery of Patrick Geddes and Colleagues. Sharp was sending

My dear Geddes,

It may interest you to see accompanying digest of Press Opinions of Fiona Macleod's book. I am glad that she has had notices so favorable: also, that the book *qua* book, and the new firm have had recognition in many quarters.

Also, herewith I send some typed copies of letters received by Mrs. Wingate Rinder from the eminent Belgian novelists, Georges Eekhoud, Demolder, and Louis Delattre.⁵ Please

Geddes, at his home in Dundee, a typed digest of excerpts from reviews of Fiona Macleod's *The Sin Eater* which the Geddes firm published in November 1895.

⁵ Eugene Demolder (1850--1919) was the author of *La Route d'Emeraude* (1899), *Roman* (1899), *L'Agonie d'Albion* (1901), and *Constantin Meunier* (1901). Louis Delattre (b. 1870) was the author of *Bonne Chère*; *Bon Remde* (1938); and *Pain de Mon Blé* (1938). For a note on Georges Eekhoud, see letter to Geddes dated April 29, 1895. The letters thank Edith Rinder for the copies of her translations of Belgian stories which were published as *The Massacre of the Innocents and Other Tales* by Stone and Kimball (1895) in their Green Tree Library series. The letters read as follows:

Bruxelles, le 4 decembre 1895

J'ai reçu votre livre, Madame, et je m'empresse de vous remercier mille fois et de vous féliciter. Vraiment il est exquis et je suis heureux de le posséder. Vous avez rendu un très grand service à la jeune littérature belge et je suis certain que tous nous vous seron tres reconnaissants.

Veillez agree je vous prie, Madame, l'expression de ma gratitude et de ma respectueuse sympathie

(signé) Eugene Demolder.

Mistress Wingate Rinder, | 7, Kensington Court Gardens.

Brussels, dec. 5, 95

I thank you very much, for the pretty book which you have so gracefully sent to me.

Your Green tree's, from my judgement, includes an entirely perfect choice of our belgian letters. And I am happy, for my lowly part, to be there in so picked company.

I present to you, Madame, my renewed thanks and the respectful expression of my regards.

I am, Madame, your obedient | (signé) L. Delattre

Bruxelles. II Decembre, 9 | 383, Rue du Progres.

Madame,

Je viens de recevoir et je relis vos remarquables traductions anglaises des ecrivains de

let me have them again. I thought they might interest you. The Belgians are susceptible folk: and now that they believe there is a renaissance here as well as with them their interest is extending.

The new “Evergreen” has been much discussed. We must ‘work them in’ some way: and here, socially as well as otherwise, Mrs. E.W.R. might be of real help.⁶

Yours ever | W.S.

“In the incipient Celtic Renaissance, Ireland has played a much more conspicuous part than Scotland. But the writings of Miss Fiona Macleod are gradually disclosing to the British public quite another Scotland than that with which lowland writers have familiarised them.” (*The Bookman*)

“*The Sin-Eater and Other Tales*” | (*Patrick Geddes & Colleagues.*)

Opinions of the Scottish Press: —

The Scotsman: — “The latest of Miss Fiona Macleod’s books will infallibly strengthen the spell which she wields over those who have come within the circle of her Celtic incantations, and help to make good her claim to a peculiar place in the literature of her day and race. In all these wild tales from the shore of Iona and the Summer Isles and from the hillsides of Mull — saturated with the sweet and plaintive music, and heavy with the sadness and mystery of the land and people of the Gael — in all these tales, from the beautiful ‘Iona’ prelude addressed to Mr. George Meredith, the same refrain runs. All are steeped in the gloom and glamour of the gathering mist, the lowering cloud, the breaking wave: in all is the sense of the resistless power of destiny: and in all are manifest Miss

notre “pleiade”, recueillies en un si delicieuse volume. Je vous remercie de tout coeur pour les choses si flatteuses que vous dites a mon sujet dans votre introductions à ce choix de nouvelles des notres. Et permettez moi aussi de vous féliciter pour le talent avec lequel vous avez transposé en la noble langue de Shakespeare et de Swinburne, les pages choisies dans l’oeuvre de mes amis et dans la mienne.

Votre jolie livre fait sensation ici, et on me demande de tout part où et à quelle prix il y a moyen de se le procurer? N’est ce point abuser de votre complaisance, Madame, et chère confrère, que de vous demander de bien vouloir me renseigner a ce sujet?

En attendant un petit mot de réponse, agréé encore mes felicitations et mes remerciements réitérés l’expression de mes sentiments bien respectueux et sympathiques.

(signé) G. Eekhoud.

⁶ No writings by Eekhoud, Demolder, or Delattre appeared in *The Evergreen*.

Macleod's wonderful ear and delicate touch."

The Glasgow Herald: — "The new firm of Scottish publishers whose imprint is on the title-page of this daintily-appointed book could scarcely have found a more striking or appropriate work with which to break ground . . .

If anyone can read them unmoved, or fail alike to shudder, to admire, to marvel at the stories, one does not envy his flat unraised spirit. For such pieces again, as to the beautiful and impassioned "Harping of Cravethen", or "The Anointed Man", with its delicate parable of the poet's soul, hardly any praise can be too high. Indeed, as "The Mountain Lovers" seemed to us to be an advance on "Pharais", so this volume of stories seems to us to mark an advance on "The Mountain Lovers". It unites beautiful and delicate language to a luxuriant fancy and a knowledge of the Gael that should yet take her very far, indeed, upon that high road of literature with which her individual by-path is now indissolubly connected."

The Aberdeen Free Press: — "It may be said at once that the volume is one of quite unusual literary power. . . All her stories are permeated by a spirit of gloomy fatalism, but while this in less skilful hands would produce an intolerably dreary result, Miss Macleod has handled the theme with great artistic skill, has given a subtle delineation of the mingling in the Celtic mind of this belief in an overpowering destiny and a highly poetic imagination, and has lavished on her sketches a wealth of vivid and picturesque detail."

Opinions of the Irish Press.

The Irish Independent (From a leading Article on Fiona Macleod and the Celtic Renaissance.): — "The most remarkable figure in the Scottish Celtic Renaissance, Miss Fiona Macleod, has now set three books before the public, and it is time to appraise her seriously. She is a born poet, and the colour and strangeness she gets into her work are as some land east of the Sun and west of the Moon rather than of some earthly island to which one may journey. All she does is namelessly fascinating. She is like her own "Anointed Man"; she has seen the fairies, and she has also seen the underworld of terror and mystery. Her work is pure romance, and she strikes a strange note in modern literature. The "Sin-Eater" will assure Miss Macleod's position with literary people; in this book she has "arrived". She is a woman of genius, and, like many people gifted so greatly, her message is often gloomy and terrible. But it is the spirit of the Celt, and her work another triumph for the Celtic genius. "The Englishman can trample down the heather, but he cannot trample down the wind", she says in her dedication to George Meredith, "Prince of Celtdom", and that wind of romance which breathes among the unpractical and poetical as Celtic peoples stirs in every page of the new writer."

The Northern Whig: — “In “Pharais” and “The Mountain Lovers” Miss Fiona Macleod gave abundant evidence of her astonishing range of vocabulary, its richness and its magic. In the present volume, however, it may be said that the gifted writer has surpassed any of her previous efforts. Weird, tragic, and gloomy as are the stories of Neil Ross, the Sin-Eater, Neil MacCodrum, and Gloom Achanna, yet her description of these characters possesses a power of fascination which is absolutely irresistible.”

Opinions of the London and English Press (Earliest received)

The Daily News: — “The preface and stories have in their style and treatment that blending of vividness and dreaminess that gives so much distinction to this writer’s work. Fiona Macleod is the central figure of the Celtic Renaissance curiously going on side by side with the progress of naturalism in fiction. These tales are, we think, the strongest and most characteristic she has yet given us. The charm and interest of the volume lies in the subtle apprehension and imaginative rendering of the ideals of race whose standpoint toward life and the unseen is altogether remote from that of a practical and agnostic generation.

The Morning Leader: — “Miss Macleod has the intellectual and emotional equipment that enables her to appeal effectively to the whole English-speaking race, while she has the intense love — idolatry is perhaps a truer word — for the “Celtic fringe” that lends to her imagination an unearthly vividness that nothing else could give, and touches her almost with prophetic fire. Her weird story of the wild man of Iona who took upon himself the sins of a dead man whom he hated could hardly be rivalled outside the pages of Maeterlinck. The startling effect made upon the reader’s imagination cannot be set down merely to the writer’s literary skill, great as that is. Much is due to the racial identification of the writer with the men and women she writes about. Her brain and heart are like unto theirs, and hence the secret of the sympathy and terror she creates.”

The National Observer: — “The hand of the authoress of “Pharais” and “The Mountain Lovers” has lost none of its cunning. Miss Macleod’s new volume is as remarkable as her earlier ones for sombre romance, striking imagery, and poetic expression. She has caught in no small degree the spirit of the Celt with its gloom and superstition, its fixity of purpose, its harshness and nobility. Her tales, full of curious folk-lore, are always powerful and melancholy. The stern, rude nature she describes forms not only a fitting background to her characters, but seems, as it were, a part of them necessary to them — nay they appear to spring from it and be made by it.

The Graphic: — “Critically, it remains to note Miss Macleod’s mastery of a not, indeed, untried, but of a hitherto less frequently handled instrument of her art. Her telling of the title story and of certain of the others, notably, the Dan-Nan-

Ron, shows that she can command terror as powerfully as pity, which is saying much.”

The Western Morning News: — “Written with consummate skill, and is a fine addition to Celtic literature.”

Liverpool Mercury: — “The book is full of an art that carries the imagination captive and leads it where it will. Moreover, there is a delicate strength of expression and a power of indicating the finest shades of meaning that is almost, if not absolutely, unique among living writers; at any rate, we know of no one else who possesses it in an equal degree. On nearly every page some phrase strikes home with its freshness and truth. Those who take up “The Sin-Eater” as a merely entertaining book may be disappointed; but let them read it in the glowing of a winter evening by the “soft radiance of oil”, when the firelight dances on the wall and the imagination has freed itself from the cares that oppress the day, and they will find more than entertainment in the images of beauty, and sadness, and love, with which this most charming abounds.

ALS and typed reviews NLS

To Mrs. Grant Allen, [January 17, 1896]

Friday

My dear Nellie

After a very fatiguing time in Edinburgh (the night before I came away I had to sit down at 8:30 p.m. and write without a break till 5 a.m.) I got back at midnight last night, but found such a mass of urgent correspondence that I had to write till 3 a.m.; so, this morning, am rather in the condition of the proverbial ‘boiled owl’.

This ‘cooked’ state of mind and body, I hope, will be in the past tense by tomorrow: so that you may have a human creature, & not mere limp material, as your guest — a guest who looks forward very much to seeing you both, tho’ it must be a brief visit, as, at the latest, I must leave on Monday morning.

I hope to get away tomorrow by the train due at Haslemere at 5:32.

In great haste, | Cordially Yours, | Will

ALS Pierpont Morgan

To Mrs. Grant Allen, [January 21 or 22, 1896]

My dear Nellie,

A line of cordial thanks for all the friendly welcome of Grant and yourself. I carry back with me from the sunny uplift of the Hind Head air a delightful memory. The fog & gloom of London make the city seem doubly insupportable. Never let Grant *settle* here, however desirable it may be to be here for 2 or 3 months at a time.

I had good news from Lill, I am glad to say: tho' she is still very far from well.

I think you are an extremely fortunate and happy couple: and if you would both only sleep a little better, and be as brave as your hearts tell you to be, you would know your luck, & feel inclined to throw the cat across your shadow for mere delight! Meanwhile make Grant well content to remain at The Croft. If he came to live in London he would not add a dozen people to his audience — “Milleadh dana, 'bhi 'g a ràdh fer nach tuigear,” which being interpreted means [’twould be but a]⁷ “Waste of Song, reciting where not understood.”

Then, too, to fall back upon Gaelic again, “Faodaidh duine sa’ bith gàir a dheanamh air enoc” — “any man may laugh on a hill-side” — & Grant I am convinced will come out at the right end of the laugh! Do not trouble to send back the handkerchief you honoured me by appropriating with such unscrupulous selfishness! Let it serve its new owner, with all the joy of a released slave for a gentler master.

But I do deserve a pat on the head, for not being obviously ‘down’ when with you at Hind Head — for I arrived at a moment of great anxiety and profound heart-sinking, & one of the telegrams was not calculated to allay either. It was a relief, however, to throw myself into sympathy with you & Grant. So, after all, I suppose I don’t deserve that pat. I hope soon to see the Birds.⁸

Please let you & Grant seek out a convenient rabbit-hole & there bury “Mr. Sharp” — so that when I come again, I may not find that unnecessary acquaintance but only

⁷ Sharp’s brackets.

⁸ In his January 10 letter to Nellie Allen, Sharp said he would be glad to see more of Mrs. Bird.

Your Friend, | Will

ALS Pierpont Morgan

To Herbert Stone, January 24, 1896

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | London | 24th January/96

My dear Herbert

This is merely a hurried line, a chronicle of woe!

(1) When I was in Edinburgh a few days ago, I found Miss Macleod ill, and though now convalescent unable to be at work. She says she cannot now let us have *The Washer of the Ford* till the middle of March, tho' can promise it by then. So that renders publication till beginning of May infeasible: but we hope to issue *then*.

