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Book Reviews

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Book Reviews



Poetry of the Stewart Court. Joan Hughes and W.S. Ramson.
Canberra: Australian National University Press. 1982. 610 pp.

Hiry hary hubbilschow
Se ye not quat is cum now?-----welth

Attention. *Poetry of the Stewart Court in Scotland* from the fifteenth century up to the reformation is now available—for the library shelf, scholars' larder or personal word-hoard—embodied as it was in 1568, when collected, selected and presented by George Bannatyne "in time of pest." His *Ballat Buke* later known as "the Bannatyne Manuscript" has for long been not easily to hand. It has only been edited twice. The old Hunterian Club edition of 1896 is a rarity. The Scottish Text Society edition, which appeared in four volumes over the years 1928 to 1933 edited by W. Tod Ritchie, was hard to come by—though it may become available again in photocopy form. It gave the contents complete plus the "draft" version but it had no gloss and only editorial introduction.

This new presentation in one splendid volume, though it cannot comprise the complete contents, gives the body of the work—some 17,000 lines of poetry. It retains Bannatyne's arrangement into five parts and within the parts his order. It also lets us note, through retaining the original numbering of items, where there has been omission. As the complete headlinks, endlinks and entitling of sections are preserved we can read the *Ballat Buke* as a concept: not only a treasury of a nation's *making* but also as "a conspectus of the five medieval and renaissance uses of poetry." As Bannatyne voices it—theology, wise moral counsel, laughter and recreation, love and "remeids of luve"—and fable.

The editors are therefore offering us not only the body but also the spirit of the *Ballat Buke* and expounding it in a substantial critical commentary. For some time it has been dawning on us that this was not merely a beautifully marshalled collection, but was an assembly of poetry with an inner meaning to display. I glimpsed the possibility when studying his Book IV "Ballatis of Luve" as the ground of many lyric texts for art-song of the Scottish courts; but an unforetold depth of meaning and eloquence of communication in this repertory ordered as it is, has been revealed by the present editors, Joan Hughes and William Ramson. Their introduction, nine absorbing chapters long, roughly one quarter of the whole volume, expounds Bannatyne's *sens* in his presentation of his chosen *matière*: this is shown not only in large but in detail, such as the choice of a key poem for each section. The points they make give us that pleasant shock of recognition and assent—"delight."

The critical appraisal is full. (Almost one wishes they had shown us the way but left some of the working-out for us to do!) Their evaluation is fair. Among many masterpieces some poems of lesser import or interest to us now are given in their places, as found significant by Bannatyne in his age. There is very little for a reviewer to add. Perhaps in the discussion of one keytext, Douglas's Tenth Prologue for his *Eneados*, they have missed the presence of the Athanasian Creed, in thought and in shape of thinking about the Trinity. Or, where they note in a lyric a technical virtuosity in patterning of internal rhyme, it may be less an individual's initiative and more a bravado usual in Scots *making*, a lesson well learned from *les rhétoriqueurs* now blended with an old facility from native alliterative poetry.

We are grateful for this gifted exposition of the poetry of Scotland's past as valued by George Bannatyne—as also for the editors' skillfull glossing of hard words *on the page*. But now that we can *see* what George Bannatyne was about there arises a new need to *see* Bannatyne's *Ballat Buke* in terms of its parallels elsewhere, collections like or unlike, in and furth of Scotland. The editors look as far as England and regard *Tottel's Miscellany* as not in the running, by its declared nature. That goes for other anthologies picked at will and bunched at whim. France had produced and printed by 1501 *Le Jardin de Plaisance* (a copy of which was in Queen Mary of Scotland's library). This has great variety and some skill in arrangement. But in France by Bannatyne's time there were volumes in print of poems by the individual author. In Germany nothing of the kind; their great collections of medieval times had been of lyrics. In Denmark Bannatyne's contemporaries were amassing their wonderful collections in manuscript—but they were courtiers of either sex and their collections were of ballads . . . for in these lay the treasury of their earlier poetic *matière*—heroic, narrative, humorous, amorous or merry in concern. This tentative and amateur overview, then, points up the unique aim and achievement of Bannatyne's collecting.

If we look within Scotland there are indeed manuscript compilations of court poetry: the great book of Sir Richard Maitland, whose own life in court circles spans four reigns, James IV to James VI, and his daughter's collection, too. Perhaps there is scope here for a new look at aim, substance and arrangement in the Maitland Manuscripts and an assessment of political and poetic values implied there, compared to those in the Bannatyne manuscript.

