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## Book Reviews

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## Book Reviews



Donald MacAulay (ed.). *Nua-Bhàrdachd Ghàidhlig/Modern Scottish Gaelic Poems: A Bilingual Anthology*. New York. New Directions. 1977. 220 pp. \$16.00.

Anyone interested in the Scottish literary scene during the last few decades will have been at least vaguely aware that something interesting has been happening in Gaelic literature. But unless he has been unusually resourceful he will have had until now to rely largely on the claims of Gaels themselves as to its significance. The publication of this, the first anthology of modern Gaelic poetry, with its parallel English versions and introductory essay, gives the non-Gaelic-speaker as good an opportunity as translation ever can to judge for himself.

It also invites the Gaelic reader to reassess work which had been in danger of acquiring the status of unassailable classics too soon--and too easily.

The non-Gaelic reader will want to know at the outset how representative the anthology is of modern Gaelic poetry. Its main drawback, in this regard, is that MacAulay has restricted his selection to the work of five poets. Certainly these are the five best poets, by far, but, of course, a middling poet may, occasionally, produce a first-rate poem, just as a great

poet can have his off-days. And there have been trends, which, while they may not have produced any outstanding individual poem--or poet--are, nevertheless, significant, but which are not reflected here at all. For these reasons, *Nua-Bhàrdachd Ghàidhlig* gives an impression of neatness and finiteness--and of evenness of quality--which is, to a degree, misleading.

In his selection of the work of individual poets, MacAulay's selection is, on the whole, impeccable. The fact that only one of the poets has been creatively active over a long period, passing through various phases of development, has, of course, made his task that much easier. In that one instance (Derick Thomson), MacAulay has sharply and perceptively outlined the development of his oeuvre. In the case of one other poet, Sorley MacLean, the problems of selection were complicated by the fact that some of his best poems had originally formed part of a long poem-sequence, dismemberment of which inevitably results in a diminution of some of the poems. However, since this is also done in MacLean's recently published collected works, this must be an indication that the poet himself no longer regards the sequential arrangement as definitive.

Taking all of this into consideration, *Nua-Bhàrdachd Ghàidhlig* may be said to give a reasonably accurate picture of the best of modern Gaelic poetry.

Two aspects in particular of the poetry stand out: namely, its wide range, especially as to style, and its distinctively Gaelic ethos.

There is, for example, the unusual blend of rich lyrical texture and hard-edged realism of attitude which we find in the work of MacLean and Thomson, a blend showing the influence of Gaelic song culture. There is, again, George Hay's precise and intricate prosody, which reflects the influence of another strain of the Gaelic tradition, the austere classicism of the bardic schools. Even the work of Iain Crichton Smith and Donald MacAulay, the least "traditional" of the five, has many distinctively "Gaelic"--and, as such, essentially untranslatable--features.

The overall arrangement of the book--the poets are placed in order of age, with Sorley MacLean, the oldest, getting the lion's share of space--is suggestive of a master surrounded by his disciples. Though *Nua-Bhàrdachd* also shows the extent to which the other poets have each his own recognisable voice, there *is* some truth in this first impression.

Sorley MacLean's *Dàin do Eimhir agus Dàin Eile*, published in 1943, is the cornerstone of the contemporary revival in Gaelic literature. Distinctively Gaelic in form, European in sensibility and radiating an infectious joie-de-vivre, MacLean's work inspired and--though, perhaps to a diminishing ex-

tent--continues to inform the work of his younger contemporaries.

Probably the most remarkable aspect of MacLean's achievement is the way the rich and varied tradition of Gaelic song crossbred in him, in a quite unforced way, with the influence of the English (and other) literature--the work of Yeats, Eliot and the Metaphysicals especially--which he had been reading at Edinburgh University at the beginning of his most creative period. Another important influence--and one often underrated--was the intense, personally felt anger which the spread of Fascism in Europe produced in a native of a crofting community for which the Highland Clearances were still a living and a bitter memory.

Although some of MacLean's work superficially resembles that of the English-language poets of the Thirties--in particular his Communism and his specific commitment to the Spanish Republican cause--his poetry, on the whole, lacks their strident polemicism and has instead a lyric cry which they, usually, lack and which, in fact, many of them would have regarded as decadent. Some of the best poems in the "Dàin do Eimhir/Poems to Eimhir" sequence, for example, deal with the classic conflict between private emotion and public duty, handled, however, not in an abstract, contemplative way--this would have been alien to the tradition he inherited--but as a highly subjective, personally experienced angst.

MacLean, in other words, does not use his poetry to expound or to further his political and other ideas, but simply chronicles how they impinge upon the sensibility of one individual, himself, and how they relate to other areas of his sensibility.

The non-Gaelic reader may find this relative thinness of abstract thinking perplexing; the Gaelic reader will not. That the methods of poetry are radically different, though not necessarily less trenchant, than those of metaphysics should not need reiterating; but the general reader may, nevertheless, have to consciously suspend his usual critical prejudices if he is to attune himself to poetry in which lyrical subjectivity is so profoundly intertwined with political and intellectual awareness as here.

MacAulay has selected three poems from the "Dàin Eile/Other Poems" section of MacLean's 1943 collection. These are: "The Heron," a memorable image of singleness of purpose; a breathtakingly virtuosic evocation of the creative subconscious, "The Woods of Raasay"; and the satirical, "Highland Woman." There are also four other poems, two with a wartime setting.

MacLean's richly grained language and his sinuously musical metrical effects--reminiscent of the old Gaelic songs in their

freedom of rhythm within strict overall limits--are qualities which do not translate well. But the non-Gaelic-speaking reader may find the Claddagh recordings of MacLean reading his own verse a useful corrective.

*Nua-Bhàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, then, confirms once again Sorley MacLean's standing as, certainly, the best Gaelic poet of our time, and probably of all time, and as a force to be reckoned with in a much wider context.

Conversely, the reputation of some of the other poets suffers from the comparison which an anthology such as this invites.

George Hay's work, though he was not a native speaker of Gaelic, is noteworthy mostly for the classically "cool" but nevertheless often strikingly beautiful use he makes of language and metre. (Some of this the Gaelic reader not acquainted with Hay's Argyllshire dialect may miss.) His deceptively simple description of a solitary tree ("To a Bonny Birch Tree") is a fine example of this, as is his celebration of the beauty of Kintyre in another poem, not included here.

Some of Hay's more philosophical poems, on the other hand, now seem rather laboured and trite.

Hay's most important and lasting work, besides the descriptive pieces, are, without doubt, his war poems. For example: his image of the dust of battle bringing tears to the eyes of disinterested observers; his vision of a dismembered Europe as "a promontory of Asia, the Balkans of the world"; and, above all, his description of the bombing of Bizerte--highly wrought both emotionally and artistically; the awe-inspiring blaze on the horizon, its silence and every beauty contrasting with his imagined vision of the destruction and individual suffering it entailed. This must surely be one of the most memorable images to come out of that war.

Derick Thomson's earliest work also dates from the period of the Second World War and just before, but, unlike Hay and MacLean, Thomson has continued to write and to develop his repertoire since then, through from early romanticism to his recent abrasively realistic phase, through a long middle period in which these two polarities are in fine balance in his work.

Although the early simplistic romanticism soon evaporated, much of Thomson's best work is, in fact, pervaded by nostalgia: not the traditional Gaelic poetic nostalgia for the poet's native place, however--Thomson's attitude towards it is ambivalent--but, in his early work, nostalgia for a lost innocence ("Harvest Field") or a disappearing spirituality ("The Well") and, in his later work, regret--tempered by pragmatic acceptance--at his own growing alienation from the Island and

its people, which, paradoxically, continue to serve as the well-spring of his imagination.

Underlying these two phases is the true, if subconscious, motivation of much of Thomson's work from this period: namely regret at the gradual attenuation of his personal capacity for direct experience--the natural, and universal consequence of aging, education and worldly cares. On this interpretation, the rich lyric texture of Thomson's verse may be seen as a surrogate for or sublimation of those early sensual experiences which he lovingly recreates in his poetry, such as the mud of Lewis pressing through his toes as a boy, or his memories of Lewis characters such as "Cotriona Mhór" or the "Herring Girls."

Thomson, like Hay, is a superb poetic craftsman, but the effects he creates--with the overlapping brush strokes and consequent textural richness of an Impressionist painter--are quite different.

Of the five poets in this collection, Thomson ranks second only to MacLean in depth and quality of work. But *he* also suffers from the comparison. Thomson expresses, often memorably, what many Gaels with a similiar life-experience--in other words, most educated Gaels--feel, though they may not be aware of having so felt until his poetry reminds them. Squarely on the wavelength of his time--he is one of the "Gaelic Movement's" astutest politicians--Thomson is very much, and this is meant in no way disrespectfully, a poet *of the ordinary*, whereas Sorley MacLean, at his best, achieves an intensity and complexity--a "wholeness"--of experience which is *out of the ordinary*.

Iain Crichton Smith's Gaelic poetry in no way compares with his best English work--or even with his Gaelic fiction. An ideas-oriented poet, the relative lack of abstract terms in Gaelic--which was little used hitherto for philosophical discourse, apart from some theology--forced Smith, in his early work, into rather self-conscious statements of his intellectual and poetic credo--preaching the gospel of contemporary awareness and intellectual rigour--and, more recently, into a preoccupation, which may well prove more fruitful, with complex image-structures. These latter--sometimes complementary, sometimes contradictory--exhibit a tentativeness which contrasts sharply with the often homiletic tone of Smith's previous work, and, in this respect, reflect a general change in the Gaelic intellectual climate.

Though Donald MacAulay has published only one slim volume of verse (in 1967), he is, rightly, regarded as a very fine poet, and has been an important influence on younger writers. His selection of his own work here plays down some of the pre-

occupations which loomed large in his *Sobhrach as a' Chlaich*--his own sense of alienation from his native society, for example, and the alienation of the artist in a wider context--and, thereby, highlights the impressive range of his work, with regard both to content and form. Intellectual subtlety and technical virtuosity--both, occasionally, in danger of being carried to excess--are the hallmarks of MacAulay's poetry. MacAulay has not published much in recent years. In fact, Gaelic literature generally has recently entered a distinct phase of reappraisal and reorientation. Of the older poets, MacLean and Hay's best work was completed by the end of the War, of course; Iain Smith's recent work, as has been indicated, shows him to be unsure of which direction to proceed in; and most of Derick Thomson's recent output--significantly much of it written for public readings--has been overtly political--nationalist and rightist--and highly rhetorical, pointed by strong, occasionally violent imagery and well-honed wit. Thomson seems now to be *using* his rhetorical skills for ideological ends--in other words, the political commitment which, it was suggested above, had hitherto, *indirectly*, motivated much of his work, has now become the subject of it. (It is a pity that the anthology, because of its publication date, just missed this interesting development in Thomson's work.)