(2) On my return I went to see Mrs. Wingate Rinder, & found *her* ill also, & more seriously: inflammation of the bowels. However, she too is now better, & hopes to be up out of bed in three days or so. But *The Shadow of Arvor*⁹ cannot now come to us till about the same date — namely mid-March: and even that can't be taken for granted until next week.

(3) As to W.S. — he admits he is a culprit: & that he is not so far on towards “finis” in *Wives in Exile* as he had hoped. But — apart from the trouble connected with Mrs. Sharp's break-down & going to Italy, & the heavy extra strain thrown on me, & having her work to do for her — I too have been very far from well. Moreover, I have been under a great strain of anxiety & suffering of another kind, as to which I can only hint to you, thus: but, now . . .¹⁰ anxiety are almost over. Still, with the delay, & with all involved, I must ask you to wait for *Wives in Exile* till well on in February. I am going to do nothing else now till it is finished, & at last can work at it again with verve & pleasure. Believe me, the delay is wise. The book will be all the better for it. There is an interpolated story-episode in the latter portion of it, “*The*

and her husband. Friends of the Allens, the Birds lived in London.

⁹ Edith Wingate Rinder's *The Shadow of Arvor* was published by Patrick Geddes and Colleagues in the Celtic Library series in the fall of 1896.

¹⁰ Bottom of page containing last line is almost entirely cut off.

Man of Two Minds,” by *The Woman of Two Natures* which, for one thing, I want to rewrite.

I hoped to have had a cable from you about Ernest Rhys’s book¹¹ etc., as I wrote on Jany 4th (abt new books by Rhys, Mrs. Wingate Rinder, & myself — & also abt a proposal by Mrs. Sharp).

In the faint hope that this blood of my crucified patience may better attract your attention, I write to say that I have never yet received the “*Gypsy Christs*” you say in your last were sent a month ago, nor have I seen a copy of that book — though a week or two [ago] I had a very nice letter from Mrs. Moulton¹² about it.¹³

DO SEND SOME COPIES FORTHWITH, OR I SHALL DAMN you EVERLASTINGLY.

Affectionately yours | William Sharp

ALS Newberry Library.

To John Ross, January 27, 1896

London | Monday: 27: Jan

Dear Mr. Ross

I hope you are now all right again. I, too, have been rather seedy, but am better: & have, I am glad to say, good news of Mrs. Sharp.

I want to send you a *memo* shortly of our Publishing indebtedness — due to White & Co., author’s advances — etc. Please meanwhile let me know what the firm’s indebtedness is to me — I mean under the arrangement on Agreement as to Salary, & discounting what has already been paid. Am I right in thinking that the sum remaining due to me, to be paid in two more instalments before May (see Agreement as to date of Engagement) is £75.? So far as I recollect, the payments of the firm already made (apart from advance & salary to Miss Rea)

¹¹ Ernest Rhys’s *Fiddler of Carne* was published by Patrick Geddes and Colleagues later in 1896. Sharp wanted Stone and Kimball to publish an American edition.

¹² Louise Chandler Moulton.

¹³ This paragraph and the next are written in red ink.

are: —

- (1) £10 to myself in August (or Sept)
 - (2) £50 to Miss Macleod Advance on “*Sin-Eater*”
 - (3) £50 to Mrs. Sharp for *Lyra Celtica*
 - (4) £30 to myself on a/c Salary as Manager
 - (5) £20 for purchase of Celtic books etc. required
- £160 of which, “W.S.” a/c as manager —
- | | |
|-----|-----------------|
| (1) | £10. 0. 0 |
| (4) | <u>30. 0. 0</u> |
| | £40. 0. 0 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Deducting which from Salary at | £105. 0. 0 | |
| Travelling etc. allowance | 10. 0. 0 | £115. 0. 0 |
| | | <u>40. 0. 0</u> |
| | | £75. 0. 0 |

Is this right?¹⁴

Yours faithfully | William Sharp

ALS NLS, Geddes Collection

*To the Editor, The Highland News, January 28, 1896*¹⁵

¹⁴ The following annotation signed P.G. (Patrick Geddes) is inserted here: “Yes £75 due to W.S. as manager in two installments before May.” In the lower left hand corner of the letter appears the following: “1896. | Feb. 1. Pd. £25. | Apr. 11. Pd. £50.

¹⁵ This William Sharp letter and the Fiona Macleod that follows are among several solicited by John Macleay, a reporter for *The Highland News* in Inverness, and published in issues of the paper dated February 1 and February 8, 1896. In the previous issue (January 25), Macleay called on fellow Highlanders to follow the lead of Fiona Macleod, to “come forward and give the benefit of their ideas and experiences.” It is to be hoped, he said, that “Miss Macleod is but the first in a movement which shall bring the Highlands into line with the great band of young Irish writers who are at present attracting so much attention in the literary world.” The January 25 issue of the paper also contained the first of two articles on Fiona Macleod by Macleay: “A Highland Novelist.” The second article, in the February 1 issue, praises the Irish writers and calls for Highland writers to try their best to emulate their “wide culture” and “commanding knowledge of the laws of their art.” Although the Highlands do not show well in this Celtic revival, they have “one writer of great worth and greater promise,” and that writer is Fiona Macleod, whose first three books — *Pharais*, *The Mountain Lovers*, and *The Sin-Eater* — are discussed in some detail and lavishly praised. The Sharp and Macleod letters reproduced here appear with others in a section of the February 1 issue called “The Highlands in Literature: A Symposium.” Macleay continued the symposium the following week (8 February) with letters from, among others, Katherine Tynan Hinkson, who wrote, “What can I say except that I am

London, 28th January, 1896

Sir,

In reply to your letter, I would gladly write at some length were it at present practicable for me to do so; for the question is one in which I am profoundly interested.

I have the less reluctance in not writing to you more adequately from the fact that I have recently had an opportunity to say a few words about this Celtic Renaissance of which we now hear so often, and shall soon hear much more — remarks that, in a week or so, will appear, forming, as they do, the introduction to *Lyra Celtica*, an anthology of Celtic poetry, to be published by Messrs Patrick Geddes & Colleagues, of Edinburgh, who, as you rightly surmise, have identified themselves with the Celtic movement in literature and art.

But I must take this opportunity to disabuse the minds of some of your readers who may accept the statements so commonly made concerning the extinction of the Celtic speech as a living language — at any rate, of Gaelic.

The assertion so constantly made in England as to the rapid disappearance of the Celtic language and Celtic “nationalism” is based upon surmise rather than upon close observation. It is true that in Eastern Ireland there is almost as little Gaelic to be heard as in Eastern Scotland (though even in Edinburgh, it may be added, the Courts not infrequently need the services of an interpreter); but wherever the native Celtic population is still dominant, the beautiful old tongue survives. The present writer knows a good many places in the Western Isles or Highlands where no English is spoken in ordinary parlance, and some where it is not understood at all; and there are whole districts in Western Ireland, in Wales, and in Brittany of which a corresponding statement could be made. Not only in England, however, but in Edinburgh and Glasgow and Aberdeen, it may be a matter of surprise to learn that the present Gaelic-speaking population of Scotland is larger than that to which Ossian — not the Macphersonian recreation, but Oisín mac Fhionn himself — sang the Passing of the Fein. For in Scotland at this moment there are estimated to be 310,000 people who speak both Gaelic and English, and

fully in sympathy with your desire to see the Highlands in line with a Celtic revival, and to wish you God-speed in your endeavors to promote it? You have begun well with Miss Fiona Macleod. She is worth many lesser and less Celtic writers.”

about 48,800 who speak Gaelic only — in all, 358,000 Gaelic-speaking folk: while it is almost certain there were not 300,000 Alban Gaels at the time when “Oisín, led by Malvin, wandered blind and desolate in his old age.”

Doubtless, it will be a further surprise for many to learn there are nearly three and a-half million persons who to-day use one or other of the Celtic dialects, and that of these it is estimated 1,156,730 speak no other than their native tongue. Numerically, it is not Wales that comes first, as commonly supposed, but Brittany, of whose population nearly a million and a-quarter speak the Armorican dialect, while 700,000 of these can speak no other language. Wales comes next, with close upon a million (996,530) inhabitants who use the old Cymric tongue, with the large proportion of over 304,000 who have no English. Then come Ireland and Scotland (the former with 867,570 who speak both English and Irish-Gaelic, and about 103,560 who can understand Erse only, and finally, the Isle of Man, where, it is true, there are very few who know no other language than Manx Gaelic (about 190 is the estimate), but where, it is calculated, at least 12,500 speak Manx as well as English. There is no longer any Brythonic dialect spoken in Cornwall: indeed, the Celtic tongue practically died out in the Duchy before the Elizabethan era. A solitary native who could speak Brethonec (the Celtic name for the Brythonic dialects) died early in this century, but this old woman was a derelict on a sea that had long been unsailed. On the other hand, the forgoing estimates take no note of the large alien Gaelic-speaking contingent scattered in Australia and New Zealand; considerable in many parts of the United States; and concentrated in large districts of Canada, and particularly in Nova Scotia, where indeed I have come across whole settlements of Gaelic-speaking Highlanders. Moreover, neither Gaelic nor Welsh is, as commonly averred, decreasing. On the contrary, within the last few years there has been a marked arrest of the wane that for adequate reasons had been so long and steadily taking place, and even in some places an unmistakable popular effort to foster and honor the ancestral language. In the West of Scotland many English visitors — and Scots too — infer that Gaelic is no longer spoken because they hear so little of it; but in the first place the Gael has a sense of courtesy that is somewhat foreign to his Southern kinsman, and will seldom indulge in Gaelic conversation before one ignorant of the language: and in the next, English — if often very Highland English — prevails in the summer

and autumn seasons almost everywhere from the Firth of Clyde to Macleod's Maids. It is in the winter months that the Gael forgets his English awhile, and returns to his old language. Even in summer, however, and in so frequented a part as the Kyles of Bute or the long reach of Loch Fyne, the fishermen of Tarbert or Strachur habitually use among themselves nothing but Gaelic. In the Inner and Outer Hebrides it is *the* language throughout the dark months. All of us who know this language — in its idioms, I think, the most beautiful of any Aryan speech, and with a flexibility far beyond what is commonly and ignorantly affirmed of it — can be of material help to the Celtic cause in the Highlands in three ways:

1. By speaking Gaelic wherever and whenever it can be used without pedantry or affectation — that is, wherever it can be used naturally.
2. By taking down (with every useful or desirable particular from the mouths of shepherds, fishermen, and others) whatever of local legendary lore or ballad lore they may be willing to impart.
3. For those who can read, but cannot speak Gaelic, there is a wide and fascinating field of research and translation.

Would it not be a good plan to establish in Inverness, with branches in Oban, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and London, a society to be called, say, "The Gaelic Literary Union," with intent to further, in particular, the organization of the second and the initiation of the third of these suggestions?

Yours in strong sympathy, | William Sharp

The Highland News, February 1, 1896

To the Editor, The Highland News, January 28, 1896

Murrayfield, 28th Jan., 1896

Sir:

Your appeal is one that ought to find an echo and a swift response throughout the Highlands. I am convinced that from this our ancient and beloved corner of Gaeldom a new spirit of intellectual and spiritual life is to go forth; not indeed merely to gleam in fantastic beauty, as bewitching but as insubstantial as a rainbow, but to merge into the larger spirit of

intense life which makes everywhere for beauty. But we must not expect to work a vital change merely by writing books, however interpretative and freshly stimulating they may be: the change must come from within. Of course, I believe profoundly in the advantages of a Highland league, both as a racial bond and as a system for local union and approach of individual and individual; and am convinced that we can go far towards our goal by lectures, articles, books; still more by fitly directed personal enthusiasm and energy; and by taking the crofter and the shepherd, the labourer and the fisherman, old men and women and the younger generation and even children, into confidence and indeed comradeship. The rebirth must come from within, and be of the people.

So it is now all imperative that we look to the preservation and the realization of the Highland sentiment — of the distinctively Celtic sentiment. But I for one do not believe in this unless we are true to our old love of two of the noblest of human ideals — Beauty and Simplicity. We must not only love but revere Beauty in Nature, in Art, in Life, in the souls of men and women: and we must not only praise Simplicity, we must practice it again. It is better to live on porridge and have the spiritual birthright of our race, than to be bondagers to the palate and the belly, and live less in the spirit and more in the body: and it is better to be wrought by what is Beautiful than by social ambitions and the chronic pathetic effort to live at a tangent.

Here, again, we must not be content with generalities. The Highlander who will deprecate the deep resentment caused by the projected spoliation of national rights in the matter of the Falls of Foyers has no right to claim to be other than a North Briton. It may be a good thing to be a North Briton, possibly much better than to be a Highland Celt: but that is a matter of opinion. Do not let us be ashamed of anything we cherish: but let us be ashamed to seem ashamed. There are some wrongs one should never forget, until they have been undone. One of these wrongs is the Lowland and English tendency to shut us off from our own hills, and lochs, and rivers; even, in some instances, from fishing in our sea-lochs; a shutting off that means a narrowing of our national life, a dulling of our ancient pride, and a perversion of our hereditary passion for the beautiful in nature, of our deep intense love for our *Tir nam Beann's nan Gleann's non ghaisgach*, as one of our forgotten old Gaelic poets has it.