We have been admirably shown by these two scholar-editors what his *Ballat Buke* was to George Bannatyne. But—to move from *sic* to *non*, what was the Bannatyne Manuscript *not*? What was omitted from its contents—or already lost or destroyed and never available to be chosen? In his favored mode of presentation what linkings and affinities obtaining formerly, what schemes of values were non-operative? No historical order of composition, or grouping deliberately by author . . . well, of course not. Also absent, and understandably is ordering by sequence in cosmic patter of seasonal or liturgical year—though the former is traceable in the Prologues to *Eneados* and the latter

in *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis*. Looking upon that picture and on this, there is a complete absence from Bannatyne of the great lyric mode of *a lo divino* the spiritual parody of secular love-song, praise or appeal to madonna or to Madonna in the same words, or the love-song to "Christ, the heavenly leman" . . . straight or in parody, that comes in *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis* ("Alace thet same sueit face"). In this lies an older "remeid of luve" earthly or false than those brought forward by Bannatyne in his Book IV. We ponder on "Ballatis of Theologie" where "Devocioun" would have stood in past. Among the fables (stories of moral import) there is nothing of heroic narrative, no Ballads as we now understand the word, though the tale of Johnie Armstrong was widely known and treated of pride, avarice, grace and bad faith in king and subject. Perhaps the ambience was unacceptable though we know ballads were valued in courtly circles—witness James V and "Greysteill." Among the fables there is likewise no trace of "the tales of saints in glory, both the common and proper story," that Dunbar assures us he had written.

We know that strong-handed editorial policy, indeed censorship, has been exercised by Bannatyne or sometimes by those who had handled the texts before him. And of course he had to think of his readers. The absence of Ballatis of our Lady found elsewhere has been noted, as has the excision of Marian elements from a lyric, the protestantising of "the dregy and the bede" to "psalm and testament." But how powerfully protestant his whole conception was is now made abundantly clear in what he has done and what he has failed to do—the latter by his discreet choice for his age, his purpose and his own conscience maybe. But when in the same decade Thomas Wode set out on his grand rescue and assembly of Scottish part-song sacred and some secular, he determined to save the glories of polyphony from Scotland's past "lest they perish alluterlie"—perish not from peril of the pest but by the protestant judgment and choice, the Kirk's determined insistence on the plain in worship.

To see all round George Bannatyne's volume we should have in mind the older view of theology, wisdom, jest, love and story as it was to *them* under King James IV—who did penance for blood-guilt, who was not always perhaps of wise counsel, who relished jest, who favored love rather than its remeid (but who made eternal amends for Margaret Drummond) and honored the

saints by frequenting their distant shrines. Some of this ancient color "begaried in gules and vert, azure and or" is in the new volume magnificently rendered in the endpapers—the King with St. James and St. Andrew, the Queen kneeling before the Virgin and Child. As displayed in the *Ballat Buke* itself these ancient colors are diminished: the palette is firmly of 1568.

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J.P. Vijn. *Carlyle and Jean Paul: Their Spiritual Optics*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Co. 1982. xii + 284 pp. Utrecht Publications in General and Comparative Literature, vol. 18.

In a work of painstaking, and at times painful, scholarship J.P. Vijn has set out to deal with some large issues in the thought of Thomas Carlyle and Jean Paul. His stated aim is to provide a correct interpretation of Carlyle's religious position and, as a corollary to it, a correct interpretation of the relation of that position to Jean Paul's. Along the way he also aims to rectify what he sees as errors and mistakes of his scholarly predecessors who have treated these matters. But by an inversion occasioned by his own technique, Vijn's incidental aim has devoured his principal one. One comes away from this study with a strong sense of how wrong, in Vijn's eyes, everybody else has been but with only a weak notion of what it was that Carlyle believed and what Carlyle and Jean Paul did or did not believe jointly.

Charity dictates that the reviewer not follow Vijn's procedure but instead seek to separate Vijn's wheat and chaff and deal with them individually. The wheat first. This concerns above all Carlyle's religious position. The involvement with Jean Paul's "Rede des todten Christus vom Weltgebäude herab, dass kein Gott sei" ("Speech of the dead Christ from the universe that there is no God"; hereafter referred to as the "Rede"). This extraordinary piece first appeared in 1796 in Jean Paul's *Blumen-Frucht- und Dornenstücke* ("Flower, Fruit, and Thorn Pieces"), and Carlyle first encountered it in 1817 in reading Mme de Staël's *De l'Allemagne* (1813) where it is called a "songe," or dream. In 1827 Carlyle provided an English translation of it,

calling it a "Dream," in an essay on Jean Paul, and he echoed the "Rede" frequently in his public and private writing, including of course *Sartor Resartus*. Probably the best known such passage in *Sartor* occurs at the end of the chapter "Romance": "Why, then—'thick curtains of Night rushed over his soul, as rose the immeasurable Crash of Doom; and through the ruins as of a shivered Universe was he falling, falling, towards the Abyss."