As early as the mid-sixties a strong satirical reaction had set in to the work of the "Famous Five"--as they have, inevitably, been dubbed. Recently, a number of young writers have been, more quietly, but with equal confidence, altering the direction of Gaelic literature.

Their poetry--and songs--are relatively more traditional, or, at least, less stridently "modern" in style. Though their preoccupations vary, a recurring one is the way-of-life of ordinary crofting folk in the Western Isles: dealt with not as a reference point for their own alienation but as a subject in its own right--and certainly not patronisingly.

Significantly also, the more "accessible" genres, drama and fiction, have featured at least as strongly as poetry. And, in fact, recently some of the best writers--the short story writer John Murray, for example, the playwright Finlay MacLeod and even Iain Smith--have been devoting much of their energy to writing for children.

All of this is, of course, merely a local, but independent example of a worldwide phenomenon--exemplified elsewhere in searches for "alternative" social and political systems, treatises such as "The Deschooling of Society" and disillusionment with the cult of progress for its own sake and with all modes of autocratic and elitist thinking.

How deeply these attitudes have affected the Gaelic literary revival remains to be seen. Whatever happens, however, it already seems clear that any anthology--and its introductory background essay--published twenty years hence will be quite different from this very commendable first one.

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Margaret Fay Shaw. *Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist*. 2nd edn. Oxford. Oxford University Press. 1977. xiv + 310 pp. £12.50.

"To one who had been brought up in the wooded Pennsylvania valley and had never known a land without trees the contrast of Uist with nothing higher than the heather and the hay was to discover a new earth." This is only one of many differences between the Outer Hebrides and the rest of western civilisation, and this book reflects other, deeper, differences which Margaret Fay Shaw found during her residence in the south-eastern corner of the island from 1929 till 1935. South Uist, she tells us in the Introduction, written in 1955 for the first edition, "still retains in greater measure than any other part of the Highlands and Islands the great traditions of its Gaelic past." This Gaelic tradition is here mediated partly in translation, but mainly with the original text accompanied by translation. One important reason for the book's great value is that so much of it, both text and music, was noted down, accurately and sympathetically, long before South Uist became widely known as a rich source of folksong and folklore.

The book has been revised since its first edition. Some small additions have been made, and some of the notes on the songs have been lengthened a little. The excellent monochrome photographs (numbered 1-32), showing aspects of the everyday life and work of the people, have been collected at the end of the book, whereas in the first edition they were presented in groups in various parts of the work; the last photograph in the first edition has been replaced by a much more relevant one. But the most important change is the addition of an Appendix containing seventeen South Uist tunes contributed by the author in 1956 to *Studia Memoriae Belae Bartók Sacra* (Budapest, 1957): one of these (no. 7) is already in the main

collection (no. 32). Unfortunately, the only words given with these are the words written below the tunes: perhaps the author will one day publish the succeeding verses, and indeed a further selection from the songs she has noted.

Most of the remainder of the book is reproduced without change from the first edition; this has obvious dangers, but the only case I note of an error in the first edition being reproduced in the second is the date 1786 (*recte* 1768) on p. 260. The unchanged 1955 Introduction gives an account of the island, and of the Glendale community in which the author settled, the people and their work, and some of their traditions, beliefs and history. Then follows a section headed "Prayers and Saints' Days" and one headed "Duain--Ballads;" of the four *duain* given, only one is strictly a ballad in the sense of a narrative poem, for *duan* has a considerably wider meaning than this. There are proverbs, cures, recipes for food and for dyes, and six stories in English translation from one Glendale storyteller.

This takes us to p. 70, and the rest of the book is concerned with the songs, over a hundred of them, given with tunes and words. They are essentially the songs of one small district in the island, but they are not all of them, not even all of what Margaret Fay Shaw noted down. However, they are surely a good representative selection of the folksong of the area--the song which is genuinely of the people. The more learned tradition of the great 18th-century poets, which is also known in the oral tradition, is barely represented here (no. 13); nor is there anything of the ubiquitous Gaelic tradition of songs about local personalities and events, "village" poetry, which is often satirical and sometimes slanderous. The songs given are perhaps best read in conjunction with Chapter 2 of Derick S. Thomson's *Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*.

More than thirty of the songs belong to the "waulking song" category--choral (unison) songs used in the laborious process of fulling or waulking cloth in the traditional way (this process is attested on p. 72 as surviving in Glendale in 1955, by which time it had died out everywhere else). The tradition of these songs must be as old as the process itself, and some of the individual songs may date from the seventeenth or even the sixteenth century, though the effects of addition and subtraction in the oral tradition have undoubtedly changed them all. In theme, many are love songs and many are laments, both types often being related, not surprisingly, to sea-faring; they are thus very similar to songs in the sections headed "Songs of Love" and "Laments." One of these laments (no. 12) has the lines (inevitably diminished by translation): "It is a tragedy that your curly head is being torn in the seaweed, without

coffin, without shroud, but the sand of the bottom of the sea." The emotional effect of this emphasis on the details of death becomes a little less startling when one realises that it is almost a commonplace in Gaelic songs lamenting death at sea.

No. 94, among the waulking songs, is of special interest in that the love expressed is, atypically, that of a man for a woman--or perhaps a boat, praised as a woman. It is likely that this song was in origin an *iorryam* or rowing song (a type much beloved of Sir Walter Scott under the name *jorryam*). This type of work song seems to have lost its practical function during the first half of the nineteenth century, but some of the songs were taken over into the waulking song tradition, which used similar metres and rhythms.

With most songs the author adds notes, usually identifying other versions--in many cases more complete versions. The second edition extends some of the notes, and some of them might be further added to. For no. 27 we could add a reference to the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. XLVIII, where a discussion of *Cholla, mo rùin* begins on p. 231. In *Scottish Studies*, vol. 7, p. 226, John MacInnes gives a Skye version of no. 42 and suggests that its date may be late 17th century. On p. 117 the note on a version in Menzies' collection was added for this second edition, and loses some of its significance when it is noted that Menzies' version is a practically *literatim* transcript of the Stewarts', which was named in the notes to the first edition.

A new "Addenda" page (298) is added, listing some relevant books and records published since 1955, and some still in the press. We can now add that vol. II of J. L. Campbell's *Hebridean Folksongs* appeared in 1977, as did Ethel Bassin's biography of Frances Tolmie, *The Old Songs of Skye*.

Since its first publication, *Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist* has been a valued and important work, a deep insight into the culture of Gaeldom in the 1930s: the second edition is an improvement.

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Allen Wright. *J. M. Barrie: Glamour of Twilight*. Edinburgh. The Ramsay Head Press. 1976. 96 pp. £2.50.

One unfortunate result of the enormous achievements and interest of early twentieth-century Scottish literature has been a relative *critical* disregard of the Scottish writers of the preceding fifty years. The position is worse with the poets, but even in prose, with the obvious exceptions of Stevenson, MacDonald, and possibly Lang, the later nineteenth-century seems to exist, at least in general Scottish critical discussion, only as a foil to the glory that was to come. The assumption seems quite ineradicable that the writers long lumped together as the Kailyard were feebly trying and wantonly failing to do in their writing what later generations would triumphantly perform. No amount of narrowly-based, specialist, academic study is likely to change the attitudes which most modern readers of Scottish literature bring to this period. If Barrie has, over the years, attracted a fair amount of, largely non-Scottish, attention, it has been on account of his status as a children's fantasist in *Peter Pan*, and because of the gossip-worthiness of his psyche, and has hardly led to the general critical reevaluation of his adult writings. The value of Allen Wright's *New Assessment of Barrie* is that it addresses itself to a reasonably non-specialist audience, and that, for all its overstatements and snap judgments (and, might one add, inherited embarrassments about its subject), it shows a genuine openness of response to this most difficult of periods in Scottish literary history.

Mr. Wright's is in some respects an infuriating little book. He rightly and interestingly invokes the widest range of contemporary parallels to set the context for Barrie's work (Carlyle, Chekov, Ibsen, Shaw, Stevenson, and even Sir Harry Lauder), but nearly always shies off with a disparaging phrase, leaving the comparison to Barrie's disadvantage. He allows himself the kind of frank overstatement that captivates in late-night conversation but sounds merely smug or knowing in print--as, for instance, when he dismisses a speech from one of the late plays as "sentimental twaddle" (p. 90), or when he interpolates that "of course, J. M. Barrie's mother fixation was of monumental proportions" (p. 35), or when he gives as the motive for Barrie's prose the realisation that "money was to be made from stories about humble Scottish life" (p. 90). Though Mr. Wright establishes the presence of significant social themes in Barrie's adult Edwardian dramas, the *tone* of his self-consciously revisionist praise for these plays--he refers to their "subversive quality" (p. 60)--seems wildly out of key with the Clubland Barrie we know from the

biographies. Can Barrie's social attitudes in *The Admirable Crichton*, for instance, really be parlayed into "the audacity, at the beginning of the Edwardian era, to suggest that the ruling classes were incompetent" (p. 92)? Surely there remains a distinction between ironic possibilities and political propaganda? Nor will all Barrie fans be happy with Mr. Wright's rather curt dismissal of *Peter Pan* as a "digression" from Barrie's real career (p. 91), though he handsomely admits its continuing appeal (pp. 47-50). The omission of any index is a serious flaw even in this comparatively short book, because of the rather unpredictable way, not quite chronological, not clearly thematic, in which Barrie's many works are taken. The (very incomplete) list of Barrie's own published works, and the (very) select bibliography of Barrie criticism (pp. 95-96) do not give place of publication, publisher, or even date, for the works they list, and the title is wrongly cited for the two of J. A. Hammerton's three books on Barrie here included.

Nonetheless, Mr. Wright has written a book with many good and thought-provoking things to say. He is a practising drama critic (for *The Scotsman*), and has weighted his book towards the adult plays. He fully concedes the unevenness of Barrie's stage-work, but he has particularly interesting praise for Barrie's social observation, in his discussions of *The Twelve Pound Look*, and of the one-acter *Shall We Join The Ladies* (pp. 63-66). It is from the stage-plays that he has developed his central idea about Barrie, that his genius rested on an "ability to strike a balance between comedy and pathos" (p. 91), and that he was betraying his gift when he "wanders off into realms of fantasy" (p. 93). The discussion of the Thrums books (Ch. 2) is used as a preparation for this central thesis, and Mr. Wright, while he praises Barrie for his "command of Scots vernacular speech," sees the stories' chief strength as coming from the very duality of attitude that George Blake long ago condemned: to Mr. Wright, Barrie's stories are "sympathetic satire," not so much patronising as penetrating in its observation (p. 33). It is in the brief but first-rate discussion of Barrie's late Scottish story *Farewell, Miss Julie Logan* (pp. 37-41) that Mr. Wright shows real critical quality, bringing out through careful quotation the strange power and rich texture of Barrie's writing. Indeed, in these pages, Mr. Wright seems to forget his rather simplistic central thesis, and to confront the much more difficult and complex Barrie suggested in his subtitle--it was, after all, not mere social observation that led R. L. S. to praise the "glamour of twilight" in Barrie's pen. Here, in fact, is a clue to the revaluation of Barrie's Thrums stories--until we recognise the careful construction of a central liter-

ary consciousness in these works, and the consequently tentative and half-known nature of the idyllic worlds that consciousness encounters, the Thrums stories will always be misread as sentimental or exploitative, rather than as exploratory of something in Barrie himself. Thrums is not so much a simplified, well-packaged version of a real Kirriemuir, as a region of the mind, expressing a typically late-Victorian ambivalence about all old lights whatsoever, while simultaneously coming to recognition of how inescapably both culture and psyche remain oriented by the old landmarks, lights or no.