Only through this mental atmosphere can we go out, as a regenerating force among ourselves and as a stimulus abroad, our Celtic dream. May it go then, *na's luaithe na earb, na's milse na mill, na's fhearr na an t-or!*

With every cordial wish for your timely crusade, and with thanks for the much too generous words you have for my own place and work in this movement,

Believe me, | Sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

The Highland News, February 1, 1896

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [late January, 1896]

. . . . Only a brief line to thank you for your letter about *me* and *Fiona*. Every word you say is true and urgent, and even if I did not know it to be so I would pay the most searching heed to any advice from you, in whose insight and judgment mentally as well as spiritually I have such deep confidence. Although in the main I had come to exactly the same standpoint I was wavering before certain alluring avenues of thought. . . . If I live to be an elderly man, time enough for one or more of my big philosophical and critical works. Meanwhile — the flame!

The only thing of the kind I will now do — and that not this year — will be the “Introduction to the Study of Celtic Literature”: but for that I have the material to hand, and shall largely use in magazines first. . . . Well, we shall begin at once. February will be wholly given over to finishing *Wives in Exile* and *The Washer of the Ford*

Memoir, 260

*To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [January 30?, 1896]*¹⁶

My dear Gilchrist,

Fiona Macleod has suddenly begun to attract a great deal of attention. There have been leaders as well as long and important reviews: and now the chief North of Scotland paper, *The*

¹⁶ EAS said (*Memoir*, 260) this letter was written in mid-February, but the two articles on Fiona Macleod by John Macleay which Sharp says the *Highland News* “is printing” appeared in the issues of January 25 and February 1. That suggests a late January date for the letter which is confirmed by the fact that the *Academy* review Sharp mentions appeared in the issue dated January 25, 1896. It was a favorable review of *The Sin-Eater* by Ernest Rhys (#1238, pp.72-3).

Highland News, is printing two long articles devoted in a most eulogistic way to F.M. and her influence “already so marked and so vital, so that we accept her as the leader of the Celtic Renaissance in Scotland.” There is, also, I hear, to be a Magazine article on her. This last week there have been long and favourable reviews in the *Academy* and *The New Age*.

I am glad you like my other book, I mean W.S.’s!¹⁷ There are things in it which are as absolutely out of my real self as it is possible to be: and I am glad that you recognise this. I have not yet seen my book of short stories published in America under the title *The Gypsy Christ*,¹⁸ though it has been out for some weeks: and I have heard from one or two people about it. America is more indulgent to me just now than I deserve. For a leading American critic writes of *The Gypsy Christ* that, “though it will offend some people and displease others, it is one of the most remarkable volumes I have read for long. The titular story has an extraordinary, even a dreadful impressiveness: ‘Madge o’ the Pool’ is more realistic than ‘realism’: and alike in the scathing society love-episode, ‘The Lady in Rosea,’ and in that brilliant Algerian *conte*, ‘The Coward’ the author suggests the method and power of Guy de Maupassant.”

I hope to get the book soon, and to send you a copy. As I think I told you, the setting of the G/C is entirely that which I knew through you. I have made use of one or two features — exaggerated facts and half-facts — which I trust will not displease you. Do you remember my feeling about those gaunt mine-chimneys: I always think of them now when I think of the G/C. Fundamentally, however, the story goes back to my own early experiences — not as to the facts of the story, of course. . . . Then again, Arthur Sherburne Hardy, who is by many considered the St. Beuve of American criticism — in surety and insight — has given his opinion of a book, i.e., of all he has seen of it (a comedy of the higher kind) for which Stone and Kimball have

¹⁷*Ecce Puella: And Other Prose Imaginings* was published (London: Elkin Mathews) in November 1895 though its title page carried the date 1896. Gilchrist knew Sharp was the author of the Fiona Macleod writings.

¹⁸ *The Gypsy Christ and Other Tales* (Chicago: Stone and Kimball, 1895). This book was listed in Stone and Kimball’s *Chap-Book* of November 1, 1895 as “now ready.” It was not published in Britain until January 1897 (by Constable’s) under the title of another of its tales, *Madge o’ the Pool*.

given me good terms — *Wives in Exile* — that it “is quite unlike anything else — at once the most brilliant, romantic, and witty thing I have read for long — to judge from the opening chapters and the scheme. It will stand by itself, I think.”¹⁹

Personally, I think it shows the best handicraft of anything W.S. has done in fiction. It is, of course, wholly distinct in manner and method from F. M.’s work. It ought to be out by May. Sunshine and blithe laughter guided my pen in this book. Well, I have given you my gossip about myself: and now I would much rather hear about you. I wish you were here to tell me all about what you have been doing, thinking, and dreaming.

Yours, | W.S.

Memoir, 261-2

*To Mrs. Grant Allen, [February 2, 1896]*²⁰

[Pettycur Inn] | near Kinghorn, Fife/

My dear Nellie

I did not walk over today from LeGallienne’s to see you & Grant, for the good reason that I was not there, but 500 miles north of you.

I was very far from well last week, and a radical change was imperative: & besides, I was sick of London and longed for the North. So I came to a place I know of — a remote inn on a little rooky promontory on the Fife coast: & here I shall probably remain for a fortnight at

¹⁹ *Wives in Exile, A Comedy in Romance* (New York: Stone and Kimball). The first American edition was entered for copyright on June 20, 1896, and copies were deposited on September 11. This book was published just as the Stone and Kimball firm was unraveling; after Stone left the firm and Kimball moved it to New York. Shortly after its publication and the collapse of the Kimball firm, its sheets were sold to Lamson, Wolfe, and Company of Boston which reissued them with its imprint and different covers. The first English edition was published by Grant Richards in June 1898.

²⁰ EAS said Sharp went north to the Pettycur Inn on February first. In this letter he tells Nellie Allen he is writing on a Sunday. February 2 was a Sunday, which dates the letter. EAS (*Memoir, 260*) reproduced diary entries of what he wrote at the Pettycur Inn between February third and tenth.

any rate. I am alone at present, but tomorrow or next day expect to be joined by a friend. I daresay you can guess who it is!²¹

It is as still here tonight (I write on Sunday night) as in Hindhead — though I can hear the lapping of the tide on the rocks below the windows, and a strange low casual moaning of the sea-wind far out on the water.

It is one of the nights in which one both dreams and fears impossible things.

I hope Grant is feeling better. My love to you both,

Ever Cordially your friend, | Will

The news from Elizabeth is good in the main — though she has caught an annoying inflammatory chill in her ear and jaw.

ALS Pierpont Morgan

To John Macleay, [February 3?, 1896]

Pettycur Inn | Kinghorn | Fife

Dear Mr. Macleay

Thanks for the H/N²² copies – in every way very interesting. I shd. like to subscribe to the H/N. Will you send me a form (the first time convenient for you.)

²¹ The Allens are to assume the friend is Fiona Macleod or, perhaps, the woman who inspired her. Although Allen suspected Fiona Macleod was Sharp when he read *Pharais*, he did not dwell on the matter and accepted her as a real person in accord with what Sharp wanted him to believe. Whether or not he had confided in the Allens at this time about the role Edith Rinder played in his life is uncertain, but Edith was surely the friend who joined him at the Pettycur Inn. They stayed there often in these years for they could do so in relative privacy, and Sharp found the place conducive to writing as Fiona Macleod.

²² See note to Sharp's January 28 letter to the *Highland News*. Macleay has just sent Sharp copies of the weekly paper — probably the January 25 issue that contained the first of his two pieces on Fiona Macleod and the February 1 issue which contained the second Macleay article on Fiona Macleod and the January 28 letters from Sharp and Macleod. The "Symposium" was continued in the February 8 issue. Uncertainty about the letter's date derives from uncertainty about whether Macleay sent Sharp all three issues or only the first two.

Let me have the *Evergreen* paper²³ at your convenience – the sooner the better, *but no hurry*. After the 13th cancel the above address, for my London one.

Yes, Fiona Macleod is a very tangible reality indeed. She and my sister Mary were here yesterday (She is better, but far from strong), & I had to pay for their luncheon etc. – & one doesn't pay for phantoms. When in the East Country, she stays mostly with my mother & sister (Up. Coltbridge Terrace, Murrayfield) & generally has her letters etc. addressed there when absent. She leads a rather wandering lonely life otherwise: mostly in the West & in the Hebrides, & sometimes in Brittany and the South.

I will send her your message about the photograph, but am certain beforehand she will not consent. A few weeks ago she so far yielded as to send a photograph at the request of the editor of one of the big American monthlies – but a day or two later canceled by telegram the right to reproduce it. Apart from her dislike of publicity, she does not wish to have her freedom of movement affected in any way: and it is not too much to say that anyone who once saw her photograph would recognize her in a moment anywhere, for her beauty is of a very striking kind.²⁴

I am very sorry indeed to hear of your ill health. Do you sleep well? Sleep is absolutely the sovereign remedy for all head & nerve troubles. I once cured incipient insomnia by drinking warm milk just before going to bed. If that does not suit you, a tumblerful of water drunk as hot as possible is helpful, both for sleep & overwrought nerves. I trust you will soon

²³ John Macleay contributed a brief reflective essay called “The Breath of the Snow” to the second volume of *The Evergreen: A Northern Seasonal, The Book of Autumn* (113-7), which appeared in the fall of 1895. The reference here is to Macleay's second and last contribution to *The Evergreen*, a story called “Nannack” which appeared in the Summer 1896 issue (129-34). Sharp seems to have been more involved in editing this issue, and there is a marked improvement in the quality of its contents. It contains a poem by Sharp, a poem and a tale signed Fiona Macleod, and a sketch by Edith Wingate Rinder based on a recent work by the Breton writer Anatole La Braz. The latter also appeared in Mrs. Rinder's collection entitled *The Shadow of Arvor* which the Geddes firm published in the fall of 1896.

²⁴ Here Sharp had Edith Rinder in mind for she was just such a beautiful woman.

be well again, & able to work in the Good cause in which we are all so interested.

Cordially yours | William Sharp

ALS NLS

To Mrs. Grant Allen, [February 7, 1896²⁵]

Pettycur House | Kinghorn, Fife

Just a line to say I am all right again — and the better of this keen salt air, & the isolation, & the beauty of the environment — and circumstances in general!

It is possible now I may visit R. LeG.²⁶ on Sunday the 23rd. If so, I'll try to get over to see you.

My love to you both. Tell Grant I have sent him a copy of "The Highland News,"²⁷ with an interesting article (the second, here) on Miss Macleod, with letters from her, Barrie, Crockett, myself, & others, on the new movement in Celtic Scotland.²⁸

I send you affectionate Greetings, N. & G.!

Will

ALS Pierpont Morgan

²⁵ The manuscript contains a note that the letter was posted on 7 February 1896.

²⁶ Richard LeGallienne.

²⁷ Sharp sent Allen the February 1 issue which contained the letters from Sharp and Fiona Macleod and Macleay's second article on Fiona Macleod. A letter from Grant Allen, whose name may have been suggested by Sharp, appeared in the "Symposium" in the *Highland News* of February 8: "Dear Sir: I have every sympathy with the movement you are trying to inaugurate, but I hardly know how I can personally be of any service to it. I have welcomed and will continue to welcome (so far as opportunity is afforded me) all good work of Celtic writers which comes under my notice. More than this, I fear, I have no means of doing. Yours, very faithfully, Grant Allen."

²⁸ James Barrie (1860-1937), playwright, biographer, and novelist, wrote *Peter Pan* (1916). Among his many other works are *The Admirable Crichton* (1914), *Dear Brutus* (1922), *Farewell, Miss Julie Logan* (1932), *Quality Street* (1934) and *The Boy David* (1938). Samuel Crockett (1860-1914) was the author of many tales, poems, and novels. Among his publications are *The Silver Skull* (1898), *The Loves of Miss Anne* (1904), and *Rogues Island* (1926).

To Richard Garnett, [February 7?, 1896].

Pettycur House | Kinghorn | Fife

My dear Garnett

If in your power, will you do my wife & myself a genuine favour by sending to her an Introduction to the head of the National Library in Rome, particularly with a view to the Consultation of Celtic books there, & still more particularly as to traces of the Celtic migration, influence, etc. in Italy.

Excuse a hurried & scrappy note. I expect to be in London again in a week or so: but meanwhile am rejoicing by the sea.

Ever Yours | William Sharp

My wife's address is Mrs. William Sharp / Hotel Hassler / Rome but if you will hand the Intro note to my cousin Farquharson Sharp, he will send it on.²⁹

ALS University of Texas at Austin

To Herbert Stuart Stone, February 8, 1896

9 Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian | 8th. February / 96

Dear Mr. Stone

Your letter of January 28th reached me less than an hour ago, and I now hasten to answer it at once: though I doubt if in time to catch today's mail.

I wish to do nothing unfair, and am distressed that you should think I am acting in any such spirit. You have treated me courteously and fairly in all our intercourse, and I had neither the intention nor any idea of overriding any definite agreement.

As to "*The Washer of the Ford*," I admit I was somewhat 'at sea' as to the terms: and having mislaid your and other publisher's letters (which I have not yet recovered, though I now know where they are) I confused different undertakings and agreements.