Commentators have often equated Carlyle's views, especially in *Sartor*, with those of Jean Paul, especially in the "Rede." The prevailing interpretation has been that both writers were talking about the experience of personal despair or loss of faith, and that both returned from the experience with a new belief in God. Vijn seeks to disengage this equation, to distance Carlyle's views from Jean Paul's, and to reinterpret Jean Paul's position in the "Rede." Vijn argues that Jean Paul did not despair, that his so-called "dream vision," the "Rede," is not a dream at all but a "Vernichtungsvision," or vision of annihilation (a somewhat subtle and overdrawn distinction perhaps), and that Jean Paul retained through it and through all a firm belief in God. Carlyle on the other hand, says Vijn, lost his faith and any belief in an immanent divine being; in *Sartor Resartus* Carlyle recounts rather an experience by which he came to a conviction of an "ordering principle in the Unknown Deep of Nature itself" (this latter being Vijn's final summary statement of Carlyle's religious view).

Such, as this reader extracts it, is Vijn's central point and the ostensible reason that he wrote this work. It is certainly a defensible position, if not so irrefutable a one as Vijn claims. Nor, as regards Carlyle, is it so distinctly Vijn's own. Many modern commentators have argued against the thesis of Carlyle as theist and have seen him as everything from a lukewarm atheist to a proto-Marxist, to say nothing of the surviving suspicion, still current in Britain, that he somehow caused both world wars. Still, Vijn can reasonably claim that this view of Carlyle as theist is widespread. Such a view, he thinks, calls for his fierce scalpel for proper excision. What Vijn does not seem to realize is that no amount of citation and reference can finally settle a matter like this. When a critic like René Wellek (or the present writer) calls Carlyle a theist, he is talking about the overall effect of Carlyle's writings and utterances. Vijn appears to think that if he can find a letter or statement from Carlyle

saying, or implying, that he lost his faith that one suddenly has a Q.E.D. But there are letters and letters; and statements and statements; and there are, finally, works and works. The real question is what kind of reading you give to these thirty volumes, or to any one of them. In other words, it is a matter of interpretation, and Vijn is as much engaged in interpretation as Wellek or any other reader of Carlyle, though Vijn seeks to make it appear that he is dealing solely with fact. Vijn's narrow reading may serve to continue the debate on the vexed case of Carlyle's theism, but it will not settle it. Moreover, dragging in Jung, as Vijn does, as a parallel with Carlyle is little more than a red herring. Nevertheless, we can agree that Vijn has entered the lists and made an arguable case for Carlyle as something other than a theist, even if it remains unclear what that something other is.

Vijn's case regarding Jean Paul's "Rede" is somewhat more secure, though here too a good deal rests finally on interpretation rather than on any verifiable fact. At least the interpretation of Jean Paul is not clouded by Jungian superimposition or other extraneous issues. Vijn's argument is that Jean Paul in the "Rede" is positing the horror of a world without God, not the horror of individual loss of faith. This is a persuasive argument. Against it, however, one could raise the objection that to posit a universe without God is, at least by implication, to posit a universe in which one *must* lose one's faith. To use Christ as the bearer of the tidings that there is no God, as Jean Paul does, contributes an irony and depth to the vision of which Vijn seems oblivious. But the main argument that Jean Paul is concerned more with annihilation and with what would happen to the universe were there no God is a strong one. However, to proceed then to argue that Carlyle has no such concern in "The Everlasting No" is to strain credulity. Vijn writes that "the image of the 'Steam-engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference, to grind me limb from limb' [refers] not to death and fear of annihilation, but to the universe turned into a machine, in which man has lost his sense of inner freedom." Inner freedom, and outer freedom, would certainly be lost, when one is ground limb from limb, for one would after all be annihilated!

As for the chaff, there's a God's plenty of that here, more than any wind can drive away. Too often it smothers the wheat, making for the obscurity of the main points mentioned earlier;

for Vijn seems more concerned with "correcting" other scholars than with making his own central points. These corrections range from matters of dating and citation, editions used, accuracy of transmission (at one point he berates a French scholar for failure to reprint the correct *spacing* of a word), to more substantive matters of interpretation and glossing. Not only is all of this more prominent than any other feature of Vijn's study, it is frequently delivered in a reproving, schoolmasterish manner and at times even in a tone that smacks of heresy hunting. Thus, an air of *odium scholasticum* hangs over the entire study, rendering uncongenial the reading of Vijn's consequential criticisms along with his niggling ones.

That there are consequential criticisms, corrections, and addenda is undeniable. That they are presented so as to offend and annoy is also undeniable. Worse yet, they are too rarely shown to have a meaningful connection with Vijn's main points. Rather than take up here all of Vijn's charges, I give one example, an example involving dating, a subject that greatly occupies Vijn's attention.