The New Assessments series will, one hopes, gain wide distribution in schools, and public libraries, and general bookshops, as well as in academic circles. The lively enthusiasm of this book deserves a general audience, but its usefulness to non-specialists could have been much increased by firmer editorial control--ideally, it should combine Mr. Wright's freshness and verve, with that orderly exposition of basic biographical material which marked the old Famous Scots series, and with a bibliographical appendix on the lines of the British Council pamphlets. Yet, if he lacks the duller pedagogic virtues, Mr. Wright has written an intelligent essay that well lives up to the series title. He conveys a firm sense that such critical debate matters to the general national culture, and his critical openness, to a period much Scottish criticism treats both metaphorically and literally as a closed book, makes his work particularly welcome.

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Mark A. Weinstein (ed.). *The Prefaces to the Waverley Novels*. Lincoln, Nebraska. University of Nebraska Press. 1978. xvii + 269 pp. \$11.95.

In the introduction to *Chronicles of the Canongate* (1827), admitting his authorship of the *Waverley* novels, Scott compared himself to the unmasked Harlequin who could no longer perform with the verve and freedom which his disguise had favored. The analogy applies to the introductions written for the "Magnum" edition of the novels (1827-1831), in which Scott speaks in his own person. They are essentially blander and more reticent than many of the anonymous or pseudonymous utterances which accompany the earlier editions. Peter Pattieson in *Tales*

of my *Landlord* could discuss themes and moral purposes, and even suggest deeper personal feeling. The Author of *Waverley* and Captain Clutterbuck, separate personae of Scott, could argue about techniques, the purposes of the serious novel, and the demands of the popular audience in *The Fortunes of Nigel*. But Sir Walter Scott, Baronet, in these later introductions is more on his guard. Though his tone is frank, even personal at times, what he reveals is external: the circumstances of his writing, the stories, anecdotes, and historical facts on which his narratives are based, and bland confessions on his most obvious alterations of the source material. These introductions have their uses, to be sure, but they are likely to be closely linked to study of the texts of the individual novels. And, in fact, nearly all recent editions reprint them.

Professor Weinstein's selection, in a convenient, well-printed volume, includes nearly all the introductions from the Magnum edition, with the exception of those for *The Black Dwarf* and *Old Mortality*, and parts of those for *Waverley*, the *Antiquary*, *Rob Roy*, and *The Bride of Lammermoor*. Of the earlier prefaces, introductory chapters, epistles and envoys, about one-third are included. Scott's review of *Tales of My Landlord* is reprinted (minus the long quotations) from the *Quarterly Review* of 1817, and so is the previously unpublished introduction to *Count Robert of Paris*.

This last item seems to demand a bit more explanation than the editor gives it. He states that it was intended to be printed, since Ballantyne's note on the corrected proofs asks that it be corrected [i.e., reset in type] immediately. The editor speculates that the revised proofs did not reach Scott in time for a final correction and were therefore not included in the Magnum edition of the novel. But the text of the Introduction itself supplies the most important reason for its suppression. In it, Scott comments on a major episode in the *first draft* of the narrative--an episode which was suppressed and did not appear in the published text of any edition. Originally the warlike Countess of Paris engages in a public hand-to-hand combat with the Princess Anna Comnena of Byzantium, and loses because pregnancy impairs her normal fighting skill. Cadell and Ballantyne protested vehemently at the "indecentcy," and Scott substituted a more conventional duel between Count Robert and Hereward, the English Varangian. Either this introduction was written before the revisions were made, or Scott, sick and sometimes confused in the days before his departure for the Mediterranean, forgot that he had changed the story.

Apart from the convenience of having so much of the prefatory material in a single volume rather than scattered through

two dozen or more, this collection does not offer much. It is not as useful, for example, as Ioan Williams' *Sir Walter Scott on Novels and Novelists* (New York, Barnes & Noble, 1968) which includes a diversity of less accessible material from the miscellaneous prose as well as the novels. All eight of Williams' selections from the *Waverley* prefaces are also reprinted by Mr. Weinstein. Although the editor's preface is sound and enlightening as far as its compass of eight pages allows, it skirts the most interesting questions about the earlier prefaces: how far their personae voice Scott's own opinions and perceptions, to what extent they are burlesque or ironic in purpose, and whether they demonstrate any significant change or development.

If Scott removed his Harlequin mask in the Introduction to the *Chronicles of the Canongate* in 1827, it was only to assume the blander, less penetrable mask of Sir Walter Scott, Baronet, in the Introductions to the Magnum edition. A complete reprint of *all* the prefatory material, or a fuller selection of the more revealing earlier material, might have helped to make the real countenance more perceptible. One can only regret that this was not done.

THOMAS R. DALE  
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Everard H. King. *James Beattie*. Boston. Twayne Publishers. 1977. 190 pp. \$8.50.

Everard H. King views his study of James Beattie "as much an attempt to see the waning of the Age of Enlightenment in Scotland and England through a restatement and an analysis of his ideas and principles and of the preoccupations of his poetic life, as it is an assessment of Beattie's achievement, influence, and place as a writer" (p. 9). Students of the eighteenth century have needed a work which would provide such a comprehensive picture of Beattie. Although Professor King succeeds in achieving many of his aims, he has not completely realized all of them.

In the first two chapters, he offers a most sympathetic and informed discussion of Beattie's life and times: in particular, his troubled personal life; career and impact as a teacher; and association with others in the Scottish intellectual world. King uses unpublished manuscripts most helpfully:

Beattie's "Journal of Sessions" allows us to glimpse the man at work as a presence in the classroom; and his student James Rennie's description of the lectures reveals the humane character of the man. Beattie emerges vividly as a personality here and again in the next three chapters as we follow his activities as champion of common sense and defender of the Christian religion in the *Essay on Truth and Evidences of the Christian Religion*. King believes "The Castle of Scepticism," unpublished in Beattie's age, has received inadequate attention, and he makes it come alive again for us as he effectively relates the work to Beattie's interests, and to satire of the eighteenth century, in addition to the classical tradition.

The extended commentary on Beattie's poetry which follows these chapters does not match the usefulness of the first part of the book. King's discussion of the minor poetry includes numerous claims for Beattie's "new" practices and attitudes, indicative of Romanticism, and their unique qualities. But often the passages cited can be seen to be very similar to those found in other poets of the age. King's analysis of *The Minstrel* should include some reference to Beattie's own comment that the "hint" for it came from Bishop Percy's *Essay on the English Minstrels*; Percy is not mentioned in the book. It is helpful to observe, as King does, that the Hermit's advice to Edwin compares to those issues taught by Beattie in a philosophy course (p. 95). But it is misleading to argue that Beattie offers here "a new doctrine of nature's moral power" (p. 92), since various poets before Beattie have at least some claim for this as well. What of Joseph Warton's "The Enthusiast: or, The Lover of Nature" (1744), or Thomas Warton's "The Pleasures of Melancholy" (1747)? Joseph Warton is not mentioned in the book; the latter is cited once in another context, although not listed in the index. Thomas Warton is neglected in yet another way, for King suggests that "the popularity of...[*The Minstrel*] was probably the major cause of the great revival of interest in Spenser in the second half of the eighteenth century" (p. 104). But surely Warton's *Observations on the Faerie Queene* (1754) ought to be acknowledged. Here too the passages cited to indicate Beattie's unique and new contributions to poetry are not convincing. The following lines in no way suggest any advance on similar ones that can be found in Edward Young's *Night Thoughts* (1742) or Robert Blair's *The Grave* (1743): "Dark woods and rankling wilds, from shore to shore,/Stretch their enormous gloom..." A claim for a "new kind of poetic vision" (p. 93) is unsupported when such lines as the following are offered by the author as proof: "While waters, woods, and winds, in concert join;" or "The wild brook babbling down the mountain side."

The chapter describing the influence of *The Minstrel* presents some convincing evidence to demonstrate Wordsworth's debt to Beattie, and expands on another scholar's suggestion that Keats was significantly influenced. But the material offered to prove Shelley's debt amounts to little more than slight verbal similarities. The section on Coleridge's indebtedness is particularly weak. A brief passage from his "Monody on the Death of Chatterton" occasions various unfounded assertions. King begs the question by claiming that the reason Coleridge and other Romantic poets remain silent on "their Edwinlike qualities" can be explained by believing "their silence indicates a deep-rooted preoccupation with Edwin as the personification of the largely unspoken fears and hopes of their own early poetic lives" (p. 129). Those readers who value Coleridge's poetry will be puzzled by King's gratuitous comment that "the nature of much of Coleridge's poetry leads one to claim that he knew considerably less about nature and poetic identity than any of the other Romantic poets" (p. 131).

In the ninth and tenth chapters, King speaks of Beattie's literary prose and of his reputation. It would be helpful to cite Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783) in connection with Beattie's "On Fable and Romance," since both are making significant contributions to early discussions of the novel in the same year. The claim that the prose descriptions of the Scottish landscape and people in "Essay on Poetry" are the first of their kind "published for their own sake" (p. 136), might be revised in light of Dr. Johnson's achievement the previous year in his *Journey to the Western Isles* (1775). It is not clear why Beattie's essay "Illustrations on Sublimity" (1783) can be called "an attempt to present a clearer distinction between sublimity and beauty than any other critic had made" (p. 155), when one recalls Edmund Burke's comprehensive *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1759).

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Erik Frykman. *'Unemphatic Marvels'--A Study of Norman MacCaig's Poetry*. Gothenburg Studies in English 35. Gothenburg, Sweden. Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis. 1977. 70 pp. Sw. Cr. 50.