I at once accept your assurance that "*The Washer of the Ford*" was to go to you on an

²⁹ Robert Farquharson Sharp, who worked with Garnett in the Department of Printed Books at the British Museum and later succeeded Garnett as Keeper, was Elizabeth Sharp's brother as well as William Sharp's cousin.

arrangement of 25 advance on a 15% royalty (though, I may add, I have two American alternatives for any new book of mine, one of £50 and a royalty of 15%, and one a royalty of 20% and if wished, a small sum in advance thereof.)

From the first I promised to act loyally by your firm, and I have certainly no intention to break my word.

So, as to "*The Washer of this Ford*" let it be as you say: and I hereby formally agree to abide by the above terms, as you say, (and I have no doubt absolutely correctly) they were the terms originally agreed upon.

Pharais

I still do not understand about this matter. Certainly if I had believed I was asked to sign away all American rights, for £10, I should not have agreed.

I see the points you urge, but if matters stand as you say what is to prevent *any* publisher (or, for that matter, myself or any representative) from reprinting *Pharais* in America, if even the slightly amended edition has only a nominal copyright? What I *do* apprehend is, that you wish me to withdraw my stipulation as to your not issuing *Pharais* in other form or in a cheaper edition: and this I now do. In a word, you may cancel my objections, and accept my obligation as indicated in your contract-form. I will say no more than that (1) I have perfect confidence in your good faith; and (2) that it is the last time I shall give my adhesion to a contract that takes away my copyright, or whose terms I do not quite clearly understand.

Date for "*The Washer of the Ford*".

As I think Mr. Sharp explained to you, I have been unwell (though not so seriously as Mrs. Sharp, who is now in Italy or my dear friend Edith Rinder, whom you know, and from whom at Christmas I received a copy of "The Massacre of the Innocents," so delightfully got up — or as Mr. Sharp himself, who has had influenza, and is still in the doctor's hands, from that cause and a superadded dangerous chill) — and so there has been delay in finishing "The Washer of the Ford," or rather, in rewriting and partially recasting it. I am now under a promise to deliver the book, if possible, by the middle of March, but this means that you cannot have it till about the end of March.

Professor Geddes told me the other day that his firm intended to issue it nominally on

May 1st. I need not see proofs of the American edition: but even thus could you manage to issue the book on May 1st? It is about the same length as “The Sin-Eater”.

Please let me know by return, if that date, or exactly when will suit, so that I may arrange with Messrs. Patrick Geddes & Colleagues.

In re a New Proposal (“Green Fire”)

Messrs. Archibald Constable & Co of London have commissioned a one volume romance by me, of about the same size as *Pharais* or possibly a little longer. They will probably issue it about mid-June. It is, broadly, a love-romance akin to *Pharais* and *The Mountain Lovers*, and will be entitled “*Green Fire*.”³⁰ (The phrase has a particular Celtic significance, meaning at once the intensity and passion of youthful life, and the Rising of the Sap in the green world, in the human heart, and in the brain. Hence, also, the saying: “Green Life to you!”)

I had a letter from Messrs. Constable & Co. this morning, in which they said they find they can negotiate satisfactory American terms: and asked for my directions. But I replied that I did not feel myself free to come to any arrangement in America without prior offer of the book to you: though I added: —“It is possible that Messrs. Stone & Kimball may not care to issue another book by me at midsummer, as they are to publish *The Washer of the Ford* early in May: however, as I have explained, I feel bound to give them the offer, and leave them to decide. I shall write to them at once, and as soon as I hear shall communicate with you. In the event of their not caring to issue “*Green Fire*” I shall of course be very glad to accept the generous offer proposed.”

Will you please let me know by return about this (1) if you wish “*Green Fire*”, for midsummer (or a week or two earlier) publication — and (2) if you will give me a royalty of 15% plus, on publication, an advance of £50 on said royalty.

Awaiting, then, your reply by the earliest available mail,

Believe me, dear Mr. Stone, with cordial regards, / Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

ALS Huntington

³⁰Fiona Macleod’s *Green Fire: A Romance* (London: Archibald, Constable Ltd., 1896).

To John Macleay, [Feb 18, 1896] ³¹

London | Tuesday | 10 p.m.

Dear Mr. Macleay

Your note has just this moment come: & as I have to be out of London tomorrow I answer it at once.

Many thanks about the H/News. Let me have the *Evergreen* article *as soon as you conveniently can, please*.

Of course you can write to Miss Macleod if you like – though I suppose I ought to say ‘no,’ & would if I had the right! For she has been ordered by her doctor to write as little as possible till she is quite right again. She is better – but suffers much from nervous headache & general overstrain. She ought really not to touch a pen for some weeks to come – and it will be a genuine kindness if you & Mr. Macbain refrain from writing to her just now. Altho’ I did not know it was noticeable, I am not surprised at Mr. Macbain’s noting the Irishicisms [sic] of Miss Macleod’s Gaelic. As it happens, there is good reason for this, of a private kind! But over & above this, Mr. McB. may not know that the Gaelic spoken in Arran & Iona, two islands where Miss Macleod spent years when a child, before she lived further West, is full of Irish words & idioms. On the whole, Iona Gaelic is probably the least pure in the whole West. There is a marked difference between it & that of Tirie a Coll even. And between an Inverness man & an Iona man there is as marked dialectical divergence as between a Yorkshireman and a Devonian. I daresay Mr. Macbain knows this: but you might draw his attention to it.

I am delighted with the Etymological dictionary. It is a genuine service to the Gaelic cause.

I don’t know where Miss M. got the name of ‘Gloom’ from. It is probably her own imagining. Certainly *I* never heard the word as a name. She told me once, though, I remember, that in her list of strange names which she compiled and often draws upon, she has one as strange as ‘Gloom’-- and this within her own knowledge, I am *almost* sure -- namely, *Mulad*, meaning, I think, much the same as *Bron* (grief) though possibly rather sadness than grief. This

³¹ “Feb 18 ‘96” is written in pencil at the top of the ms letter. That day was a Tuesday.

may interest Mr. Macbain.

The name Achanna I think she owes to me. I knew a man of that name: and indeed Miss M's "Gloom Achanna" is one of her most near-to-life characters -- for he is founded upon one who is a close relative of Miss M's mother, & a kinsman of my own, & a very undesirable one! The man I knew was called Stephen Achanna, and his son changed the name to its better known form *Hannay*. He is now, I think, settled in Glasgow.

As to what grounds Miss M. had for her "Sin-Eater" I do not know. Certainly the *idea* of it was not recent: for I well recollect her mentioning the superstition, and its fascination for her, some four or five years ago.

I am sorry I cannot give you anything more explicit -- but the above may interest you & Mr. Macbain -- & save my cousin correspondence. She is a sufferer from the same complaint as your own, I fear. (This, however, between ourselves.)

Sincerely Yours/William Sharp

You are at liberty to show this note to Mr. Macbain (as a private communication of course).

ALS NLS

To Hall Caine, February 20, 1896

Rutland House, Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead, London | February 20, 1896

Dear Mr. Hall Caine,

To-day Messrs. Patrick Geddes & Colleagues of Edinburgh will post to you a copy of "Lyra Celtica,"³² which, with all its inevitable shortcomings -- and what anthology has not many -- will, I hope, meet with your general approval. It is on an ambitious scale, and in its fulfillment several points had to be kept in view, which, taken together militate against perfect proportion in the sections. Still, I think it the first attempt of its kind, and I hope it will tend towards a more general and enthusiastic study of Celtic literature, ancient as well as modern.

³² *Lyra Celtica: An Anthology of Representative Celtic Poetry*, edited by Elizabeth Sharp, with an introduction and notes by William Sharp, was published in Edinburgh by the Geddes on February 21, 1896.

Yours sincerely, | William Sharp

Hall Caine, Esq.

P.S. Dear Caine, I hope all goes well with you & yours! My wife is still trying to recover health, in Italy. She has been away since New Year — & dare not come back till end of April at earliest.³³

TLS Manx Museum, Isle of Man

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, February 21, 1896

London, 21st Feb.

. . . I am sure *The Highland News*³⁴ must have delighted you. Let me know what you think of Fiona's and W.S.'s letters. . . . I am so sorry you are leaving Siena. . . . I follow every step of your movements with keenest interest. But oh the light and the colour, how I envy you!

I am hoping you are pleased with *Lyra Celtica*. It is published today only — so of course I have heard nothing yet from outsiders. Yesterday I finished my Matthew Arnold essay³⁵ — and in the evening wrote the first part of my F.M. story, “Morag of the Glen”³⁶ — a strong piece of work I hope and believe though not finished yet. I hope to finish it by tonight. I am so glad you and Mona³⁷ liked the first of “The Three Marvels of Hy”³⁸ (pronounced *Eo* or *Hee*) so well. Pieces like “The Festival of the Birds” seem to be born out of my brain almost in an inspirational way. I hardly understand it. Yes,

³³ The postscript is in Sharp's hand.

³⁴ An article on Fiona Macleod appeared in the issues of January 25 and February 1. The letters from W.S. and F.M. appeared in the February 1 issue. See note to Sharp's 28 January letter to *The Highland News*.

³⁵ “Introduction,” *The Poems of Matthew Arnold*, ed. By William Sharp, Canterbury Series, (London: Walter Scott, 1896).

³⁶ “Morag of the Glen” appeared in *The Shorter Stories of Fiona Macleod*, Vol. III, *Tragic Romances* (Edinburgh: P. G. Geddes and Colleagues, 1897).

³⁷ EAS's good friend, Mona Caird, who was with her in Italy.

³⁸ “The Three Marvels of Hy” appeared in *The Washer of the Ford and Other Legendary Moralities* (Edinburgh: P. G. Geddes and Colleagues, 1896).

you were in the right place to read it — St. Francis’ country. That beautiful strange Umbria! After all, Iona and Assisi are not nearly so remote from each other as from London or Paris. I send you the second of the series “The Blessing of the Flies.” It, too, was written at Pettycur—as was “The Prologue.” There is a strange half glad, half morose note in this Prologue which I myself hardly apprehended in full significance. In it is interpolated one of the loveliest of the ‘legendary moralities’ which I had meant to insert in Section I — that of ‘The King of the Earth.’³⁹ I will send it to you before long. . . .

Memoir 262

To the Editor of Blackwood’s Magazine, [late February, 1896]

(Letter address.) / 9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield

Dear Sir

Will the enclosed suit you for Blackwood’s? I must add at once (1) that I reserve my copyright, with freedom to reprint in volume form after Xmas 1896: and (2) that the American serial newspaper’s rights of this story are already bought beforehand by a New York Syndicate.

The circumstances may make your acceptance of “Morag of the Glen” infeasible — but I hope not, as it would be a great pleasure to me to have one of my Celtic stories in *Blackwood’s*.⁴⁰

I am at present in Skye, but I give the address (that of a cousin) where all my letters are sent to.

Believe me | Yours very truly | Fiona Macleod

³⁹ The “Prologue” to *The Washer of the Ford* was written “To Kathia,” who was Catherine Janier, the American painter and folklorist. She and her husband, Thomas Janvier, a popular fiction writer, lived during the winter months in Provence and in Greenwich Village in NYC the rest of the year. They were very close friends with the Sharps.

⁴⁰ In his 21 February letter to EAS, Sharp said he hoped to finish “Morag of the Glen” that night. In a letter from F.M. to *Blackwood’s* dated 21 March 1896, Sharp asked the editor to make a decision about the story. So this letter was written in late February or early March. Not accepted by *Blackwood’s*, “Morag of the Glen” was published in *The Savoy Magazine* in November, 1896, in *The Shorter Stories of Fiona Macleod*, Vol. III, *Tragic Romances* (Edinburgh: P. G. Geddes and Colleagues, 1897).and in the Tauchintz volume *The Sunset of Old Tales* in 1905. EAS placed it in *The Dominion of Dreams* volume of the *Collected Works*.

P.S. May I beg the favour of a reply at your earliest convenience, as I have both Syndicate and Magazine applications for any work of mine I have to dispose of.

ALS NLS

To Herbert Stuart Stone, February 28, [1896]

London | Saty 28th Feby

My dear H.

In your letter Feb. 6th (received the 17th) you say 25 copies of the "Gypsy C." go to me on that day. A fortnight has elapsed since receipt of your letter, & still no sign of the books. There seems a fatality abt. this book. (Please see that the address in your books is right: the Chap Book used to be wrongly addressed to "S. Homestead") — as to the earlier package, I have inquired at the G.P.O., & at the Customs at Liverpool & South Hampton, — but without result. Please send me particulars of the dispatch of these books on Nov. 11th: by what line & post etc.

In any case please send me at once 6 copies by post.

How is the book going? I hope to hear any day from you in reply to my note to you with reference to the cancelling of any arrangement with Mr. McClure⁴¹ here. Altogether, this book has 'gone wild', so far as I am concerned.

Tho' not quite right yet, I am better. *Wives in Exile* goes well. I hope to dispatch it to you by the mail either of Wednesday 11th or Saty 14th.

Yours Ever, | W.S.

ACS Huntington

To Patrick Geddes, [early March, 1896]

My dear Geddes,

⁴¹ Robert McClure was the representative in England of *McClure's Magazine* which had been founded in America by his brother S. S. McClure. In 1895, Stone & Kimball appointed Robert

I wired to you today, by all means to keep Lilian Rea⁴² till Thursday morning if you wish: & so far explained my urgency.