Vijn has devoted much time and effort to the matter of dating the moment of Carlyle's Leith Walk experience that became celebrated in its fictionalized form as Teufelsdröckh's "Spiritual Newbirth" in *Sartor*. Informed opinion has long held that it occurred in the summer of 1821 or 1822, and many authorities, following Alexander Carlyle, have inclined towards 1822. Vijn develops a careful case for the event's having occurred in 1821, specifically "between 6 June and 16 July 1821, most likely (considering the weather conditions circa 6 June and the fact that, by 19 July, [Carlyle] is teaching again) somewhere in the middle of that period." But, in order to arrive at this conclusion, Vijn not only sifts and weighs all the evidence, as indeed he should, but he also wags the finger of reproach at all those who have arrived at a different conclusion, somehow implying that they did so out of malice as well as stupidity. The present writer comes off fairly lightly in this episode (not so in others that Vijn takes up), but even here Vijn is so eager to find villains that he manages to misrepresent my views as to the dating of the incident by saying that I, along with Carlisle Moore, cite both dates as possible, but that Moore and I proceed "on the hypothesis of 1822." In fact, in "*Sartor*" *Called "Resartus"* I mention the Leith Walk incident four times, in three

of which I speak of it as occurring in "1821 or 1822," and in one only do I assume 1822 and that for purposes of taking the latest possible date in order to calculate the time Carlyle spent pondering the ideas that the experience generated. But even as this explanation illustrates, one sees the effects of Vijn's caviling: the main point gets lost in the scurrying to place blame. What is, after all, the importance of the difference between 1821 and 1822? Vijn never really tells us, although his ostensible point is to ascertain the *character* of the experience in order to understand what Carlyle came to hold as true. It may well be that a correct dating would help in such an endeavor, but Vijn never tells us how. Further, Vijn believes that the experience cannot be called "mystical" in any way. But he never explains why it would be more or less mystical if it occurred in one year rather than the other. Nor does he do a very convincing job of casting out mysticism and conversion from the Leith Walk experience and its aftermath. In this, as in so many other matters, Vijn appears to have exhausted his energies on demolishing those who hold a different view and then to have had very little left for making his own point.

On other matters of factual detail Vijn proceeds by concentrating on the errors of others rather than by letting his own diligent study of the evidence speak for itself. No one is spared, from the late Victorian commentators to the editors of the Duke-Edinburgh edition of the letters. As with his principal interpretive points, even Vijn's factual ones run the risk of being lost in the universal cloud of disapprobation of the work of others, work, it is fair to say, that made possible Vijn's own contribution. Where would any of us be without Froude and Alexander Carlyle or the many richly annotated editions of *Sartor*? Where would Vijn be without the Duke-Edinburgh letters to draw on for dates? Where, I venture to say, would Vijn be without my and others' work on the allusions in *Sartor* or the connections between Carlyle and Jean Paul?

Finally, in a work so concerned with precision and accuracy, any reader is bound to marvel that Vijn nowhere explains what he means by the central term of his study—"spiritual optics." He seems to think that this is an established and universally understood term rather than a curious Carlylean coinage, if indeed it is that. Typically Vijn points out that Froude calls a late and unfinished Carlyle essay by that name but that the

manuscript was designated by an unknown editor as "Autograph Manuscript on Creeds." Why has Vijn not pursued this hare but instead adopted Foude's term as though it had widespread currency and denoted a commonly understood concept? Why has Vijn not clarified at least his own use of the term?

There are some clear-sighted passages in this study, but there is also a great deal of clouded vision in Vijn's literary optics.

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Scotland and the Lowland Tongue. Studies in the language and literature of Lowland Scotland, in honor of David D. Murison. Ed. J. Derrick McClure. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press. 1983. xix + 231 pp.

A long time ago, when the present reviewer, licensed to teach English in Swiss schools, arrived at Glasgow Central Station, he was both astonished and ashamed that he could not understand the speech of the citizens. Either his certificate was invalid or the idiom he was listening to was not English. Little by little he came to realize that his experience was but a tiny reflection of the intricate language problem in Lowland Scotland, which does not only interest linguists but also thoroughly affects literature as well as everyday life.

It is appropriate that this problem should be central to the Festschrift published by friends and fellow-linguists in honor of the distinguished Scottish linguist, David D. Murison, the subtitle announcing the eleven contributions as *Studies in the language and literature of Lowland Scotland*. For scholars it is natural to base their linguistic findings on written texts, preferably on literary ones. However, two articles focus on the one category of literature which is made up of direct speech and increasingly tends to imitate everyday conversation, on drama.