Erik Frykman readily admits that, "anyone who has read [MacCaig's] scathing and perhaps somewhat condescending poem 'Academic' in *A Man in My Position* might think twice before undertaking a critical examination of his poetry. Still, the risk must be taken." He is right, of course; there is a "risk" but it is certainly worth taking. Norman MacCaig can surely now be regarded as one of Scotland's foremost living poets--if not *the* foremost--and his work deserves more attention than it has thus far been granted, particularly outside Scotland. The individuality and the sheer quality of MacCaig's poetry merits this fresh study, and Mr. Frykman is to be commended for taking the leap into criticism.

Mr. Frykman opens his brief monograph with a tantalizing Introduction, which raises a number of significant general points about MacCaig's poetry--some followed up, some not. He notes that the great majority of the poems are located specifically in Scotland; while he thus defines the geographical limits of the poetry, Mr. Frykman at the same time asserts that these are limitations of a "liberating" kind, the borders of a marvellously varied body of poetry, particularly poetry of the landscape. Mr. Frykman recognizes other limits also: he correctly marks the absence of political poetry or strident social comment; he acknowledges that, "MacCaig has dared to be Scottish without writing in Lallans"; he points out the "economy," the conciseness of the verse. These, too, act ultimately as "liberating" forces. One wishes that the author had elaborated on these powerful generalities. Other of his sweeping statements are less convincing, such as his attempt to place the vast majority of the poems in the immediate present; this can be taken only so far, as Mr. Frykman comes to realize as his critique unfolds and he discovers the importance of myth and history in the imagery, as well as the poet's "fondness" for wide-ranging time-space themes. Mr. Frykman's main purpose in the Introduction is to highlight MacCaig's "obvious gift for metaphor," his "lust for metaphor-making" which is the governing idea of this aptly-titled critical study (the title comes from MacCaig's "Learning," in *Rings on a Tree*.) As Mr. Frykman modestly states, "The present study does not claim to be more than a brief examination of, particularly, two aspects of MacCaig's verse: his major thematic preoccupations, and clearly discernible patterns in his imagery." His little book does more or less what he meant it to do; it examines, it explores, but happily, it in no way tries to say the final or definitive word on the subject.

Mr. Frykman sets out by trying to organize his study rather arbitrarily; one feels that the task of labelling or categorizing MacCaig's poems by "theme" or "image-pattern" is an

exercise with too many exceptions ever to prove any rules. Nonetheless, he is able to place the poems into rough categories: "The Poet and his Art"; "Landscape and Mindscape"; "People"; and miscellaneous, "Love, Myth, History, Space and Time, Death." Mr. Frykman helpfully gives numerous examples and short quotations from the poetry throughout the book, to illustrate in close analysis (sometimes myopically close) the points he wishes to make about theme and imagery. If these examples seem frequently to contradict one another, they still serve to point up the very complexity of the poet's vision; out of Mr. Frykman's attempt to impose a rigid order on the poetry, emerges all too clearly the truth that MacCaig stubbornly resists classification. Mr. Frykman ultimately concedes MacCaig, with Walt Whitman, the "right to contradict himself."

The first of the thematic categories, "The Poet and his Art," illuminates with genuine appreciation some vital aspects of MacCaig's poetic personality--his irony (often self-directed); his "playfulness;" his bursts of self-assertion; his profound awareness of his limits as man and poet; his modesty and restraint; his essential honesty. The section "Landscape and Mindscape" investigates a particularly important tendency of the poet to establish a relationship between the (Scottish) landscape and his own mind. Here, Mr. Frykman seems rather too eager to try to fit MacCaig into an inappropriate "Romantic" role, to the point where the poet appears to "lose" himself in the landscape, to become "one" with it: this is not quite fair. While the poet-landscape relationship is one of deep love, it is also one of respect, as MacCaig must fight to uphold the individuality, the integrity of the landscape or "other." His metaphysical mind transforms the landscape, perceives it uniquely, but never seeks to absorb it into pure ego. Similarly, the love-poetry seems not to be *passionate* enough for Mr. Frykman; again, MacCaig fails to fit his "Romantic" preconceptions. This is not to say that the love-poetry lacks feeling, however; as G. S. Fraser has pointed out,<sup>1</sup> such reticence about the display of strong emotion may even be a Scottish trait. Depth of feeling is surely there; Mr. Frykman seems uneasy in allowing MacCaig to express it through the "Metaphysical manner" or conceit. MacCaig's admirable restraint in such love-poems indeed recalls the controlled passion of Donne. The important "Metaphysical" element of MacCaig's poetry is underplayed throughout the book.

Following this inevitably rather frustrating attempt to pin down predominant themes in MacCaig's poetry, Mr. Frykman goes on to deal (somewhat more confidently) with a number of recurring patterns of metaphor. The chief device is, of course, the

poet's relentless tendency to anthropomorphize. Mr. Frykman is right to emphasize this central, humanistic impulse. He might also have mentioned that such thoroughgoing personification is a feature of Scottish Gaelic poetry, as well. Mr. Frykman is honest in his criticism of MacCaig's occasional weakness in handling such abundant figurative language, some of which "misses the mark"; however, many of these "imprecise" metaphors might appear more convincing when seen, not in isolation as they are treated here, but as parts of whole poems. Like Robin Fulton, Mr. Frykman feels that MacCaig sometimes exhibits a disturbing "reductive" tendency, rendering potentially-significant themes merely "decorative" or "whimsical."<sup>2</sup> This, too, could be argued--but are they not taking the poet more solemnly than perhaps he takes himself? Most readers of MacCaig will not need to be prompted to *delight* in the "Metaphysical" wit and sharp sense of humor which is such an important part of the poetry.

On the whole, Mr. Frykman's study succeeds in calling attention to most of the major thematic and stylistic characteristics of MacCaig's verse. These are most fully and beautifully illustrated in the longer poem "A Man in Assynt," as Mr. Frykman demonstrates in the final section, concluding the volume on a positive note. This book represents a fairly skillful New Critical approach to MacCaig's poetry, and thus, by definition, precludes any broader consideration of the poet in his cultural context. MacCaig's development within the Scottish literary *milieu* is an aspect still in need of discussion. Mr. Frykman's book does achieve its stated aims, and is a welcome tribute to MacCaig's work.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> G. S. Fraser, Review of Erik Frykman's *'Unemphatic Marvels'--A Study of Norman MacCaig's Poetry*, *TLS* (9 September, 1977), 1077.

<sup>2</sup> Robin Fulton, *Contemporary Scottish Poetry--Individuals and Contexts* (Loanhead, Midlothian, 1974), p. 76.

Philip Flynn. *Francis Jeffrey*. Newark, Delaware. University of Delaware Press. London. Associated University Presses. 1978. 218 pp. \$12.00.

Philip Flynn's quite slim volume makes a valuable contribution to Jeffrey studies, superseding as it does the book-length account by J. A. Grieg (1948) which was wholly biassed in Jeffrey's favour. Flynn's book can be set beside Cockburn's life and collection of letters (1852) as a standard work. He wisely presents Jeffrey not as a mere literary critic, but in the context of his Scottish intellectual background. Thus a discussion of Jeffrey's "philosophical education" is followed by chapters on his inherited theory of knowledge, and then on his views of the moral sentiments and social progress, politics--the war and reform, aesthetics and literary history, poetry and the novel. Flynn here lays out a scheme which succeeding students of Jeffrey can take advantage of, exploring particular areas in greater depth than he himself has been able to do.

The rather fascinating personal side of Jeffrey is here hardly touched upon, though the author's reliance on Cockburn and Jeffrey's contributions to the *Edinburgh Review* shows correctly how much the private was subordinated to the public man. Flynn does not relate Jeffrey to the larger than Scottish tradition to which Horner alluded in a hitherto unpublished letter here quoted (45) where he compares the position of the potential editor of the *Edinburgh* to that held in eighteenth-century France by Bayle and LeClerc, and to which Carlyle referred many years later when he compared Jeffrey to Voltaire and Goldoni. Nor does Flynn explore the great influence which Jeffrey exercised not only as a critic but also as originator of a certain kind of critical article and as editor of a review. He established the format of article and review which dominated Anglophone intellectual culture past the end of the nineteenth century. Against Flynn's assertion that since Arnold major critics have ignored the public to which Jeffrey catered (171) one can observe that in the twentieth century such giants as Eliot and Leavis have striven to fill the gap which the decline and death of the quarterlies caused.

However, these negative indications of limitations only point up the value of Flynn's book as an introductory study. In Chapter I he refers the reader back to the eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment with its ideal, to a high degree realised, of literature, broadly understood, appreciated by a large and central social group. As Cockburn wrote, quoted by Flynn, "learning was improved by society, and society by learning" (25). Jeffrey was indebted to this broad setting and to

its formalisation in the university, particularly Jardine's philosophical class at Glasgow. The latter's "almost daily requirement of written themes" (28) provided excellent training for the mind of the future reviewer. Flynn also shows how Jeffrey benefitted later from the intellectual clubbishness of Edinburgh society and from his apprenticeship and experience as a lawyer.

In the following carefully documented discussion of Jeffrey's epistemology, ethics, politics and aesthetics, Flynn convincingly shows Jeffrey to be in particular a follower of the sceptical Hume with his sage assertions: "a true sceptic will be diffident of his philosophical doubts, as well as of his philosophical conviction," and "Be a philosopher; but, amidst all your philosophy, be still a man" (54). It was again the percipient Horner who addressed Jeffrey as "my dear Pyrrhonist" (55). In his moral and social thinking Jeffrey shared Hume's reliance on generalisation; however, he distrusted too much theory, including the theory of progress. As philosophically and morally, so politically Jeffrey's mind, as he himself said, was "disposed to accommodation" (96), but he did come out against the Peninsular War and later for Reform. His aim was to thwart revolution at home with what was to become the typical Liberal policy of allowing greater play to public opinion and enlightening and restraining the democratically minded populace. He sided with Reform, though without ardour.

Flynn shows well Jeffrey's aesthetic debt (after Hume) to the associationism of Alison, and how he stressed the special social responsibility of the creative writer. Unfortunately Burns, Wordsworth and Byron, in their different ways, failed to live up to this ideal. As Flynn wittily puts it, "out of the nettle of subjectivism" Jeffrey plucked "the flower of a public standard" (144). He applied this standard not only to the poets, but also in his accounts of the history of English literature and in his literary reviews generally, as they are here presented.

In his conclusion Flynn suggests that Jeffrey saw the end of the Scottish Enlightenment. One looks forward to further studies tracing Jeffrey's role in the continuing influence of this Enlightenment not only in a rapidly changing Scotland, but also in England, the Empire, and the United States.

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Garry Wills. *Inventing America, Jefferson's Declaration of Independence*. Garden City, N. Y. Doubleday & Company Inc. 1978. xxxvi + 398 pp. \$10.00.

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., in an article in the *William and Mary Quarterly* in October 1964, argued that the emphasis in the phrase "pursuit of happiness" as used in the Declaration of Independence should be upon the word "happiness" and not on "pursuit." There was a natural right to happiness which the programs of the government should ensure. Garry Wills in his book *Inventing America, Jefferson's Declaration of Independence* is working in the same direction.