I don't care to go into the matter; but it amounts to this, I neither feel so well, nor *am* so well, if quite alone just now — particularly in the evenings. In fact, I have medical injunctions *not* to be alone. Circumstances have so concurred that there is *no one* at present who can suitably come here just now except L.H.R.

I am under extreme pressure of work of my own — which has been so terribly interfered with by *Lyra Celtica*, E's work,⁴³ & my own ill health & absence — and in order to meet E's heavy expenses abroad & my own here I must put my best foot forward. In order to do this work I must have help for the correspondence etc. involved with printer, binder, & the question of distribution, reviews, etc. etc. of L/C, Rhys,⁴⁴ etc. — besides *Evergreen*

McClure as the firm's London "buying agent."

⁴² In a 25 January 1897 letter to E. C. Stedman, Sharp described Lillian Rea as "an American girl who after much residence abroad and fairly wide experience came to London first to assist me secretarially, and afterwards succeeded to a responsible position in the firm of Patrick Geddes & Colleagues." By that date, Miss Rea had left the Geddes firm and settled in London as a literary agent. Sharp was responsible for having her hired by the Geddes firm, and he continued to think of her as his assistant. He was annoyed with Geddes for delaying her departure to assist him in London. He needed secretarial help, and he needed her as a companion. His doctor had ordered he not be left alone which suggests a companion helped him ward off the demons of depression. Of the two women who usually performed that function, Elizabeth was in Italy, and Edith Rinder was ill.

⁴³ The anthology *Lyra Celtica* which EAS had edited and the Geddes firm published on 21 February. E's regular work was writing art reviews for the *Glasgow Herald*.

⁴⁴ L/C is *Lyra Celtica*; Rhys is Ernest Rhys's *The Fidler of Carne* which Sharp had accepted for the Geddes firm. Ernest Percival Rhys (1859-1946) was a literary critic, poet, editor, and close friend of Sharp's. As editor of the Camelot prose series for the Walter Scott publishing company in the early eighties, he obtained for Sharp the editorship of Scott's Canterbury Poets Series. He is best known for his long editorship of "Everyman's Library" (1906-46). In *Everyman Remembers* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons Limited, 1931), a literary reminiscence of London from the 1880s through the 1920s, he described William Sharp as "a veritable literary chameleon, taking on the colours of the regions and people he visited. His master stroke of magic was the discovery of the mysterious 'Fiona Macleod.' He kept current an imaginary biography of her, which in some moods he fully believed to be fact, the lines between fact and

correspondence, etc. In a word, it is not only W.S.-F.M. who wants an opportunity to get well & to do his own work, but the Manager of P.G. & Co. who wants a clerk or at least an office-boy!

Primarily, though, it is a matter of health. By the middle of March I hope to be quite right again in every way. The doctor's report is good: only I am to be scrupulously on guard. As for the immediate emergency: I have now arranged to put off my own work, & give up tonight and tomorrow to doing the immediate publishing correspondence etc. I had meant L.H.R. to do for me.

I trust you are not detaining her for the *New Edinburgh* article. That could not be done at once anyhow, but in any case *Harper's* would not want it immediately, as they always arrange these things months in advance. If I can have Lilian Rea's services *clear* for about three weeks (or at most a month) I hope to put all straight, for myself and others, at the least possible expenditure of my rather too severely drawn upon reserve.

My doctor has given me the alternative of having Miss Rea (or Mary⁴⁵ or some intimate friend) to be with me, & help me, or else to give up *at once* my connection with P. G. & Co., & do *nothing* except my own *imperative* work? — (& that under new conditions).

My dear boy — you don't realize how 'down' I have been. I don't care to speak about it. I want to forget it. I want to be well. I want to work.

To do all this, I must not only have help just now, *but must not be alone*. It is not only the terrible (& to me novel) depression I then experience, but the paralysis that comes upon my writing energy, that distresses me.

January & February *ought* to have been my most remunerative months for some years past. They have been disastrously the reverse: and unavoidably, owing to circumstances. Every day's postponement now means a heavy loss — and yet!

fantasy being very carelessly drawn, or not drawn at all, in his cosmogony" (*Everyman Remembers* 79). His other publications include *Welsh Ballads* (1898), *Rhymes for Everyman* (1933), and *Letters From Limbo* (1936).

⁴⁵ Mary Sharp lived in Edinburgh and provided the Fiona Macleod handwriting.

So close have all my arrangements to be knit, that a day's sudden lapse may throw a whole week out of gear e.g. having trusted to L.H.R.'s arriving tonight at latest, I arranged accordingly: but must now sit up all night and work hard tomorrow at detail-work, correspondence, etc. I mention this only to let you understand better. Besides our whole method of work is so different. I could do *nothing* (not even good hack-work) if I worked in your methods — as you would be handicapped and practically paralyzed by mine. My *own* work is primarily the outcome of mental atmosphere — and that *cannot* exist under certain conditions.

I have not made myself or my position clear. I despair doing so. But just as I would absolutely accept any statement of yours, even if I did not understand, so I ask you to accept mine.

And one thing is certain: if I find myself unable to do my F.M. work — & it is imperative that for the next six weeks F.M.'s work should prevail — I must sever my connection with the firm. At all hazards, F.M. must not be 'killed'. *But this is sure*: she cannot live under present conditions. Leaving aside then the Doctor's & E's urgent requests as to my not being alone (partly because of my heart, & partly because of a passing mental strain of suffering and weariness) it comes to this: (1) I have help (& mind you an 'outsider' is absolutely worthless to me just now, & probably at any time) & stay here, and do both F.M. & W.S. & P.G. & Co. — each in proportion and harmony: or else I definitely sever my connection — at any rate pro: tem: — before all correspondence: & go away somewhere where F.M.'s funeral wd. not be so imminent, & W.S.'s nervous health could not be so drained.

My plans all hang upon (1) how much I can get done before the end of March, (2) and at what mental cost.

God need not send poets to hell: London is nearer, & worse to endure.

Wearily yours | Will

ALS NLS, Geddes Collection

To Herbert Stuart Stone, March 4, [1896]

9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian | 4th March

Dear Mr. Stone,

Just a hurried line, to catch the mail, to thank you for the copies of "Pharais" just received. It makes a very charming book in its "Green Tree" format.

Alas, is Gaelic so terrifying a tongue that there is no hero among the printers of Chicago who is equal to it? I notice several misprints: some from the MS. of the supplementary matter which I sent out, which is not so surprising; and others in the text as printed from the printed copy, which is more a matter for surprise. So far as the Gaelic words go, I do not suppose this very much matters; with the exception of an unfortunate misprint on the last page of the Introduction, where the well-known phrase of Tir-Nan-Og (or, Ogue) — is given as the impossible *Tir-Nan-Ogul* — a bait for the laughter of all the Celtic gods that are.

You will have received my answer about *Pharais* and *The Washer of the Ford*: and I am now awaiting your expected reply to my query about *Green Fire*. As to *The Washer of the Ford*, I do not expect to be able to post the typewritten copy until the end of March from here. Messrs. Patrick Geddes and Colleagues do not wish to issue it later than about the 10th or 12th of May, if feasible.

With kind regards, | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

P.S. I should be much indebted if you could kindly oblige me with two copies of "The Sin-Eater" in your beautiful little *Carnation Series*, and if you are so good also as to present me with a copy of Mr. Sharp's "Gypsy Christ," which I see you advertise, I shall be still more indebted.

F.M.

ALS Huntington

To Herbert Stuart Stone, March 11, 1896

11th March /96

My dear Herbert

That unfortunate "Gypsy Christ" has never turned up yet. I cannot understand it. I wrote to the G.P.O. & Southampton & Liverpool P.O. — and also to the several Customs — but without result. This as to the packet sent last November. As to that sent on 7th February, it

seems to have gone to join the other.

Surely they must have been wrongly addressed.

Meanwhile I am glad to hear from Mr. McClure that he has had a telegram from you confirming me in my wish to try and arrange for the Book here myself — probably under another title, both so as to save copyright — really lost, alas — so far as possible, and because of the name, which seems to be the paramount stumbling block. I doubt if, in the circumstances, it won't be a total loss to me financially; & the utmost I hope for now here is to get the book out here. T'was born under an evil star, I fear.

How has it gone in U.S.A., with reviewers, and as to sales?

I am sorry you have had to cable your rejection of Ernest Rhys's "Fiddler of Carne." Did you not like it. We think highly of it, & advance orders are good.

You will have got the *Lyra Celtica* I sent to you from Mrs. Sharp and myself. How do you like it?

Do post me some of these d____d "G/Cs"! By the way, I paid last year for a "Verlaine's Poems" that never came. It is out, is it not?

"*Wives in Exile*" should go to you the day after tomorrow — i.e. by the mail of Saty. 14th. It is, I think, a true "Summer Comedy," and, as such will I hope have a wide and cordial reception.

In haste, | Ever yours, and affectionately, | Will
Please send me a line to say if I may write for the *Chap Book* an article on Richard LeGallienne. Have just been reading the MS. of his new book "The Quest of the Golden Girl" & think it exceedingly fine. I could send a Photo of R. LeG. with the article. Let me know: and also *what length*.

ALS Huntington

To Herbert Stuart Stone, March 14, 1896

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead, London | 14:3:'96

My dear Herbert:

By today's post (in postal Tubes) "*Wives in Exile*" goes to you.

I hope you will find it a true Summer Comedy — a true comedy in Romance.

With George Meredith I believe that “comic romance is about us everywhere, alive for the tapping”. It has, I think, verve and ‘go’ from first to last, with, as a good friend and critic says, “a note of sunny laughter throughout.”

I estimate it to be equivalent to a volume of about 65,000 words. (actual close estimate, *without* same allowances, 63,700)

For sub-title, how do you like

- (1) A Summer Comedy
- (2) A Comedy in Romance
- (3) A Midsummer Month’s Dream.

The first, I fancy? I hope, and believe, you will be able to do well with the book. It ought to sell particularly well in June and throughout the summer months — with the ‘yachting fever’ in full swing.

By the next mail (that of Wedny next, 18th) I shall post you the duplicate— *with final revisions in red ink*. These can thus easily be transferred. I have had to send this copy without my final glance through, though gone over carefully by my copyist and revisionist.

So far as America is concerned, *this will obviate you sending proofs*. (Let me, however, have duplicate *page*-proofs, for my own satisfaction — not to send back to you.) I do not know what arrangements you have made, or are going to make in this country. If possible, I had better see proofs *here*, of course.

But the book is now yours to deal with as you see fit — as the young lady said to Don Juan. Its fortune is on the knees of the Gods.

In your agreement-letter of 4th July — and in another note about same date — (from the Portland Hotel) — you undertake that £100 will be paid in receipt of MS.

I am going to ask you my dear Herbert, not to delay an unnecessary mail with this — and for this reason: I have, as soon as it comes, to go & meet *my* Wife in Exile!

The doctor forbids her return meanwhile — and she is fretting at this long separation of ours. I have arranged to go abroad to Venice, & bring her home by sea, towards the end of April. All her & my plans, however, are dependent upon this advance of £100.

So, remember the happiness of a Wife in Exile and a Husband at a Distance — to say nothing of your written vow before God! — !

Ever yours affectly | William Sharp

ALS Huntington

To the Editor, Blackwood's Magazine, *March 21, 1896*⁴⁶

9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield

Dear Sir

If possible would you let me have an answer soon about my story "Morag of the Glen" — as Mr. Bacheller,⁴⁷ whom I have sold the American serial rights, would like to know when the story is to be issued in this country.

Yours faithfully | Fiona Macleod.

To the Editor, *Blackwood's Magazine*.

ACS NLS

To Herbert Stuart Stone, [mid -March 1896]

My dear Herbert,

Just time for a hurried line by this mail to say that the last "Gypsy Christs" have now come to hand!

The book looks well. I hope it goes well.

I have been so infernally unwell that I have been unable to do any pen work for 3 days — but now I am by the sea (Hastings) and am all right or nearly so. I can't now send out the revised type-pages of *Wives in Exile* till next mail — but from a glance thro' them I see my copyist has not been careful, & that there are many annoying slips and misreadings. These can

⁴⁶ Date from postmark.

⁴⁷ Irving Bacheller (1859-1950), a popular American novelist, established in 1884 the Bacheller Newspaper Syndicate, which supplied fiction and feature stories to major newspapers and periodicals. Bacheller's syndicate introduced the American reading public to Stephen Crane's *Red Badge of Courage*, Joseph Conrad, Rudyard Kipling, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. More

be put right from my amended copy by next mail. I suppose you are setting up at once.

In great haste | Yours ever | Will

ALS Huntington

To Herbert Stuart Stone, [mid-March 1896]

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead

My dear Herbert,

I write from Hastings — where I still am, recruiting.

Herewith the duplicate of the first 10 Chaps. of *Wives in Exile* overlooked by me.

Still, I do hope I shall have proofs if possible — especially of English issue. (Would you not try A. Constable & Co. first?)

I must send out names for the chaps by next post — with remaining revised chaps.

The long fourth Chap should be divided: I forget if set sent out *is* so divided. I have put it here at bottom p. 66.

My typist has massacred many words. I am correspondingly anxious.