Edwin Morgan ("Glasgow Speech in Recent Scottish Literature") objects to the notion still current even among Scottish linguists that the idiom spoken in Glasgow is "impoverished and bastardised Scots" (p. 195). Such disparagement seems to be linked with the odd fact that the Introduction to the *SND* ignored Glasgow speech. Even within

the past fifty years urban dialects throughout the English-speaking world have been slow to attract the linguists' attention. Now Morgan can present evidence that Glaswegian Scots is being studied and also used as a medium for serious writing. In stories the dichotomy characteristic of the language situation is often reflected in the disjunction between standard-English narrative and Glaswegian dialogue. The speech of certain characters climbing the social ladder may be modified, characters who are likely to discard the grossest features of the local idiom. So dichotomy is giving way to a cline, with standard English at one end and vulgar urban dialect spiced with slang at the other end. The author, in passing, hints at the crucial question of whether there is a third variety available, "a modern generalised literary Scots, as against a naturalistic locally-based Scots" (p. 196—alternatively named "mainstream Scots" in A.J. Aitken's Foreword); this question is bound to percolate through most of the articles. In the Glasgow plays—a respectable list culminating in the seventies—dialogue usually moves along the cline mentioned, an additional obstacle being that an attempt at exact phonetic spelling might shy off prospective readers while the spectators might or might not understand or enjoy the idiolect of the actors. Such limitation in range and effect is, of course, the innate handicap of any literature written in a locally-based idiom. In Scotland, moreover, such an idiom has to make headway against a prejudice which, especially on stage, associates the local dialect with music-hall joking, generally with low taste or with nostalgic quaintness. Glasgow writers of plays, stories, or poems, therefore, endeavor to win recognition not only for their idiom, but also for the people's right to express their vital concerns in it. "If you don't treat language seriously, you don't treat people seriously" is a quotation from within the article (p. 206).

The three playwrights representing "Mid-Twentieth Century Drama in Lowland Scots," R. McLellan, A. Reid, and R. Kemp, are accorded by the author of this contribution, the late John T. Low, the status of "classics of the Scottish theatre" (p. 170). They cover a wide range of subjects, Scottish history of the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, Border legend and folklore, and two adaptations of Molière's comedies to a Scots locale and personnel. All three playwrights are judged to be "successful in using the comic colloquial form" though they also "in varying

degrees explore the serious . . . possibilities of the language" (p. 192). This shade of difference betrays limitations in the mode; limitations in range are highlighted by the deplorable but significant fact that four out of the six classics examined are not available in print as yet.

Dialogue in some Scottish novels is the material for the article "Scots in Dialogue: Some uses and implications," by the editor, J. Derrick McClure. This is how he embeds his topic: "The constantly changing sociolinguistic situation in Scotland, the confused and ambivalent attitudes of the Scottish populace towards Scots, the strange elusiveness even of the concept of Scots, make the choice of Scots or English as a language of dialogue a matter of much greater complexity than is at first apparent" (p. 129). This concise analysis cannot hide the author's indignation at the half-hearted support given him in his fight for Scots as an autonomous national language. Probing the prospects for its development is, I take it, the major "implication" of his investigations, which are focused mainly on six specimen novels, each mirroring its author's attitude to the linguistic varieties chosen and varied in distribution within the fictional framework (the term "variety" is mine, not McClure's). He rejects the vacuum-packed, pure local dialect used in J.M. Barrie's *A Window in Thrums*, which belies the socio-linguistic premises of real Lowland Scotland, with the distinctions conditioned by age, education, status, attitude and situation. One could, in a way, recall the quotation about the congruence of people's lives and their language which ought to be manifest even in the fictional characters. In this respect McClure finds much to praise in W. Alexander's *Johnny Gibb of Gushetneuk* and in R.L. Stevenson's *Weir of Hermiston* because here the language fits the speaker. Referring to the present-day Scotland the author notes the paradoxical situation that whereas for certain genres in writing "Scots and English are equally acceptable and viable alternatives" (p. 130), this does not hold good for spoken Scots as yet. There may be some hope implied that the autonomous national language in either medium as it was used—in McClure's opinion—at the time before the Geneva Bible will yet be revived.

What actually happened on the linguistic plane during the Reformation is the object of Mairi Robinson's research, presented as "Language Choice in the Reformation: The Scots Confession of 1560." Her thorough comparison of the various

versions (MSS and printed material) of this text (however momentous it may be for theologians) results for linguists in the sobering conclusion that the reformers did not have "any particular love of English for its own sake or any positive antagonism to Scots" (p. 72). They did not innovate but followed the contemporary trend in Scotland of regarding written English as "our commoun tounge" (p. 60), which, however, left a generous option for Scots pronunciations when read aloud. This disparity between the media of speech and writing is reflected on the one hand in the fact that spelling and phonology diverge most widely, on the other hand in the preference given by printers for forms common to both English and Scots, a kind of common denominator.