All of the foremost Jefferson scholars--Carl Becker, Julian Boyd, Dumas Malone, Merrill Peterson--have misjudged what Jefferson had in mind when he wrote the Declaration. Becker is the chief culprit for it was he in 1922 who argued that the Declaration merely embodied the Lockean ideas that provided the climate of opinion for Revolutionary America. According to Wills, it was not Locke but Francis Hutcheson who influenced Jefferson. Locke may have been in the air, but Hutcheson was "in Jefferson's hand." (p. 201) The ideas of Hutcheson had been filtered through David Hume, Adam Smith, Thomas Reid, and Adam Ferguson--the Scottish school of common sense philosophy. It was this Scottish influence that was central to Jefferson's thinking while writing the great document. "America in general had gone to school to the Scots in its last colonial period." (p. 176) "Jefferson's thought touches at some places all the leading thinkers of the Scottish Enlightenment; but the most entire correspondence is with Hutcheson." (p. 205) Wills argues on very little evidence (the Jefferson papers are conveniently sparse for the early years) that William Small, Aberdeen educated and Glasgow trained, who taught Jefferson at William and Mary, was the channel between the Scottish Enlightenment and Jefferson.

Just as Palladio found his principles in the Villa Rotonda and Rittenhouse in his orrery, Jefferson found "Benevolence" the organizing principle in society. This is what Wills means by saying that Jefferson "invented" America. Jefferson found this principle and embodied it in his Declaration, the one he drafted, not the one adopted after changes by the Congress, for Wills argues that these changes were significant. As the reader must get back to what Jefferson wrote, Wills prints as an appendix "The Declarations of Jefferson and of the Congress."

More important than the right to property was the right to happiness. For Jefferson the right to property was an "adventitious" one, not a "natural" one. (p. 231) Jefferson was not

thinking of private happiness, but public happiness. "Benevolence is defined as the desire to promote happiness in others." (p. 150) Hutcheson had spoken in 1725 in his *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* "of the greatest happiness of the greatest number." Public happiness was not something vague, but something measurable, the test and justification of any government.

Jefferson considered the pursuit of that happiness an unalienable right. Proof was in the science of morality. Hutcheson's problem had been to get the self into motion for itself, while performing acts that were not "predatorily selfish." (p. 195) Thus Hutcheson's "mechanics of virtue." Hutcheson "has made virtue a lovely form to excite our pursuit of it; and has given us strong affections to be springs of each virtuous action." (p. 205). The moral sense was directed to others. It was the principle of sociability, of benevolence, not of selfishness. Therefore self-interest could not be the foundation of the social contract as in Locke; it must be the moral sense found in everyone. As Jefferson wrote: "Because nature hath implanted in our breasts a love of others, a sense of duty to them, a moral instinct, in short, which prompts us irresistibly to feel and to succor their distresses." (p. 206) Man is distinguished from the beasts by this highest faculty, "which, for the Scottish moral-sense philosopher, is not reason but benevolence, not the head but the heart." (p. 223) In this way, Wills argues, Jefferson could see the Blacks as equal to all men. Thus the right to the pursuit of happiness has a communitarian overtone, not an individualistic one. "Locke's system of government began with the individual's autonomy. Hutcheson's begins with social drives and interdependence." (p. 236)

At this point Adam Smith's concept of property is introduced--"the right of exchange" is the basic one, not the "right of retention." From this point it is easy to jump to Jefferson's views that land must be dispersed among great multitudes, and such distribution preserved by agrarian laws to undergird a broad-based democracy. Whereas James Harrington's agrarian law had emphasized stability, Jefferson's emphasized change. Hutcheson believed that property was "a form of 'language' meant to promote human intercourse and solidarity." (p. 237)

After having transformed the concepts of individual drive and of property, Wills proves to his satisfaction that this Jeffersonian view of human nature was necessary and inexorable. "Thus Jefferson talks of man as 'following after' happiness by more than vague yearning--indeed, by a uniform necessity of his nature, something as regular as a magnetic needle's turn to the

North." (p. 245)

This is a brilliant tour de force by the author, the transformation of the Declaration from an individualistic philosophy to an humanitarian, communitarian one. Whether Wills is correct or not is not important, for he has given us a new dimension in which to test Jefferson's thought. It is, however, an interpretation more in tune with the programmatic liberals of today than with the pure milk of nineteenth-century liberalism.

No matter how much we would like to believe in this mechanics of virtue, one wonders if men are strong enough today to follow such dictates of the heart. This theme was more true of the founding fathers (thus there must be reason to believe that Jefferson was in part moved by these thoughts) than of those who now guide us. The danger lies in the programs designed to achieve this public happiness. All noble dreams seem to have their darker linings.

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Charles Richard Sanders. *Carlyle's Friendships and Other Studies*. Durham, N.C. Duke University Press. 1977.  
342 pp. \$14.75.

The immense contribution of Charles Richard Sanders will always be remembered in the world of Carlyle scholarship, and we are fortunate that seven of his best essays about Carlyle have now been collected, with a number of others, in the present volume. To some of us a few of them have already proved indispensable, difficult to get at though they have been. They are the result of a lifetime's devoted scholarship--or, perhaps, rather less than a single life if we take into account future expectations and past achievement in other fields. Several of them are based on letters to and from Carlyle from such friends as Tennyson, Thackeray and Leigh Hunt; and these are unobtrusively and wisely presented, so much in the spirit of the original authors that it would be easy to overlook the editor's sure control, graceful scholarship and perceptive incidental criticism. They are essays we are grateful to have.

Standing first in the collection is the study entitled "The Victorian Rembrandt: Carlyle's Portraits of His Contemporaries." It is an aspect of Carlyle's art compelling admir-

ation, not often questioned though adverse criticism is fairly given here and convincingly answered. As Carlyle himself wrote, there is no "secret for being 'graphic,'" except one "clearly in every man's power: *To have an open loving heart, and what follows from the possession of such...* This it is that opens the whole mind, quickens every faculty of the intellect to do its fit work, that of *knowing*" ("Biography"). True in general, true of Carlyle, and true of the author of the present essays. It is among many aspects of Carlyle that tend to be forgotten. We are reminded that he wrote to his brother Alexander in Canada, in 1847: "And train the children each in its own little garden, to respect fruit-trees, honorable profit, *industry, beauty, and good order*: it is the summary of all the Gospels to man!" (It might be Yeats praying for his daughter.) He was "austere" Jeffrey told Leigh Hunt: "'Austere!'" cried Hunt, "I said it was one of the last epithets I should have given you, it was like the austere rind of fruit round a heart of sweetness." Not that there was not another side to Carlyle; but even the portraits etched with acid are memorable because he never judges anyone just with regard to office or reputation, but keenly scrutinizes him as a man. It is what makes Carlyle, in part, a Boswell to the whole age. Emerson, in 1846, saw it in "the organism" of his eye, "the valid eye, in which I see the strong executive talent which has made his thought available to nations, whilst others...are pale and powerless."

Much of this would not come to mind but for these essays, modestly introduced in the preface as about Carlyle's "social side." They are, of course, much more than this, especially perhaps the long study of Carlyle and Leigh Hunt. There is a great deal in this skilfully-presented essay, which might call for a lengthier examination were it not that Hunt and Carlyle can largely be left to discuss their own relationship. It was certainly a significant one, discerning, loving, critical, in much fundamentally opposed, and coming to express the deepest convictions of both men. One aspect it partly brought out was the nature of Carlyle's Scottishness. According to Carlyle, himself, as they got to know each other Hunt took alarm at his convictions, "which he would call 'Scotch,' 'Presbyterian,' who knows what." And, certainly, in his *Autobiography* Hunt says of Carlyle's sense that much of the world was "devilish," that it was "after the old Covenanter fashion, in order that" he might "find something angelical in giving it the proper quality of vituperation and blows." More seriously, in Hunt's first reviews of Carlyle's public lectures, he maintained a critical independence, questioning his outlook, on which Carlyle wrote in his journal, "His whole way of life is at death-

variance with mine." One man was as extreme as the other, Hunt cheerfully seeking happiness and the abolition of Hell, and much more Mediterranean in culture than merely English: Carlyle showing an even more than Scottish dourness, durability, "Cameronian rigour," firm principle, and disdain for "paltering, poltroonery and crying for the want of *taffy*."

Their friendship survived because of their mutual recognition that each was a serious and dedicated writer. It is very true that, as David De Laura remarks, these collected essays also throw an interesting light on "the complex and sometimes surprising ways in which the English literary community conducted its personal and private business." They remind us how inevitable was Carlyle's decision to settle in London; how he could hardly have continued to exist as a writer without it; that it nourished a life which depended on expressing itself and even on the stimulus of contradiction; and that Carlyle's friends and fellow-writers saw him as a leader in the literary community from soon after his arrival in Cheyne Row. There is a remarkable observation in a letter from Thackeray to his mother in 1839: "Criticism has been a party matter with us till now, and literature a poor political lacquey--please God we shall begin ere long to love are for art's sake. It is Carlyle who has worked more than any other to give it its independence." There is truth in this perhaps surprising comment: some of the work was through his example of independence, some in direct participation in discussing the role of the author by profession, and even more in the great web of associations which came together in the friendships of the Carlyles. The deep respect in which the nineteenth-century community of letters felt for Carlyle was well-judged. One notes, too, another comment written by Thackeray to his mother that, by January 1840, he had visited Chelsea "to see Carlyle and Mrs. C.--pleasanter more high-minded people I don't know."

Readers will no doubt also be pleased to have available the thoughtful study of "The Carlyles and Byron," and also "The Background of Carlyle's Portrait of Coleridge in *The Life of John Sterling*." Both are satisfying and vigorous studies of permanent value. In all, I am sure that readers will not find that I recommend this volume myself only in the partiality of friendship. It was in friendship that Carlyle best expressed and perhaps best understood himself--as with Edward Irving through whom he said he first learned "what the communion of man with man means." It is with particular pleasure, therefore, that we understand that we may now look forward to a complete study of Irving and Carlyle by Professor Sanders.

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Ernest Campbell Mossner and Ian Simpson Ross (eds.). *The Correspondence of Adam Smith*. Oxford. The Clarendon Press, 1977. xxx + 441 pp. \$33.00.