Meanwhile, please see to such alterations as have been made. In extreme haste for the post —

Ever yours | Will

Let me know soon about the LeGallienne proposal⁴⁸: and *don't forget about my advance cheque like an angel!*

ALS Huntington

To Herbert Stuart Stone, April 4, 1896

9 Up. Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian, | April 4, 1896.

Dear Mr. Stone,

than 3.5 million copies of his own novels were sold during his lifetime.

⁴⁸ In his 11 March letter to Stone, Sharp proposed an article on Le Gallienne for Stone and Kimball's *Chap-Book*, but the proposal was not accepted. LeGallienne's *Prose Fancies* was published by Stone and Kimball on June 25, 1896 and concurrently in London by John Lane. It was advertised in the June 15 issue of the *Chap-Book*.

Herewith I send you the opening pages of “*The Washer of the Ford*” to go on with. The book is the same size as *The Sin-Eater*.

The remainder of the first half of the book will go by next mail, and the rest of the volume complete by the mail thereafter. The Edinburgh printers (Messrs. W. H. White & Co.) are now setting up the book. A duplicate set of revises shall be sent to you when the other is returned to them — so as to save time, and to obviate proofs.

Messrs. Patrick Geddes & Co. have consented to wait if necessary until May 9th for publication. Will this suit you? They are willing to oblige you and me but will not delay publication beyond the 15th of May on any account whatever — and even the 9th (the date fixed for publication) is 9 days later than they wished.⁴⁹

If it is the case that rough sheets of a book — or even part of a book — can be bound in any way, and so nominally be sold and thus entitled to copyright — I wish you would kindly see to this in the case of “*The Washer of the Ford*”. In this case, you might enable Messrs. P.G. & Co. to issue on May 1st. as they urgently wish to do. My illness has prevented my having the book ready earlier. Another time I shall not thus inconvenience you and them.

Herewith I enclose printed list of contents: and some printed press opinions.

In haste,

Yours sincerely, | Fiona Macleod.

Excuse a dictated note. I am on a brief visit to London, and have to save myself from all unnecessary writing at present.

By the way, I suppose I may soon expect a remittance on account of *The Sin-Eater*?

F.M.

TL Huntington

To Elizabeth Sharp, [early April, 1896]

. . . I know you will rejoice to hear that there can be no question that F.M.’s deepest and finest work is in this “*Washer of the Ford*” volume. As for the spiritual lesson that nature has

⁴⁹ *The Washer of the Ford* was published by the Geddes firm on May 12 and by Stone and

taught me, and that has grown within me otherwise, I have given the finest utterance to it that I can. In a sense my inner life of the spirit is concentrated in the three pieces “The Moon-Child”, “The Fisher of Men”, and “The Last Supper”. Than the last I shall never do anything better. Apart from this intense summer flame that has been burning within me so strangely and deeply of late — I think my most imaginative work will be found in the titular piece “The Washer of the Ford,” which still, tho’ written and revised some time ago, haunts me! and in that and the pagan and animistic “Annir Choille”. We shall read those things in a gondola in Venice? . . .

Memoir, 263

*To Mrs. James Ashcroft Noble, [April ?8, 1896]*⁵⁰

6 Patten Road | Wordsworth Common | London SW

My dear Mrs. Noble,

It is with a shock of profound pain and regret that I have just heard of the terrible loss you have sustained. I had no idea that so tragic an ending to a beautiful life was so imminent — and it is piteous that such long and heroic endurance of weakness and pain should not have sustained for a far longer span of life the suffering body that held so fine a spirit.

Mr. Noble must have endeared himself to many whom he did not know personally. For myself I mourn that so true and fine a writer, so generous and sympathetic a critic, has gone into the silence — to use the tender island idiom. But he will live in the minds and hearts of those whom he has helped and encouraged, and be an unknown sweet influence in the lives of hundreds who read his writings signed and unsigned.⁵¹ For you and your daughters, in your great grief, I can find no adequate words. But you have my heartfelt sympathy in your great and terrible loss. Were there time I should send a wreath of laurel and yellow flowers of spring — for him who deserved the one and would understand the exquisite symbolism of the other.

Kimball on June 12, 1896.

⁵⁰ This transcription is from Sharp’s draft for Mary to copy into the F.M. hand. James Ashcroft Noble (1844-1896) was a well-known critic and editor. See Sharp’s letter to him dated 11 November 1885.

⁵¹ From this point to the end of the paragraph is crossed through on the MS.

To those who like myself do not believe that the soul falls short of its high destiny in the mind and this heart, death is terrible only for the loved ones who have to bear the loss. The others are free of evil things, and move in light

Forgive so slight an expression of what I feel about the true-hearted sweet-souled man who has left us,⁵² and left you, and those whom he loved. Once again my deepest sympathy with you and your daughters. It is well to remember that he left you on the morning of Good Friday⁵³ — a day full of the wonder and mystery of earthly death and immortal rebirth.

Believe me, | dear Mrs. Noble, | in the Kinship of sorrow, | Fiona Macleod

ALS NLS

To Patrick Geddes, [April 9, 1896]

Thursday Night

My dear old Chap

I do not want to worry you about the enclosed — but alas I have no option.

What I have on hand will just carry me on till the end of the month (or rather till about the 25th or 20th, for some unexpected things always turn up). I had of course calculated on the promise to receive half this managerial £50 in March, & the second half early in April.

Fiona has been giving all her best thought & energies to “The Washer of the Ford” — which is the deepest & best thing she has done — but with disastrous results financially.

To keep to the urgency point. It is absolutely necessary I must have £100 within the next month — and next thing to necessary that I have it by or rather a few days before the end of April.

I must pay the deferred Quarter’s Rent before I leave, & must leave a few pounds for the servant & other household expenses: Then I have also to send Elizabeth from £15 to £20 for this month. Finally, I go abroad on the 1st of May if possible — not only to join E., who is

⁵² From this point to “you and your daughters” is crossed through on the MS.

⁵³ Good Friday was April 3 in 1896.

forbidden to return till June, but, alas, because I have come to the end of my tether. It is no longer a case of an *advisable* complete rest & change — but of that being *imperative*. In a word, if I don't take from a month to six weeks' cessation from all work & worry, & don't have the change of climate & scene I seem to need (tho' I don't take all the doctor says as quite so urgent as he makes it — though of course he *may* be right) — if I don't have this break, and at the earliest moment practicable, “both head & heart will give way.” The doctor was so seriously put out at the startling loss in vitality that he threatened to write to Elizabeth if I did not at once promise on my word of honour that I would check this rapid retrogression in (as he says) the only feasible way. I am forbidden even to travel far at a time, & am to have no night traveling, & none that is continuous beyond a day. It will be at least a week or 10 days after I leave Paris before E. & I meet — as I am told to go by the Riviera, & stay somewhere 3 or 4 days on the way, at least — This for the head. So, after I leave Paris, my pen must rest till mid-June & weary head and ‘down’ body must recuperate *at all hazards*.

It is the *least* menace, that unless I am markedly better by mid-June I shall be ordered away for a long sea-voyage & to do no work for a year!

I trouble you with all this to let you see how urgent the matter is.

First then, à propos of Ross's letter:⁵⁴ Can you send me a (managerial) cheque for £50 within the next week — and promise that without fail the ‘Washer of the Ford’ £50 shall be sent to Miss F.M. by May 15th? The book is to be published by the 10th at latest, possibly earlier.

If so, I can manage thus — by getting the consent of the Manager of my Bank to a temporary overdraft at the beginning of May.

It would be worse than useless for me to go away — to do nothing, & have perforce to

⁵⁴ John Ross was hired by Geddes to manage the finances of the publishing company. Several letters in the Geddes Collection (NLS) provide context for this letter. An April 4 letter from Ross to Sharp precipitated this letter from Sharp to Geddes. On 10 April, Geddes assured Sharp he would receive a check and wrote a short note to Elizabeth (to be forwarded to her in Italy by Lillian Rea) assuring her that Sharp's financial concerns would soon be alleviated. Lillian Rea returned that note to Geddes, stating that Sharp wished to keep knowledge of his ill health and concern over money matters from his wife.

incur such heavy & continuous expenses for Elizabeth & myself — unless I can do so with a free mind. I find the strain of anxiety, as it is, telling upon me badly.

With what I have told you will see that there is not overmuch of even the £100 left for ease of mind & recovery of health — though my anxieties should be at an end by mid-summer if only my American publishers don't prevaricate or in any way play a false game. I know of only one place where I can borrow meanwhile, & that to be avoided if possible: tho' I expect I'll have to do it by June — though perhaps the friends overseas will keep to their undertaking, in which case I'll be able to breathe more freely than I have done for long. I have to keep all these worries from E — who is still so far from being robust again, & who knows (without knowing fully) how absolutely imperative it is that I lay down the reins for awhile.

If I had anything to draw against I would not be so exigent (tho' as you know, in like instances, according to the letter of our Agreements, the payments are, or will shortly be, due) — but all I have in the World is the £100 invested in “The Town & Gown Association”⁵⁵ — which reminds me that you have never sent me the promised share Certificates or Warrants — or whatever they are called.

I heard an elderly merchant-friend say the other day that if he only had £2000 it would not only save his credit but prolong his life. I feel inclined to say the same thing, on the more modest scale of £200. *That* would be a very big stitch in time, indeed: but alas, the moon does not come to one because one cries for it.

And now, can you manage that £50 next week, & £50 on May 15th? (The rest I can manage to get some way or other when needed, *if* needed.)

Forgive me that I so press the point. I will say no more if it is to entail actual loss or serious worry upon you and Anna. I love you both too much for that. In that case, I suppose I must simply have my “Town and Gown” £100 back, and have the other sums a little later.

⁵⁵ Town and Gown Association, Ltd. was a stock-holding company formed in May, 1896, by Martin White, a long time friend of P. G. Geddes, to place the various enterprises of Geddes on a strictly business basis. The association would support projects for civic betterment and provide a common meeting ground for men of affairs and men of learning so they might work together on such projects as the eradication of slum areas in the cities and the elimination of

What a d——d—d—d —d nuisance these money-difficulties are.

It is now 1.30 a.m. but I found I could not sleep till I had written — for Ross's note came by last post: & as I was writing was not sent to me till midnight.

I hope to return restored in mind & body. There is a kind of grim relief in knowing I cannot go on as I am. Well, a good many things depend on recuperation — & recuperate I *must*. If you shd. happen to be writing do not tell Barclay⁵⁶ or anyone that I shall be passing thro' Paris — for I wish to *see no one*.

I do hope you are keeping well — & that things prosper. My love to Anna (to whom I owe a letter, & shall write soon). In the next 3 weeks I have to squeeze enough work in to make a *cauldron* boil: — but that is to live on when we come back.

Ever, Phadrine no Charaid Sileas,

Your friend affectionately, | William Sharp

ALS NLS, Geddes Collection

To Herbert Stuart Stone, April 11, 1896

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead | 11/4/96

My dear Herbert,

You will have received my cablegram which I sent to you yesterday, after receipt of your letter. It was to urge you not to delay longer than inevitable with the first remittance on *a/c Wives in Exile*. Unfortunately I have not been well, & the doctor commands immediate cessation from work, & complete rest & change for at least six weeks. I am to go abroad as soon as possible, & join my wife — who, I regret to say, is still not well enough to be allowed home till mid-June.

I am unable to get away until that money comes, though if I were quite certain of its receipt by the end of April or beginning of May, I would raise a loan meanwhile & so get away. I would not have bothered you, but for the great urgency involved.

specializations in the universities.

⁵⁶Thomas Barclay. See note to Sharp's letter to Geddes dated 27 April 1895.

I called yesterday on Mr. McClure. I have advised him to submit “Wives in Exile” first to Archibald Constable & Co. when once he has recd. the sheets from you.⁵⁷ I shall call on them first myself.

I have discovered that the chief reason (apart from trade reasons as to being late in the season) — for the refusal to have “The Gypsy Christ” was the initial story. Mudie & Co absolutely taboo any story involving possible religious offence — so I am told.

Are you coming over this Summer? I hope soon to be all right again. Possibly this going away may prove the stitch in time to save the fatal number.

Affectionately your friend, | William Sharp

I'll send the LeGallienne article after June.⁵⁸ His “Quest of The Golden Girl”⁵⁹ is not to be out now till September. The “Gypsy Christ” original package has been traced at last by the G.P.C. It was wrongly addressed, and has been found unclaimed in Scotland! As I have since received the second set sent, shall I return these earlier copies to you?

ALS Huntington

To [John Ross], [April 27, 1896]

. . . and “Ecce Puella”⁶⁰.

II. With regard to our firm's indebtedness for work to be delivered (and apart from bills due for White and Co. and Mr. Wilson), there is not much. There is £50. payable to Miss Macleod on the 15th of May, and either that sum or £25. due to Mr. Stuart-Glennie⁶¹ when he

⁵⁷ *Wives in Exile* was published in London by Grant Richards in 1898.

⁵⁸ Stone must have told Sharp to go ahead with an article on Le Gallienne, but Sharp seems not to have produced it.

⁵⁹ La Gallienne's *The Quest of the Golden Girl* was published by John Lane in the fall of 1896 in London and New York.

⁶⁰ The surviving fragment begins here. Its handwriting is probably that of Lillian Rea who was serving as Sharp's secretary. Its signature and postscript are in Sharp's handwriting.