I should add that this is a parallel to what happened about the same time in the German-speaking countries: printers in Northern Germany and in Switzerland abandoned their local idioms in favor of the written standard evolved in the central parts of Germany without any immediate consequence for the spoken medium in the respective regions. (Cf. H. Meier, "Scots is not alone: The Swiss and Low German analogues," in *Bards and Makars*, [Glasgow, 1977], pp. 201-213). The subsequent divergence from the sociolinguistic situation in Scotland is due to the crucial fact that in German-speaking Switzerland all the classes have stuck to using their local dialects as their oral medium in most speech situations. There is a case of straightforward diglossia. Di-glossia, not a cline nor a triple choice: there is no such thing as *the* Swiss-German dialect, which might correspond to "mainstream Scots." If there is a parallel within the German-speaking language community to the linguistic situation in Scotland it might be found in Austria. There, the upper and middle classes speak Standard German as their usual oral medium, but with an unmistakable "Austrian accent," a peculiar pronunciation and a few peculiar items of vocabulary; below this level, dependent on situational as well as on social factors and moving on a cline rather than separated in clear diglossia, local dialects are spoken, which differ considerably between Vienna in the east and the Vorarlberg in the west.

The potential alternatives in the present unsettled language situation in Lowland Scotland seem to me the main preoccupation of most contributors whether they face it squarely or look for elucidation in the past. I have focused on the former group,

being fully aware of the inevitable unfairness inherent in the review of any collection of articles. The choice is bound to be arbitrary and does not comprise any value judgment. The remainder of the contributions still fit the subtitle, although due to the natural diversity of interests no full convergence can be attained, of course.

Thus M.P. McDiarmid's inspired study "The 'Gododdin' and Other Heroic Poems of Scotland" sets out to prove the continuity in Lowland Scotland of the heroic spirit, with all the elation and all the sadness evoked, regardless of the different languages used to express it. His highly personal re-interpretation and location of the "Gododdin" can surely not be disregarded by further researchers on "Europe's earliest extant heroic poem in a vernacular tongue" (p. 2). John McQueen presents "The Biography of Alexander Scott and the Authorship of 'Lo, quhat it is to lufe'" as a rejoinder to Denton Fox's scepticism concerning McQueen's reconstruction of Scott's biography and his attribution to Scott instead of to Wyatt of the song quoted in the title.

Henceforth the complementary fields of literature and linguistics in the various ways in which emphasis is laid upon them will direct our brief mention of the other articles. A surprising perspective can be opened on Scottish literature from such an apparently specialist linguistic field as onomastics if handled by the expert: W.F.H. Nicolaisen has discovered "An Onomastic Vernacular in Scottish Literature." He demonstrates the juxtaposition of a web of personal and of place-names of the standard English stamp with "the secondary, alternative, supplementary, vernacular map . . . linguistically conceived with Scots or Scottish English in mind" (p. 218) in Scottish fiction, mainly in Walter Scott and Compton Mackenzie. Even with respect to names, people and the places where they live and move are granted their linguistic homes.

"An Awkward Squad: Some Scots Poets from Stevenson to Spence," by Kenneth Buthlay, refers to the neglected poets preceding the revival of the twentieth century. Their poetic endeavors to explore the potential of local Scots dialects in either contemporary or older form were rejected by Hugh McDiarmid in favor of his new Scots tongue, a promise for the future which has failed to materialize.

A long span of time, of ballad-tradition, is covered in

Hamish Henderson's "At the Foot o' yon Excellin' Brae': The Language of Scots Folksong." He establishes and exemplifies the linguistic register of "ballad-Scots" oscillating on the cline between more English and more Scots, the Scots' side drawing its vigor from the non-literate heritage embedded in formulaic conventions. This core was apt to be diluted, especially in the nineteenth century, by a flood of broadsides and chapbooks printed in the South, but did put up some dour resistance, backed up as it was by the prestige won by Scottish vernacular poetry in the eighteenth century.

This treasure of poetry is the object of "The Vernacular Revival and the Poetic Thrill: A Hedonist Approach," by Thomas Crawford. The title obliquely hints at the author's plea that even a scholar should still be allowed to sincerely enjoy poetry. More than one reader will find pleasure in his guidance when he listens carefully to the lilt, to the specific vocabulary as well as to the interplay between syntax and rhythm of a few well-chosen passages. It is obvious that the linguistic situation in Lowland Scotland is not Crawford's main concern here. Let me, however, quote one observation of his: "Interaction between the vernacular system and the English and Scots-English can produce effects ranging from the crudely parodic to the sublime" (p. 87).