Adam Smith was not one of the world's great letter writers. "I can write as seldom and as short as you," David Hume remonstrated in a letter to his friend in January 1766 and a decade later Hume referred to Smith's laziness as a correspondent. So we do not get, in this volume of his letters edited by that veteran scholar of the Scottish Enlightenment Ernest Mossner and his erstwhile student and now colleague Ian Ross, any sustained picture of the man and his moods throughout his life. Nevertheless, this is both an instructive and a fascinating book, giving us sudden clear glimpses not only of the stages of Smith's career but also of that complexly patterned world of friendship, patronage, mutual introductions and socio-cultural exchanges that made the Scottish Enlightenment at the same time a series of personal indulgences and a European phenomenon. We see the place of influence and patronage in academic as well as political appointments and we note, with surprise sometimes, how it was taken as an absolute matter of course that friendship implied going out of one's way to do a service, to provide an introduction, to write a letter to an influential figure, to put oneself out for a friend (or his son). We note too how men of letters formed a European community who as a matter of course sought each other out and carried mutual introductions when they travelled.

Smith sometimes goes rather far. "Your Lordship, I hope, will have the thanks of the whole country in general, and of our society in Particular for your generous patronage of a man whom we regard as undoubtedly the first Poet as well as one of the most eminent Philosophers of the Present age." So wrote Professor Adam Smith in Glasgow to Lord Milton, in support of William Wilkie, "the Scottish Homer," author of the egregious epic *The Epigoniad*. Did Smith really think that this St. Andrews professor was the first poet of the age (as David Hume professed to think) or was he just trying to be helpful? He helped young people as well as established figures. To David Hume, 22 February 1763: "This Letter will be presented to you by Mr Henry Herbert, a young Gentleman who is very well acquainted with your works, and upon that account extremely desirous of being introduced to the Author, As I am convinced that you will find him extremely agreeable, I shall make no apology in introducing him." Hume replies on 28 March: "I was obligd to you both for your kind Letter and for the Opportunity which you afforded me of making Acquaintance with Mr. Herbert, who appears to me a very promising young man." In 1764 Smith was in Toulouse as travelling tutor to Henry Scott, 3rd Duke

of Buccleuch (it is interesting how many distinguished Scottish intellectuals, including Hume, took jobs as travelling tutors to young aristocrats) and while there he received a letter from the Glasgow "tobacco lord" John Glassford asking for Smith's good offices on behalf of one George Kippen, a Glaswegian about to go to the south of France for his health. "You no doubt are acquainted with Mr Kippens Character and usefullness in Society which makes it unnecessary for me to say much in Recommendation of Him to your Civilities if he fixes at Thoulouse or its neighbourhood. I know that he can depend on your best advice and friendship in directing him to a proper House to lodge in That they may have as many of the conveniences as are to be afforded to Strangers in their Situation." There are numerous other similar examples in the correspondence.

This volume contains 179 letters by Adam Smith, written between October 1740 and May 1790 (he died on 17 July 1790), of which 48 have never before been published, and 125 letters written to him, including all extant letters to him from David Hume, a very important series indeed. There is an interesting letter from Lord Shelburne in Dublin, dated 26 April 1759, in which he compares Glasgow favourably with Oxford and Cambridge: "The great fault I find with Oxford and Cambridge, is that Boys sent thither instead of being the Governed, become the Governors of the Colleges, and that Birth and Fortune are more respected than Literary Merit; I flatter'd myself that it was not so at Glasgow, and your commendation of my Son's conformity to the Discipline of the place he is in, persuades me that you think as I do...."

A letter from Smith to Lord Hailes, the distinguished judge, antiquary and man of letters, dated 15 January 1759, talks in some detail about the progress of his research for *The Wealth of Nations* and illustrates that friendly mutual assistance in research that was characteristic of the Scottish *litterati*. The postscript is typical: "If your Lordship wishes to see any of the Books I have on the Prices of Provisions they are all at your service, as are likewise any papers on the same subject which I may hereafter be able to collect." This, like similar letters to other correspondents, was not an empty expression of courtesy: Smith had, as he wrote to John Bruce in 1786, a "mortal aversion to letters of compliment and ceremony" and what he wrote to and for his friends was genuinely meant. As he wrote to the bookseller and publisher Thomas Cadell in 1782, he had an "aversion to writing," exacerbated by his hypochondria. In January 1772 Hume wrote reproaching Smith for his lack of communication and unsocial behaviour. "I shall not take any Excuse from your own State of Health,

which I suppose only a Subterfuges invented by Indolence and Love of Solitude. Indeed, my Dear Smith, if you continue to hearken to Complaints of this Nature, you will cut Yourself out entirely from human Society, to the great Loss of both Parties."

Not all the mutual introduction and high exchange of courtesies were as real as some of them were. Smith wrote to Hume from Toulouse on 21 October 1764 asking him to thank Lord Hertford, British Ambassador in Paris where Hume served as secretary to the Embassy, for giving him a letter of recommendation to "the Duke of Richelieu." He added: "There was Indeed one small mistake in it. He called me Robinson instead of Smith."

This volume includes the famous letter from Smith to William Strachan (9 November 1776) giving a full account of Hume's death. Among the letters that passed between Smith and Hume the most interesting exchange is Hume's explanation of why he was thinking of settling permanently in France and Smith's reply dissuading him from this (September 1765).

Smith never forgot his years at Glasgow. On 16 November 1787 he wrote from Edinburgh to Dr. Archibald Davidson, Principal of Glasgow University: "No one can owe greater obligations to a Society than I do to the University of Glasgow. They educated me, they sent me to Oxford, soon after my return to Scotland they elected me one of their own members, and afterwards preferred me to another office, to which the abilities and Virtues of the never to be forgotten Dr Hutcheson had given a superior degree of illustration. The period of thirteen years which I spent as a member of that society I remember as by far the most useful, and, therefore, as by far the happiest and most honourable period of my life..."

The letters addressed to Smith printed in this volume were chosen on the grounds that their "contents provided significant information about Smith, or the lives of acquaintances in his career." Other letters to Smith are calendared but not printed. The volume itself is the sixth and last volume of the massive Glasgow edition of the works and correspondence of Adam Smith, commissioned by the University of Glasgow to celebrate the bicentenary of *The Wealth of Nations* in 1976. Edited with scrupulous scholarship and admirably produced and printed (I have found only one misprint, "me" for "be" on page 126), it is a worthy conclusion to a notable publishing enterprise. For the real specialist there are appendices giving Governor Thomas Pownall's 40-page letter to Smith containing his detailed critique of *The Wealth of Nations*, a document "on the State of the Contest with America, February 1778" (edited by David Stevens) which seems almost certainly to be by Smith,

and Jeremy Bentham's open letters to Smith criticising the latter's views on usury.

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Francis Russell Hart. *The Scottish Novel From Smollett to Spark*. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press. London. John Murray. 1978. xii + 442 pp. \$18.50.

Those who teach or lecture on the Scottish novel have a well-prepared but weary grimace with which to respond to specialists in English, French, American or whatever literature who will say quizzically and with assumed seriousness, "The Scottish novel? Is there one?" And it is not merely a facetious question: it was put with more intellectual rigour but with no less dismissive intent about the whole Scottish tradition by T. S. Eliot, in an essay of 1919 provocatively titled "Was there a Scottish Literature?":

When we assume that a literature exists, we assume a great deal: we suppose that there is one of the five or six (at most) great formations of history. We do not suppose merely "a history," for there might be a history of Tamil literature; but a part of History, which for us is the history of Europe. We suppose not only a corpus of writings in one language, but writings and writers between whom there is a tradition; and writers who are not merely connected by a tradition in time, but who are related so as to be in the light of eternity contemporaneous, from a certain point of view cells in one body.

Francis Russell Hart's *The Scottish Novel* is not just "a history": it certainly provides a survey of all the major Scottish writers who have used the novel form, and a fairly large number of minor ones, from Smollett and Mackenzie through to Muriel Spark and James Kennaway, but it also attempts to reveal the inner dynamic of a distinct tradition, a single body in which, from a certain point of view, all the writers are cells. We can confidently send all who ask if there is a Scottish novel to this book and expect them to return convinced that here is a significant formation contributing its share to European History. Given the lack of any such study

of Scottish fiction Hart's book is to be welcomed: those of us familiar with the tradition will benefit by having our attention recalled to neglected masterpieces--like William Alexander's *Johnny Gibb of Gushetneuk*--or to the reappraisal of a novelist like Eric Linklater, whose significance, when set within the context of the tradition, Hart argues to be much greater than generally acknowledged; and those unfamiliar with the Scottish novel will find its surveys lucid and its discrimination of various different themes and developments helpful in orientating themselves in unfamiliar territory.

Crucial to Hart's study is that it is not merely, however, a chronicle of dates and plots, no matter how much of it must, of necessity, be given over to exposition and summary. The book is built around the thesis that the Scottish novel has developed differently from the novel in England and that its modes and motifs cannot be understood as mere offshoots of the English tradition. It is closer, formally, to the American novel, in that it has consistently refused to settle within the norms of the social realism typical of mainstream English fiction. The Scottish novel, Hart argues, was formed initially by the historical impulse of Enlightenment thinking, but within the context of the counterenlightenment led by *Blackwood's Magazine*. The historical impulse might direct itself towards the past, as in Scott, or to more contemporary socioeconomic realities, as in Galt, but the social scientific impetus was, from the beginning, modified, redirected, sometimes confounded by a deeply entrenched anti-realist strain in the Scottish imagination, a drive towards the Gothic, towards romance or fantasy, that would turn history into myth. This refusal to accept that the meaning of human acts can be understood within the confines of ordinary social and material life Hart traces not only in Scott, reversing much of the trend of recent criticism and, indeed, of his own earlier writings on Scott, but argues to be the dominant force in the whole Scottish tradition down to Eric Linklater or Muriel Spark. Scott may, if Lukacs is right, have set in motion the whole European tradition of the historical novel and the problematic hero, but these are not the aspects of his work which are followed through in Scotland. What Hart makes clear is that the socioeconomic interest of the Scottish novel is essentially non-narrative, encouraging the episodic, fragmentary structure typical of much Scottish writing, and that when the novelist attempts to construct a narrative he moves, by a kind of compensatory leap to the opposite pole, to the fantastic, the melodramatic, the unmotivatedly violent. The purpose of the novel may be historical, but in the Scottish context the very construction of narrative draws into play almost immediately an entirely ahistor-

ical set of motifs. The Scottish novel wilted, therefore, during the dominance of the realistic tradition in the nineteenth century, and has had to wait for the reaction to that classic form, has had to wait, perhaps, for the advent of post-modernist experiment, before its modes can be seen for what they are and not merely as failed versions of social and psychological realism. We can perhaps speculate from Hart's thesis that Scotland did not produce a sufficiently large and dominant bourgeoisie to sustain the novel in its classic form in the nineteenth century, but that the strength of the Scottish novel in the twentieth century lies precisely in its having its roots in the working classes, industrial and agricultural, and having inherited literary forms appropriate to the consciousness of those classes.