⁶¹ John Stuart Glennie who was the author of *Arthurian Localities: Their Historical Origin*,

forwards his copy of “Arthurian Scotland”— which he has not done despite his exigency beforehand. As to whether this amount is to be payable directly by the firm, or by Mr. Geddes himself as a personal advance (as I infer from one of Mr. Stuart-Glennie’s letters) I leave you to discover from P.G. Then there will be £50 due on my “Ossian”,⁶² when that is ready, which will be sometime in July. There will be nothing else for Summer payments; and, so far as I am concerned, I have made no binding arrangements with any one, save Mrs. Wingate Rinder, who is to have an advance upon her “Shadow of Arvor,” and Miss Macleod for “Ossian Retold.” But these are matters for Autumn consideration. By special arrangement Mrs. Rinder is to have two guineas (£2-2-0) for Evergreen contribution, Miss Nora Hopper (£1-1-0)⁶³.

I hope the Company matters prosper. Perhaps you will kindly drop me a line as to how things go. Naturally, I am much handicapped at present — discussing literary prospects for the firm when I am in the dark as to what means may be at my disposal.

Some time ago, when you sent Miss Rea a cheque for £8:6:8, she drew your attention to the fact that £3:6:8 of this was not due to her while she was my guest. She consulted me on the matter, and I advised her to pass the said sum £3:6:8 over to current office expenses, postages etc., which she has done, and of which she has kept an account. As her next salary is not due until the 17th of May, and she leaves London to return to Edinburgh on or about the 5th of May, will you kindly remit to her a cheque for her traveling expenses: say £2?

I am returning Mr. Eyre-Todd’s⁶⁴ MSS, as we are at present quite unable to undertake any work, however good of its kind, that does not open up a prospect of repaying us with some

Chief Country, and Fingalian Relations (1869), *King Arthur: or, the Drama of the Revolution* (1867-1870), *Christ and Osiris* (1876), *Merlin* (1899), and *Sociological Studies* (1906). He seems not to have published a book from the Geddes firm.

⁶² “Introductory Note,” *The Poems of Ossian Translated by James Macpherson* (Edinburgh: P. G. Geddes and Colleagues, 1896).

⁶³ Edith Wingate-Rinder contributed “Telen Rumengal” to *The Evergreen*, Vol. III (Summer, 1896, 90-97) and “Sant Efflamm and King Arthur,” to Vol. IV (Winter, 1896-7, 69). Nora Hopper’s “Swan White” appeared in Vol. III (41-2) and her “All Soul’s Day” in Vol. IV (75).

⁶⁴ George Eyre-Todd’s “Night in Arran” appeared in *The Evergreen* Vol. III (137-41).

surety for outlay, and even if his book were well received, it is in the least degree unlikely that it would pay expenses. To save you the trouble, I shall have these MSS. returned with a suitable letter direct to Mr. Eyre-Todd, as from the firm.

Yours very truly, | William Sharp

P.S. In case I forget, please note that when due Miss Fiona Macleod's cheque is to be crossed "National and Provincial Bank, Piccadilly Branch," and is to be sent to her C/o Frank Rinder Esq | 7 Kensington Court Gardens | *London W.*

ALS NLS, Geddes Collection

To Herbert Stuart Stone, May 4, 1896

Rutland House, | Greencroft Gardens, | South Hampstead. | London | Saturday 4th May
My dear Sir,

If, when I wrote to you expostulatingly exactly a month ago today, I was then more than merely surprised and annoyed at the extraordinary delay in hearing from you concerning the matters about which you were to write to me, and in many weeks past-promised receipt of my MS. of "The Gypsy Christ" & Proofs — you may perhaps imagine how I regard the matter now: — now that you have had time to receive and answer that letter sent to you on April 4th.

I am utterly at a loss to understand this most unbusinesslike and apparently grossly discourteous conduct.

I understand that the same inexplicable attitude has been taken by you towards Miss Macleod. You seem anxious to alienate not only Miss Macleod & myself but others here.

When I wrote this day last month I felt certain a letter from you would cross my letter. Surely, the most ordinary courtesy will bring me an apology and explanation before this reaches you by mid-May: but, if you have not written, I must formally request *an immediate and absolutely explicit explanation and statement* from you.

For a time I thought illness might be the cause: but that would not excuse such prolonged silence, for you have a partner.

Hurt as I am, I am doubly annoyed by your conduct to Miss Macleod, as I am responsible for having urged her to write to you. She has lost time & money through your

inexplicable negligence, and, I understand, will send you a formal legal communication as to the breaking of her contract with you, & possibly on another matter if she does not hear from you satisfactorily by the end of May.

Yours truly, | William Sharp

ALS NYPL, Berg Collection

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [May 6, 1896]⁶⁵

Monte Carlo

Just a line to say that the friends about whom I wrote to you are here, & that *possibly* all may yet go well, at any rate for a time. Indeed, one of them told me nothing wd. happen now till September at any rate.

It is most glorious weather here, though so hot. I went to the Gaming Tables last night, & in half an hour made £40. Shall write some days or a week later.

W.S.

ACS Sheffield City Archives

To William Meredith, [May 10?, 1896]

Dear Mr. Meredith⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Date from postmark. Sharp joined his wife in Venice on May 16 and they returned to England via the Italian Lakes. Sharp told Geddes in his letter of 9 April that it would be at least a week or ten days after he left Paris that he would meet his wife “as I am told [presumably by his doctor] to go by the Riviera, & stay somewhere 3 or 4 days on the way, at least — This for the head.” That seems strangely specific advice from a physician and makes one wonder if Sharp simply wanted an interlude, probably with his friends Thomas and Catherine Janvier, in the South of France. In any case, he stopped in Monte Carlo. If what he tells Gilchrist is not mere bravado, he made more in one night than he received from any of the books over which he had been laboring. It seems plausible that the friends are, indeed, the Janviers who lived both in Greenwich Village and in the South of France. In that case, the problems alluded to may be those caused by the break-up of Stone and Kimball. Janvier would have had the latest U.S. publishing gossip, and Sharp was very concerned about whether Kimball, having established a successor firm in New York, could save Stone and Kimball’s publishing list and continue to market his books. Sharp may have been trying to interest the firm in the American publication of one of Gilchrist’s books.

Just a brief line, as I am not supposed to be writing just now. I am distinctly better, and enjoying the heat and colour immensely.

I traveled with Mr. Sharp as far as Avignon, and have now met Mrs. Sharp in Italy, where her husband will join us shortly.

My addresses are very uncertain, so I do not like to give even Venice. With this (or perhaps before it) you will receive *Green Fire*, which I hope you will like.

It will, after all, be best for me to see a final revision of the book. If there is time for me to see a final revise in page form, please send in duplicate to Miss Lillian Rea who will forward to me wherever I am, for my immediate return — if not, then please let me have (through her) duplicate first-proofs, which I shall return through her. I want, if possible, to avoid more textual revision than is necessary, because of my eyes.

Sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

ALS UWM Library

*To William Butler Yeats, [May 12?, 1896]*⁶⁷

9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian

Dear Sir,

Please accept from me, in return for so much pleasure, the new book of mine I have directed to be sent to you.

I hope you will find something both in the prose and verse of this volume to appeal to you.

Yours very sincerely | Fiona Macleod.

⁶⁶ William Maxse Meredith was the son of George Meredith, and he had recently become an editor at Archibald Constable and Company. Perhaps on the strength of his father's enthusiasm for Fiona Macleod, he had agreed to publish a Fiona Macleod novel. Her *Green Fire: A Romance* was published by Constable in November, 1896. It was not well received, and Sharp decreed that only one section of it, "The Herdsman," be preserved in the Fiona Macleod canon.

⁶⁷ Fiona Macleod asked that a pre-publication copy of *The Washer of the Ford* be sent to Yeats. The contrast between the formal tone of this first Fiona letter to Yeats and the Fiona Macleod letter to him in late September 1896 and the publication date of *The Washer of the Ford* (May 12, 1896) date the letter.

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [May 28, 1896]⁶⁸

Bellagio | Lake of Como

Just a line to say that I am better — & that meanwhile all goes well. I met my wife in Venice — & we came here. We shall be in England again on the 4th — tho' I shall not go to London for a few days thereafter.

Send me a line by return to Poste Restante, Bâle, Switzerland. I hope you have recd. "The W. of the Ford" & that you & Mrs. Gilchrist both find in it something to care for.

My love to you.

Wearily | W.

To _____, [late May, 1896]⁶⁹

. . . They are studies in old Religious Celtic sentiment so far as that can be recreated in a modern heart that feels the same beauty and simplicity of the Early Christian faith..

[William Sharp]

To Herbert Stuart Stone June 9, 1896

9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield. | Midlothian | 9th June

Dear Sir

I cannot understand your silence. I have had no answer to my last letters (tho' long

⁶⁸ Date from postmark. As always, Sharp was eager to have Gilchrist's opinion of his work.

⁶⁹ Sharp is responding to someone who asked him about "The Three Miracles of Hy," which he wrote in February 1896 (see letter to EAS dated February 21, 1896) and included in Fiona Macleod's *Washer of the Ford* which was published in May. Thus the approximate date of the letter.

overdue) about *The Washer of the Ford*.⁷⁰ I understand, now, that the book is to be published by you today, the 10th.

Please remit me by return, if you have not already done so, the advance of £25 due on publication: and also, please, the stipulated twelve copies.

I have been in constant expectation of a remittance for the sum due on royalties on *The Sin Eater*, published last autumn.

I have so many requests for work, from America as well as from England, that I am strongly disinclined to publish further with your firm, unless I meet with more prompt courtesy and more satisfactory business relations.

Yours faithfully, | Fiona Macleod

ALS Huntington

To Hannibal Ingalls Kimball June 10, 1896

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | London

My Dear Sir,

Your letter of May 22nd followed me abroad and has just been reforwarded. I have barely time to catch this mail — so must send a hurried line.

I am willing to make all allowances for confusion & delay arising through the dissolution of partnership⁷¹ — but what I do not excuse is Mr. Stone's having apparently left you so partially informed. Besides, in *March* (30th I think) he writes that *Wives in Exile* has

⁷⁰ The American edition of *The Washer of the Ford* was finally published by Stone and Kimball on June 12, 1896 in New York. Having first opened a sales office for Stone and Kimball in New York, Kimball bought out Stone in early April, 1896, moved the firm to New York, and continued to publish for awhile under the name Stone and Kimball and then just Kimball. Herbert Stone retained the *Chap-Book* and started the H. S. Stone Publishing Company in Chicago. Later in 1896, when Kimball had to dissolve his firm, the *Washer of the Ford* sheets were taken over by Lamson and Wolffe in Boston. The delays in publication dates and payments which so annoyed and inconvenienced Sharp, who needed the money, were caused by the firm's financial difficulties and Stone's gradual loss of interest in its fate.

⁷¹ Sharp has finally been informed by Kimball about Stone and Kimball problems, though he may have received the bad news from Thomas Janvier in the south of France in early May.

gone to the printers, & that duplicate proofs will be with me shortly. On the head of that I at once went to consult Mr. R. McClure, with an urgent suggestion that the first offer should be made to Messrs. Archibald Constable and Co. of 2 Whitehall Gardens.

Not a proof has ever come, & now on May 22nd you write that you are proceeding with the book as rapidly as possible.

If the proofs come I can submit them to Constable and Co. But you give no particulars of any kind, as to terms, conditions, etc.

As to my own delay, Mr. Stone was duly warned that this might be — & there was indeed an express understanding. But I must again beg you to observe the signed stipulation and agreement, that this initial payment of £100 *has nothing to do with the date of publication*, but was payable on receipt of MS. Mr. Stone guaranteed this *officially*, by a personal note, and by his word of honour.

I have been very seriously inconvenienced in consequence — on account of my wife's illness abroad — and I must again ask you, as I am sure you will now readily do, honourably to fulfill your pledged undertaking.

I hope the book will be a success every way: and that we may have many pleasant relations in the future.

Yours faithfully, | William Sharp

ALS NYPL, Berg Collection

*To Richard Garnett, [June 14, 1896]*⁷²

Sunday

My dear Garnett,

I was a week later than my wife in reaching home, as I stopped for a few days at Dover: hence I received your book,⁷³ for which I thank you most cordially, only yesterday.

⁷² Since this letter was written on a Sunday, and since Sharp tells Garnett he spent a few days in Dover and reached London a week later than his wife, he must have returned to London on June 11 and written this letter to Garnett on the 14th, a Sunday.

It has been my companion all forenoon today, & indeed most of the afternoon as well, and has given me keen pleasure because of its beauty and poetic distinction. You seem to have a very remarkable faculty for entering not only into the heart but into the style of each author — to feel with his nerves, to see with his eyes, to imagine with his brain, and to speak with his own elect words. There is, therefore, a double pleasure in reading your book — not only to find the fine work of an English poet but that of a born interpreter — & to interpret worthily is a second creation.

If, on the whole, I have derived most pleasure from those of Camoens,⁷⁴ that is doubtless in part because they are newer to me — & because I now feel as though I had at last read the Portuguese poet. One or two of these I find very haunting — e.g. the 28th, beginning “Sky, earth, and air are sleeping silently”. I wonder, by the way, if I have ever told you that my favorite verse by any modern poet is the lovely quatrain by yourself

“Seclusion, quiet, silence, slumber, dreams,
No murmur of a breath;
The same still image on the same still streams
of Love caressing Death.”

Forgive me if these lines are not quite correct, as I quote from memory.