Working backward in time from the revivals of poetry in the twentieth and eighteenth centuries we reach the epoch when it flourished on its own: "The Language of Older Scots Poetry," by A.J. Aitken. It would be impossible to find fault with the vast material collected by the prime expert in this field, the numerous examples exceeding by far the well-known canon. The author may yet have felt some uneasiness at the arrangement of his material as the "modes, according to criteria of theme, metre and style" (p. 19) proposed in the Introduction cannot be fitted exactly into the methods of scrutiny in the following chapters, e.g. in 3. Syntax, 4. Colours of rhetoric, 5. Unvernacular word-choice of dignified verse, etc. The characterization and the categorization of poetic registers is only too notorious a crux in the present state of stylistic studies.

A.J. Aitken has also written the *Foreword*, which creates the vivid lovable portrait of the honored addressee of the Festschrift. Murison not only finished *The Scottish National Dictionary* but himself wrote seven eighths of the ten bulky volumes, a scholarly achievement of which both he and Scotland can be most proud.

Even for a reviewer who has not the privilege of being acquainted with Murison, he comes to life through his friend's pen, firmly rooted as he is in his native Aberdeenshire, a sturdy, devoted worker on the immense wealth of the Scottish dialects. Here is a man—if I may vary a quotation mentioned before—who has treated both the people and their language seriously indeed.

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Isobel Murray and Bob Tait. *Ten Modern Scottish Novels*. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press. 1984. 243 pp.

Michael Parnell. *Eric Linklater: A Critical Biography*. London: John Murray. 1984. xv + 376 pp.

The virtues of *Ten Modern Scottish Novels*, by Murray and Tait, are numerous and important. Its title is accurately descriptive and modest. It is clear and unpretentious analytic criticism, thorough, detailed, perceptive. It is free of dogmatism, generally committed to a formalist realism, but pluralistic enough to entertain insights into the features and values of very different kinds of fiction. It honestly explains its own procedures, acknowledges its necessary limitations, recognizes alternatives to its own arguments. It is free of thesis-grinding, and of premature generalizing about its subject. Its limitations are probably inseparable from those virtues. And so, to call attention to them is not to fault the book, but rather to raise questions about the modes of criticism needed now in the study of Scottish fiction. For such a book as this has the effect of initiating reasonable and concrete conversation, and to carry this on is to engage with the critics as they wish to "engage with the texts."

The very appearance of the book testifies at last to the growth of art and significance in Scottish fiction during the past half-century. The growth has not been easy. Dominant influences in the modern Scottish Renaissance disparaged the novel as an inferior, corrupt, or alien form. Emphatic focus on poetic language and linguistic synthesis made the job of the novelist seem either impossible or peripheral. But those battles

now seem past, and Scotland can point to a number of proven, remarkable talents in prose fiction.

Serious criticism of modern Scottish fiction is still inevitably in its youth. And Murray and Tait have provided just the kind of study that is most useful at this stage. As they observe, previous criticism (excluding a few studies of individual writers) has been limited to "surveys"—or, like my own, an uneasy mixture of survey and essays. (The subtitle of mine, by the way, "Critical Survey," was not of my choosing, and I never understood what it was supposed to mean.) Murray and Tait wish to give "the considered attention to individual novels that is taken for granted in the criticism of English fiction," but in this time of theoretical debate over the functions of criticism in general, what is "taken for granted" may not be clear. Their essays move flexibly on a level of strictly "practical criticism," unconcerned with theory. But of course, the most practical critical act has its theoretical assumptions and restrictions, as we will see. Meanwhile, they profess a tolerant pluralism, a reluctance to judge, even an unwillingness to offer general summings-up. Almost every essay simply finishes without concluding—surely a deliberate decision—and the book as a whole ends with the final comments on *Lanark*. They express the hope that the sum total "would produce not only ten individual analyses but at least some pointers to cultural preoccupations in literary Scotland during the past half century." These cultural preoccupations—recurrent themes—are laid out tentatively in a useful Introduction (with little discussion of technique and almost none of language), where they tend to remain segregated from the individual essays.

Clearly one function of criticism for Murray and Tait is the canonizing of the "best work," and one cannot help but wish to know more about their rationale for selection, however cautiously they acknowledge that these ten books are only "ten of the best." They have tried to space the choices "reasonably" over the past fifty years, but their decision to speak only of books in print (controversial, if only because library copies are available) has the effect of emphasizing recent fiction: Spark (1951), Kennaway (1956), Williams (1968), Brown (1972), McIlvanney (1975), Jenkins (1979), Gray (1981), are all well post-War-Two, while Gibbon, Gunn, and MacColla belong in composition to the 1930s. But it may be worthwhile to note some of the difficult

decisions they had to make, and even useful to quarrel with a few (though such quarrels are friendly and inconclusive).