Hart's argument is interesting and sustained, and makes the reading of the book more enjoyable than such literary histories, with all their cargo of information, generally are. For those not familiar with Scottish literature the brief discussion of Scott might be misleading and Hart's decision that enough has been written on Scott to make irrelevant substantial attention to him in a history such as this is probably to be regretted. It emphasises weaker elements in the Scottish novel at the expense of stronger, and Hart's attempted reorientation of our assumptions about the generic characteristics of the Scottish novel is made easier by the omission. That he can suggest Galt and Linklater as the novelists who have best coped with the difficulties, or best fulfilled the potentialities, of the tradition is a sufficient indicator of how radical a reevaluation Hart's argument might justify. But it is precisely in his evaluations that Hart seems least convincing and the reason for it, it seems to me, is his self-imposed refusal to consider stylistic, linguistic, comparative or socio-historical explanations and interpretations. There is only so much, of course, that one man can put into a single book, but concentration on theme and motif leads to a flattening out of the differences between novels, a reductionist emphasis in which a novel is only as valuable as the material from which it is constructed.

The clearest case of this is when Hart, in justifiably trying to understand the problem of the Kailyard in a non-partisan spirit, ends up doing away with the *literary* quarrel between Kailyard and anti-Kailyard writers altogether.

The anti-Kailyard revulsion, however, is much less a matter of literary mode than of theological vision. Anti-Kailyarders are offended by sentimental images of man's goodness because they find man grotesquely

fallen. They find more salvific force in the evil grandeur of a Calvinist megalomania than in glimpses of kindness behind the dour facades of Thrums and Drumtochty. When George Douglas Brown claimed his *House with the Green Shutters* was "more complimentary to Scotland," I take it he meant that it is truer doctrine to have a powerful vision of evil than a poignant vision of redemptive innocence....This anti-Kailyard furor is manifestly theological...(p. 116)

This is well put and encompasses a real distinction in world view, but the difference between Douglas and, to take the best of the Kailyard writers, Barrie, is not merely a matter of point of view, but of style, and the complexity of character it allowed them to portray. Outlining theme, plot and location will not reveal the difference because it is a difference that exists only in the linguistic texture of the work. Barrie's thinness, the sentimentality of his early works, comes from a continual deflection of attention from his characters to the objects with which they live. In fact the objects are in some ways more alive than they are. The furnishings of their bare lives are made to stand token, in the mode David Lodge has recently analysed as a type of synecdoche, for human emotions, but they are emotions which are never fully realised in and through the characters themselves. The "I" of the schoolmaster narrator in the Thrums stories allows Barrie to escape confronting complex presentation of psychological states by claiming lack of adequate knowledge of anything except the perceptible exteriors of his people's lives:

I only once stayed during the whole of my holiday at the house on the brae, but I knew its inmates for many years, including Jamie, the son, who was a barber in London. Of their ancestry I never heard. With us it was only some of the articles of furniture, or perhaps a snuff-mull, that had a genealogical tree. In the house on the brae was a great kettle, called the boiler, that was said to be fifty years old in the days of Henry's grandfather, of whom nothing more is known...Jess's rarest possession was, perhaps, the christening robe that even people at a distance came to borrow. Her mother could count up a hundred persons who had been baptized in it. Every one of the hundred, I believe, is dead...(A *Window in Thrums, Works* (London, 1927), pp. 6-7.)

The object is introduced as a means of allowing us to see individual character, but it immediately neutralises the need for discrimination of the individual psychology by the generalised pathos it inspires in its ability to outlast its possessor. The object acts as a focus for emotion, but the emotion is tied to no specific situation--like Desdemona's handkerchief or Anna Karenina's handbag--but to a generalised sense of loss to which all and any object would be adequate; as the emotion is general any object will do, when the object is specific it must focus the most generalised emotion. To return to T. S. Eliot, it is a stylistic habit we might describe as a subjective correlative. Hart argues of *A Window in Thrums* that it is

as elegiac pastoral, close to "Michael" and "The Ruined Cottage." Where is the rose-covered cottage we are led to expect in the Kailyard?...It is sentimental only insofar as a quiet, somewhat grim domestic heroism might be named sentimental--only insofar as a resignation grounded in a sense of the pathos of human goodness might be considered sentimental from a theologically opposed point of view. (p. 130)

The genealogy may be accurate, but when Michael goes to the unbuilt sheepfold, or when Wordsworth asks us to notice the pile of stones that is left, only that object can focus for us the emotion of the whole human drama. The achievement of the poem is precisely the opposite of Barrie's, for it depends on how much can be read out of an object, a thing (both words, with their implication of the neutrality of the material world from which human life has to be saved, resound through Wordsworth's poem) so little regarded, so little individuated, whereas Barrie's story depends on every thing becoming charged with the same encompassing emotion. When the wayward son of Barrie's novel returns home to find his family all dead what he asks about is the furniture:

"Ye wouldna hae heard," he said, "wha got the muckle arm-chair 'at used to sit i' the kitchen i' the window 'at looks ower the brae?"

"I couldna be sure," I said...

"There was the chairs ben i' the room," he said, after a while.

I said I thocht Sanders Elshioner had got them at a bargain because twa o' them was mended wi' glue, an' gey silly.

"Ay, that's them," he said, "they were richt neat mended. It was my mother 'at glued them...There was the clock, too, an' the stool 'at Leebie carried when she gaed the errands." (*Window in Thrums*, p. 219)

The sentimentality of Barrie is not in his material as such but in the diffuse lack of differentiation in which every object, indiscriminately, becomes charged with emotion. There is much to be said for Barrie's work, and Hart's attempt at a fairer estimate is not misplaced, but concentration on event, location and plot at the expense of the linguistic matrix in which they find embodiment makes the revaluation too easy.

This weakness applies not only to the discussion of Barrie and the Kailyard but throughout the book, and I have spent so much time on it because it is surely the pervasive problem of Scottish prose writers that stylistic uncertainty undermines the very texture of their writing and that any evaluation of their achievement has to take this into account. In not undertaking any stylistic analysis Hart allows himself more generosity to a wide range of novelists than they might otherwise receive, but it does have the effect of undervaluing those who have managed a real command over their medium: the plaudits for Grassic Gibbon's style are perfunctory and style goes unnoticed in the discussions of Neil Gunn and Muriel Spark. Yet the success of Scottish writers in the limited Mid-Atlantic of popular fiction (Alistair Maclean, for instance, or Catherine Gavin at a more serious level) and the ease with which Scottish novelists of real talent move into films or TV (Gordon Williams's *Straw Dogs*, Alan Sharp's allegoric westerns and thrillers) suggest that the great temptation for the Scottish writer is to give up the struggle with language, to accept the formulaic style or the primacy of the image.

Hart mentions that problem of finding a suitable narrative language for the Scottish novel in his conclusion, "Notes for a Theory of Scottish Fiction," but it was here more than anywhere that the deliberate limitation of perspective was most disabling to his argument. The theory amounts to little more than a review of the themes already covered in the various chapters, and, given that it is intended to be no more than "notes" in any case, that would not matter if the lack of theoretical explanation did not feed back into the discussion of individual authors. For instance, in his section on Galt, Hart makes deliberate provincialism a keystone of the conception of his work:

The close interweaving of household memoir and national history is a central Scottish motif. For Scott, the

epic historian, small domesticities are caught up--given scope and dignity--by their entanglements with historic fatality. Galt's version is in the more familiar Scottish mode of diminution. Man's historic pretensions are seen in their true limits when reflected on the stage and sensibility of household and parish. Only through a provincial perspective can one see the real smallness of history. (p. 50)

The whole idea of the provincial needs more analysis, however, than Hart has time to give it. He justifies the idea of the provincial in fiction by quoting Ortega y Gasset to the effect that the classic novelist must make the reader accept a provincial horizon: "He must make a villager of him and interest him in the inhabitants of his realm...To turn each reader into a temporal 'provincial' is the great secret of the novelist."

Now a temporal provincial is a very different matter from a spatial provincial. The great tradition of the provincial novel in England in the nineteenth century is very different from the growing provincialism of the Scottish novel in the same period--even though the English novelists took their start from Scott. The difference is not in the geographical limits the novelist sets himself, but in intellectual temper and historical awareness. The great provincial novel takes its limited human scene and puts it under the microscope of the most advanced thinking about the relation of man and society of its day, or it finds in that scene the most important conflicts of the broader social world of its time. Scott and, to some extent, Galt, could still achieve this amalgam but they were working with the tools of the Enlightenment. As those became outdated or were superseded elsewhere they were not replaced in Scotland and the Scottish novelist becomes provincial not by his choice of setting, but because unlike George Eliot, or Hardy, or Lawrence, most of his thinking is dog-eared scraps that have blown about the world for a generation or more. It is still a major fact of the contemporary Scottish scene as far as the novel is concerned and the temptations of Catholicism for Muriel Spark or George Mackay Brown are, at least in part, literary rather than theological, since it allows them to establish an intellectual framework still in touch with the major movements of intellectual life in the world at large. As Joyce recognised, the actual matter of a peripheral culture can be only rarely of much interest to major cultures--only thought and technique as advanced or more advanced than that of cosmopolitan centres can redeem the provincial artist. Giving up such standards of comparison is almost bound to intro-

duce a falsifying partiality in evaluation.

In this context the achievement of Neil Gunn must come to seem more and more significant. Gunn is one of the few authors, and the only modern one, to whom Hart devotes a whole chapter, and though this is partly because he makes the Highland novel a separate development of the Scottish tradition it seems eminently justifiable. Despite my previous comments this chapter is one of those in which Hart's mode of approach pays off, for he is able to show the continual developing and deepening of Gunn's thought and technique in the course of his career so that our attention is drawn to late novels like *Blood-hunt* and *The Other Landscape* as culminations of Gunn's long dialogue with psychoanalysis and the meaning of violence. What Hart brings out is that Gunn's provincialism is not a provincialism of the mind, and the basically unchanging location of his novels masks an enormous range of novelistic modes, each one used in the exploration of a different facet of the human condition.

Precisely because it is engaged with fundamental intellectual issues that are not just a distant echo of already decided battles, Gunn can be seen to have much in common with other European novelists of the same period, with Hamsun, with Hesse, with Giono. Such comparison Hart, of course, denies himself, and if I insist on it it is because the great danger in Scotland, as in any small culture, is that in trying to develop and enlarge our own literature we will ignore the standards of the best, wherever it might be produced. It is perhaps the opposite danger, however, of undervaluing whatever we produce ourselves, that has most afflicted Scottish literature, and in that context Hart's book, with its insistence on working from within the tradition, can only be a substantial addition to our self-understanding. Whatever criticisms I have made do not detract from the book's essential achievement as a history of the novel in Scotland; they are rather, I hope, an index of the spur to critical analysis the book will provide by confronting us with the underlying themes, with a possible deep structure, to the whole tradition. Perhaps it is only rarely that a peripheral culture can offer its own imaginative vision to the rest of the world and have it accepted as an image of a universal condition, and perhaps the function of small cultures is to maintain their own responses, the integrity of their own art forms clear and precise, even if neglected and apparently unwanted, until the moment arrives when "history" can become History. If so books like this one have their part to play in keeping clear the channels by which we are connected to the hinterlands of our own imaginations and if the master novelist Hart hopes for, one around whom the

whole tradition might gel, should arrive in the next twenty years or so, he may owe more to Hart's study, and the few like it that are rewriting our sense of the Scottish past, than he will be likely to know.