I am afraid it may now be too late for me to get the book for the *Academy*, but if I can I

⁷³ *Dante, Petrarch, and Camoens: CXXIV sonnets* (London: John Lane, 1896).

⁷⁴ Luis de Camoëns (also Camoës) (1524-1580) was a Portuguese poet and adventurer of Galician descent. During an eventful life which included losing an eye while fighting the Moors and being shipwrecked off the coast of China, he wrote lyric poetry, sonnets, and drama. He is most remembered as the author of the *The Lusíads*, an epic poem that was widely read in nineteenth century Britain after it was translated by Sir Richard Burton.

will.

With cordial regards | Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

ALS University of Texas at Austin

*To Patrick Geddes, [June 20?, 1896]*⁷⁵

Rutland House | *Saturday*.

Dear Patrick

How nice of you to send me so friendly a welcome home! I have come back refreshed indeed — stronger & better than I have been for years. It is a new & delightful sensation. I look forward to the strong Scottish air to put the finishing touches, this autumn. I wish my Poet were half as well. He met me at Venice, so weak & feeble I was very alarmed. He had long fainting fits which at first I thought were heart attacks. As soon as I got home I summoned the doctor. He told me that Will has so greatly overworked that he had reduced himself to a dangerous point of weakness; that the danger to be avoided is heart failure. He is a little better again, but not strong enough to take the journey from London to Edinburgh without a break. Had I known he was in this state I would never have consented to his going to Venice. We had to take the journey home in short breaks & even then, his fatigue was distressing to see.

It is very good of you to ask us both to your seaside Cottage, but I cannot come north just now; & it is better Will should add nothing to his journey to and fro — besides he requires to be near Edinburgh — And now I am going to ask you a favour; and that is not to allow him

⁷⁵ In his note to Gilchrist from Belagio, Sharp said he and his wife would return to England on 4 June, she going directly to London and he following a few days later. In the June 14 letter to Garnett he said he had spent a week in Dover on the way to London which means he arrived there on Thursday, June 11. In this letter Elizabeth tells Geddes she called a doctor to see to her husband upon his return. That would probably have been during the week of June 14. Since she is forwarding Geddes' note to Fiona to the Pettycur Inn, Sharp must have left London for Edinburgh shortly before EAS wrote to Geddes. We know Sharp stayed at the Pettycur Inn from about June 20 until the 30th. The probable date of this letter is, therefore, 20 June, a Saturday.

— when you see him — to discuss business matters for any length of time at one sitting. He needs all his time and strength to get well —

Each Spring he grows worse — & I can see that if he works at the present speed, & with the present complications, he will not see many more Springs. The dual work of F.M. and W.S. is a great drain on his strength, at the present moment too great a drain; & his state at present is unsatisfactory.

With regard to your second kind proposal which is very seductive (only *I* should bid for the post of under-gardener!) it, too, alack! must regretfully be refused. For, I cannot get away till about the end of July. I have taken up my *Herald* work again & must stick to it till the end of the summer.⁷⁶

I look forward with so much pleasure to seeing Anna and you in August — for we shall be at Petticur for part of that month in any case, I think. And then I shall run in and out of Edinburgh to see & hear what is going on.

I do hope you, too, are resting a little! I know you usually consider the Dundee term a time of partial rest and recuperation and I feel sure you need it greatly before the arduous work of the Summer Meeting begins. Please give my love to Anna and the Godson⁷⁷ & to his father.

Cordially yours | Elizabeth A. Sharp

I have forwarded your note to Fiona to Petticur.⁷⁸

ALS NLS, Geddes Collection

⁷⁶ Elizabeth had taken over from her husband the job of writing of art reviews for the *Glasgow Herald*.

⁷⁷ Arthur Allhallow Geddes was born on Allhallows Day in the fall of 1895; the Sharps were his godparents.

⁷⁸ The Pettycur Inn, which is where Sharp was headed, was across the Forth from Edinburgh. Although Elizabeth asked Geddes in this letter not to discuss business matters with her husband “for any length of time at any one sitting” since he is so weak, subsequent letters indicate he was significantly involved with publishing firm business while he was there.

*To Patrick Geddes June 22, 1896*⁷⁹

Patrick Geddes and Colleagues | Lawnmarket | Edinburgh | June 22, 1896

In re Dr. Croll.

My dear Geddes,

I am at a loss what to write to Mr. Campbell Irons: and for the following reasons:

I. Are we to publish the book on our own account, or simply as agents for Mr. Irons?⁸⁰

It is being set up, I see, by Morrison & Gibb, and I presume, from what you told me before, at Mr. Irons' expense.

II. If we are to be the publishers, why is there any need to bring Fisher Unwin's name into the matter? It is not customary to have two British publishers' names on a book.

III. Would it not be a better plan for our firm to publish the book for Mr. Campbell Irons in Scotland, for Mr. Unwin to act as English distributor, and, if possible, to arrange with Stone & Kimball or elsewhere in America? At present I am quite in the dark as to what actual negotiations have taken place.

By no possibility can this book of 400 pages pay expenses — since it is not to be brought out by private subscription: really the only suitable way for a book of this kind. Even if Croll were far more commanding a personality, any book about him written as Mr. Irons' is, would be heavily handicapped. You will gather my opinion of the book when I say that it is with extreme regret that I think our firm should issue anything so incapable and amateurish. Almost every sin possible to the Biographer is committed, with a promiscuity which is literally offensive! Excuse such plain speaking of one who is, I understand, a friend of yours; but here, of course, I am writing simply as a critic. If you have a copy of the proofs, read the first five or six pages of Mr. Irons' biographical introduction, and I am sure you will realise the

⁷⁹ This letter was typed by Lillian Rea on Patrick Geddes & Colleagues stationery. "WILLIAM SHARP. per L. H. R." is also typed. Most unusually, Sharp did not sign the letter. Geddes was teaching in Dundee.

⁸⁰ Irons' *Autobiographical Sketch of James Croll* was published privately in 1896.

hopeless ineptitude of his matter.

However, if a definite pledge has been given to Mr. Campbell Irons I presume there is nothing for it but for P.G. & Coll. to issue this ugly duckling. It may well be that you are a better judge of the likelihood of the success of such a book as this, at any rate with the scientific world; but the question is, is it meant for the scientific world, or for the general reader? If for the latter, it is foredoomed.

But now about what I am to write to Mr. Irons. He says that he understands that you propose to publish in England through Mr. Fisher Unwin. Kindly advise me as to what definite proposal of the kind you *have* made. As to America, there is now no possibility of issue this summer—even if, as seems to me incredible, any firm would take up the book for separate issue there. The very most we could expect is that some firm would take a certain number of copies on sale. It would, I know, be useless to apply to Mr. Kimball (Stone & Kimball dissolved), as his firm publishes no books of this nature. Probably the best publishers to apply to, owing to their scientific connection, would be Messrs. Appleton. We can, of course, write there, but before doing so I must know on what terms we are publishing the book, and what conditions and terms we can grant to our American agents, whoever they may be.

Again, are we to bind the book, or is it to be bound by Mr. Irons himself? and what about expense of distribution and advertisement? Are we to undertake these on commission, or are they his affair? His letter and yours alike leave me quite in the dark on these important details. Meanwhile, I refrain from sending him more than a mere acknowledgement. Please let me hear from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully, | William Sharp | per L.H.R.

Pettycur House, | Kinghorn, Fife.

TL NLS, Geddes Collection

To Herbert Stuart Stone, June 24, 1896

9 Upper Coltbridge Terrace, | Murrayfield, Midlothian, | June 24, 1896.

Dear Sir,

I have received your statement as to additional sales of “The Sin-Eater”, and note that you have credited the small amount in question to me. You will, however, have by this time received my letter asking you to remit me by return the amount already due to me upon that book, as also the sum due on “The Washer of the Ford” on the day of publication.

I am hoping the last-named is in the same bind etc. as its predecessor, for I like the Carnation Series format much better than that of the Green Tree. In my note I asked you kindly to let me have the promised copies as soon as ready.

In haste for this mail,

Yours very truly, | FIONA MACLEOD.

TL Huntington

*To Patrick Geddes, June 30, 1896*⁸¹

Patrick Geddes & Colleagues | Lawnmarket, Edinburgh | June 30, 1896

My dear Geddes,

As I shall be leaving Pettycur immediately in any case, and probably going south on Thursday or Friday at latest, you need not reply to this here.

Herewith I send you a letter which Mdme. Janvier asks me to read and forward to you. After you have read it, consider the advantage of a paper from her for the *Evergreen* — say Provençal and other southern Celtic points of affinity with North Celtic folklore and customs.⁸²

By the way excuse that the last page of her letter is copied — but the remaining page and a half belong to a letter intended for myself. Perhaps when you have read it, you will let me peruse it, as I have not had time to do so — or let Miss Rea make a copy of it.

In accordance with your wish — and with my own concurrence — “Lyric Runes” will

⁸¹ June 30 was a Tuesday, which means he left Edinburgh for London on 2 or 3 July. The first two typed pages are on blank sheets, and *Copy* is written at the top of page one. The last three pages are typed on Geddes and Colleagues stationery. Again Sharp’s signature is typed, and below it L.H.R. is written in Lillian Rea’s hand.

⁸² Catherine Janvier’s anthropological essay, “A Devolution of Terror” appeared in the fourth and final volume of *The Evergreen* (Winter, 1896, 106-11).

not now be published until the Autumn. So that the only two books we shall be issuing this next quarter will be the *Ossian* in July, and “*The Shadow of Arvor*” in September.

A propos, it will, of course, be absolutely necessary to spend a certain sum in advertisement. The best way will be to do so on a limited scale sufficient to give the books that preliminary start-off which is absolutely essential. The main question of advertisement we shall leave over, as agreed, for final settlement next year. Meanwhile I shall endeavour to make peace with our sole three authors, Mrs. William Sharp, Miss Fiona Macleod, and Mr. Ernest Rhys, each of whom will naturally regard the suspension of all advertisement pro tem with dismay.

However, that is a matter into which we need not enter again just now.

With regard to the “*Ossian*” I find that a contract concerning this book was drawn up between us at the time of arrangement. I find also that the “*Lyre Celtica*” duplicate agreement has not been signed — that is the duplicate on the part of the firm.

As I shall not now have time to call on Arthur Thomson this visit, will you kindly see him at your convenience, after your return, and discuss with him (1) *The Natural History of Woman* project; (2) If he can be preparing for issue next year the “*Three Fates*” volume — or, if preferred, the more popular and remunerative “*Romance of Ornithology*” the title and, so to say, good will of which I will so gladly hand over to him.⁸³ Also, what about Miss Marion Newbiggin?⁸⁴ (3) You spoke to me about my own “*Critical Essays*.” I can say nothing about these meanwhile. My idea is not to reprint any of these past essays of mine intact, even the best of them (Concentrations of books on Heine, Browning etc.⁸⁵); but rather in three long

⁸³ To my knowledge, none of these works by Thomson materialized.

⁸⁴ Marion Isabel Newbiggin (1869-1934) was a biologist, geographer, and editor of the *Scottish Geographical Magazine* from 1902 to 1934. She has been called one of the founders of modern British Geography. Her works include *Life by the Sea Shore* (1901), *Animal Geography* (1913), and *Geographical Aspects of Balkan Problems* (1915).

⁸⁵ Sharp’s critical biographies of Heinrich Heine (1888) and Robert Browning (1890) were published in the Walter Scott firm’s Great Writer’s Series.

essays or addresses to give the gist of my best writing and later thought, and this throughout the three following essays, which would really sum up the essential part of what I have to say:

THE LITERARY IDEAL

LIFE AND LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF CELTIC LITERATURE⁸⁶

These three being each of considerable length, would make a good volume, to be published under the title "The Literary Idea."

This, however, is merely a statement as to what I think will be best to do: and, if you wish to have them next year, as you suggest, let me know in due time.

There is only one other point which needs to be alluded to just now: and that is one of necessary administration. Do you remember our contracts, or rather the clause in these contracts dealing with the matter of rendered statements? By this clause, the authors were promised a definite statement of sales and royalties to account every six months. Of course, the only omission as yet is in the instance of "The Sin-Eater" no statement of account, etc. having been sent to Miss Macleod at the expiry, in April, of the six months from date of publication, as per contract. But, of course, this should be done, and in each case, as occasion demands. I have, therefore, instructed Miss Rea to attend to this matter — another publishing item which will take up some of her time, involving as it does the gathering of complex details from White and the other distributors, as well as from Wilson, etc.

Thus, on the 15th of September, we shall have to render to Mr. Rhys an exact statement as to number of copies sold of his book. This, of course, is an instance where Miss Rea can take over from me detail work of a kind that I could not myself adequately fulfill from London.

I have written to Mr. Yeats to tell him that while we are in complete sympathy with him in his project, we cannot take up the book. Of course, I have not been so curt as this — as you can see any time you glance over the firm letters kept by Miss Rea.

The Standish O'Grady idea must also lapse on account of expenses involved. The

⁸⁶ This project did not see the light of day.

same reason, I think, should at present militate strongly against your idea of the Universities of Scotland volume.

There is decidedly comfort in the maxims from Montrose, Solomon, P.G., and other prophets. They were and are a bad lot, but I suppose one must still believe in them.

Yours ever, | WILLIAM SHARP | L.H.R.

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