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Charles N. Fifer (ed.). *The Correspondence of James Boswell with Certain Members of The Club*. The Yale Research Edition of the Private Papers of James Boswell. Correspondence: Vol. 3. New York and Toronto. McGraw-Hill Book Co. 1976. 466 pp. \$30.00.

"Herculaneum, or some old Roman field, which, when dug, fully rewards the labour employed": such was Boswell's striking image for the mind of Bennet Langton from which he recovered a "good store of *Johnsoniana*" (*Life of Johnson*, sub 1780). The volume reviewed in its turn might also be likened to a rich archeological site, yielding piecemeal the remains of the friendships, animosities, viewpoints, and exertions of the individuals in the Johnson circle, and cumulatively a sense of the era of English literary culture dominated by the sage fondly called "Idiot" by Topham Beauclerk, the "Modern Soc-rates" by Thomas Barnard, and a "magnificent Tree" by Boswell who said that he had "long been used to be sheltered" under its shade.

In all 268 letters are presented in the volume, of which 84 were written by Boswell, 131 to him (mostly by Club members), and 53 more to or from Club members. In addition, 46 letters from Boswell and 10 to him whose texts do not survive are noted under their dates, with as much information about their contents as is available. The following members of The Club are represented in the correspondence: Reynolds, Langton, Beauclerk, Goldsmith, Hawkins (all original members from the foundation in 1764), Percy (1768), Charles James Fox (1774), George Steevens (1774), Barnard (1775), Adam Smith (1775), Joseph Warton (1777), the 2nd Earl of Upper Ossory (1777), Richard Marlay (1777), William Windham (1778), William Scott (1778), 1st Baron Eliot of St Germans (1782), Thomas Warton (1782), Richard Burke (1782), Charles Burney (1784), Richard Warren (1784), John Courtney (1788), the 5th Duke of Leeds (1792), John Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury, formerly Carlisle (1792), and Sir Charles Blagden (1794). Boswell was himself the eigh-

teenth member to be enrolled, in 1773, ahead of his former teacher Adam Smith, the great politician Fox, the Wartons, Gibbon, and Sheridan. Clearly, this was a matter of high personal satisfaction for Boswell, appreciating, for instance, that Burke had told Johnson he doubted Boswell was fit for membership (*Life*, sub 21 August 1773--a disclosure made in the dreary setting of a rainy day on a "wild moor" near the home of Lord Monboddo). Boswell also knew that, as a result of the inter-action of The Club, Burke came to have different views. Thus, a letter from Reynolds to Boswell of 1 October 1782 runs: "Mr Burke dined with me yesterday. He talked much of you and with great affection. He says you are the pleasantest man he ever saw and sincerely wishes you would come and live amongst us. All your friends here I believe will subscribe to that wish." The letters between Boswell and Burke himself, Garrick, Malone, and Johnson have been reserved for other volumes in the Yale series, but there is enough in the present volume to reveal how intensely Boswell enjoyed the activities of The Club, and how he fashioned from these, parts of the biography which was the supreme achievement of his life. We can see also in the letters, as in the one by Reynolds quoted above, the nature of the seductive appeal his London friends and the city itself made to Boswell, calling him to move from Scotland where he felt so keenly his talents were "exerted in a narrow sphere" (to Barnard, 14 May 1784).

Preceding the texts of the letters there is a chapter offering a gallery of biographical sketches of the correspondents. It may be that the reader who is neither a Boswellian nor a Johnsonian will detect here some measure of *parti pris*. In the case of Adam Smith, for example, we are diverted with the stories of Johnson describing him, on one occasion, as "a most disagreeable fellow after he had drank some wine, which... 'bubbled in his mouth'" and, on another, as being "as dull a dog as he had ever met with" (p. xci). We are not told, however, that three different traditions claim Johnson's roughness in giving Smith the lie over his praise of Hume provoked Smith to call Johnson "a son of a bitch" (Clyde E. Dankert, *Adam Smith: Man of Letters and Economist*, 1974, pp. 103-4). Elsewhere the accuracy of the information about Smith is a little less than might be expected. At p. 7, n. 3, the old story, for which there is not a scrap of evidence, is introduced to the effect that Smith's stay on the Continent was interrupted in 1766 by the murder of the Hon. Hew Campbell Scott, brother of his pupil, the 3rd Duke of Buccleuch. The "murder" story comes from *The New Statistical Account of Scotland* (1845), I, 490, but the facts are that the young man contracted a fever (his brother had been similarly ill in August) and died on 19 October

(*Correspondence of Adam Smith*, 1977, pp. 119-21, citing Scottish Record Office MS, GD1/479/14). To be fair, it should be added that in general the biographies provided by the author usefully supplement the text and the notes, and four of them of an extensive nature are substantial contributions to biographical research on the Johnson circle: those of Barnard, Beauclerk, Langton, and Percy.

Students of Scottish poetry and controversies will be glad to have the details of Percy's involvement in the Ossian affair, seemingly arising from his presence at a meeting in 1765 organized by Hugh Blair and Adam Ferguson, at which an Edinburgh University student had recited and translated passages of Gaelic poetry bearing a distinct relationship to a section of *Fingal*. As a result of the experience Percy, who had at first been sceptical of Macpherson's productions, pronounced himself satisfied about their authenticity in the second edition of his *Reliques* (1767). He then dropped from the third edition (1775) the note endorsing authenticity, having been convinced by a friend of Macpherson's that the Ossianic epics were largely fabrications. This latter action did not escape the pamphleteers at war over Ossian and they dragged in Percy's name, whereupon Ferguson and Blair disclaimed any knowledge of the translation seance. Boswell was shown their correspondence with Percy on this subject and thought his "Countrymen made but a shabby figure," but he observed that Percy's notes about the episode were "very curt, and did not mention having heard Erse poetry repeated at Dr Fergusson's, but only fixed the date of his drinking tea there. [Percy] was very keen and violent upon the subject" (p. 139, n. 1). Boswell stated to Percy that his "opinion was long ago fixed, which is that *some parts* of what is given us as Ossian's Poetry has been repeated in Gaelick *I know not from what area*. But *how much* is genuine we shall never be able to ascertain" (letter of 25 December 1781). In some respects, modern scholarship has gone beyond Boswell's opinion and determined the basis for Macpherson's poetry: see Derick S. Thomson, *The Gaelic Sources of Macpherson's 'Ossian'* (Edinburgh, 1951).

The high-flying Tory, Thomas Barnard, who felt "Bold" when he thought "that the Constitution in Church and State [was] supported by all the Respectability in the Kingdom" and roundly condemned the "Motley Herd that threaten it, composed of Dissenters of all Kinds, atheists and Libertines Included, with that Dog Paine at the Bottom of the Conspiracy" (to Boswell, 9 December 1792), but who did not scruple to be present when a "Church and King" mob attacked Joseph Priestley's meeting-house in Birmingham, and tore off a brick from "its Smoaking Remains" which he sent as a "Prize" to Boswell (c. 14 July 1791), also

entered into controversy on Scottish matters, by writing on the "Irish Dynasties established in Scotland" at the dawn of that country's history. On becoming an Irish bishop, however, he decided that publication on such a topic did not "belong to [his] character and present station", but he later agreed to anonymous publication (pp. 130, 153, 158, 188). The editor of this volume of correspondence adds considerably to our knowledge of Barnard, and brings out well how he became Boswell's 'Father Confessor' and in some measure took Johnson's place in Boswell's life after Johnson died, though in the *Life of Johnson* Barnard remains a shadowy figure. Topham Beauclerk also emerges from this correspondence as a more understandable figure, and we are permitted to see behind the mask of the witty and fearless aristocrat--the only member of The Club who was not overborne by Johnson's roughness--and discern the pitiable man whose short life ended with an extremely painful illness. In some ways, however, the volume is most notable for its incorporation of newly-recovered material on Bennet Langton, that "tall, meagre, long-visaged man, much resembling...a stork standing on one leg," as a contemporary described him (Henry Beste, *Personal and Literary Memorials*, 1829, p. 62). Our editor with nice judgment characterizes him thus: "In the quick-paced, combative, enormously artful conversation of The Club or Mrs Thrale's drawing-room, Langton, who was absent-minded, slow in the uptake, rather pedantic, and always desirous of knowing why, must have been a sort of Elephant's Child" (p. lxxv). And yet it was from Langton's mind, a biographical "Herculaneum," that Boswell was able to extract the richest deposit of Johnsonian sayings and memorabilia outside of his own collections.

Finally, of course, this volume is remarkable for its multifaceted revelation of Boswell himself, in his own correspondence and that of others, as a largely endearing but often exasperating personality, playing with mingled shrewdness and naivety the roles of "hero-worshipper, pamphleteer, Scots lawyer ambitious for an English practice, paterfamilias, eminent biographer, frustrated politician, Steward of the Humane Society, Secretary for Foreign Correspondence to the Royal Academy" (p. xxiii). Anent that role of biographer, how fascinating it is to follow the story in these letters of Boswell's exultation and anxieties at attracting Johnson to Scotland:

I am in very high spirits at present. Mr Johnson is actually come as far north as Newcastle; and I expect to have him under my roof this night. We shall set out on wednesday next on our wild expedition to the highlands and some of the Hebrides. What an intellectual feast is

before me! I shall never murmur though he should at times treat me with more roughness than ever. His roughness is an indication of the vigour of his genius...

(to Langton, 14 Aug. 1773)

on to the preparation of the *Tour to the Hebrides*:

Our friend, Boswell proposes to write the Dr's. life, for which he is possessed of a variety of curious and important Materials: and he is speedily to publish his own account of their tour to the Hebrides, upon a plan totally different from that printed by Dr Johnson, as it relates less to descriptions of the Country than to accounts of conversations in which the Dr bore always a considerable share....

(Sir William Forbes to Langton,  
21 Jan. 1785)

and the publication of the great *Life* itself:

I have printed twenty sheets of my Magnum Opus. It will be the most entertaining Book that ever appeared.

(to Langton, 9 Apr. 1790)

Professor Fifer deserves our sincere thanks for the entertainment he has provided for his readers, and for the unobtrusive scholarship with which he has dug his archeological site and illuminated its obscurities.

IAN ROSS

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