They chose to consider Gibbon's trilogy, *A Scots Quair*, as a whole, rather than surrendering to the conventional notion that *Sunset Song* is obviously superior and stands alone. Excellent decision! They chose *The Silver Darlings*, Gunn's most lastingly popular novel, as perhaps "most accessible" but also "most engrossing"—probably a sensible choice, slightly prejudicial, and certainly controversial for some Gunn devotees, for whom *The Well at the World's End* or *The Green Isle of the Great Deep* or even *The Serpent* might be preferred. They chose MacColla's highly philosophical second novel, *And the Cock Crew*, rather than the more "accessible" first, *The Albannach*, and have made an excellent case for that easily misvalued book. (Others might have omitted MacColla altogether, making room for others of the period, such as Barke, Mitchison, or Linklater). They then jump almost twenty years to Kennaway's first, *Tunes of Glory*, and commit themselves uncharacteristically to a highly enthusiastic celebration ("dazzling," "sheer power," etc.) of this book rather than *Household Ghosts*. Given the abundant critical attention already heaped on Spark's *Jean Brodie*, one might wish they had chosen one of the "non-Scottish" novels and had occasion to probe the limits of the title "Scottish," but the status of *Brodie* is certainly beyond challenge. Reasons for selecting Williams' *From Scenes Like These* are difficult to determine, and in fact this essay is least clear in judgment, for the treatment is almost wholly descriptive. On the other hand, the praise of Brown's *Greenvoe* seems a trifle strained; Brown's remarkable quality in short story and poetry leaves the issue of his achievement in the novel in some question, and one wonders if I.C. Smith might have had this place. McIlvanney's *Docherty* is chosen, for reasons not explicit, over the two impressive earlier novels. The problem of choice with Jenkins, in some respects the most impressive novelist of the past generation, they admit to be bewilderingly difficult. But having properly lamented non-availability of other titles (and here it is particularly shameful), they state the basis for choosing *Fergus Lamont*—"one of his most ambitious achievements so far . . . a book which not only ranges wide and deep with superb comic control, but pulls together all his most characteristic and lasting concerns" (p. 195). The choice is persuasive, though "superb comic control" may not be Jenkins's

most significant strength.

The essay on *Fergus* is interestingly different. Unlike most of the others, it is sustained assessment: "while we try to test and assess Jenkins, he is constantly, strenuously and subtly testing us"—and their assessment is *critical* at times. Only, I think, in the case of Gunn's *Silver Darlings* is this true elsewhere. And so we find the danger of some misunderstanding in the impression that Gunn and Jenkins, often seen (whether or not justifiably) as the two most impressive of Scottish novelists since Gibbon, are the only two who are viewed in their faults and lapses as well as their successes.

Gray's *Lanark*, finally, is chosen as it must be, if only for its recent and highly acclaimed appearance, but also as "arguably . . . fiction to have appeared in Scotland during the entire period" (p. 219). Previous writers, they believe, have engaged in "ingenious adaptation of already established fictional modes," whereas *Lanark* is "self-consciously innovative experiment with the novel as a form or genre." Whether *Lanark*, with its coordination of tragic *bildungsroman* and dystopian fantasy, is more innovative than adaptive can be argued elsewhere. But the strength of Tait and Murray's pluralism is evident in the *Lanark* essay, for what might be seen elsewhere as an over-insistence on "realism" opens here into an awareness of how modes interplay. Here, too, might have been the entré for Linklater, the book's most noteworthy omission, whose frequent and various experiments with realism-fantasy are one of his most remarkable achievements. Indeed, the mixture has so often been seen as distinctively Scottish that it might have served the book as a motif (see Spark, Gunn, the later Kennaway, for example).

Realistic-mimetic criteria mingle elsewhere in the essays with formal-aesthetic ones. The discussion of *A Scots Quair* begins from a strong rejection of the sort of allegorical reading prevalent "in the schools" in favor of a meticulous realism. But the conflict of reality and allegory is a problem *in* the novel itself. And a consistent realism, they later acknowledge, is not enough. The reader (p. 18) "masters another set of conventions"—or at least their reader does so somehow if he reads correctly. Elsewhere in the essays, "the reader" is a less ideal or normative personage, and the optional kinds of reading are confronted more tolerantly.

Their tolerance for the mastery of diverse conventions seems,

alas, most limited in the case of Gunn. Here they rightly reject the notion—perhaps unwittingly (or ironically) fostered by Gunn's biographers—that *Silver Darlings* is merely a "solid mainstream novel." (In the interests of candor, this biographer suspects some disagreement between the biographers on this point). But Gunn could not have written such a book. And one reason he refused his publisher a sequel was the sense that such a misunderstanding could trap him. (The later *Drinking Well* fits the category better, anyway.) The real problem Murray and Tait have with Gunn is clear in these words (p. 52): "Gunn is astonishingly cheery in the context of 'Modernist' company." His is the only quest-myth of the whole lot to end positively. He had to "get round" the real, unhappy historic aftermath of his story. His concluding "harmonies and reconciliations" are suspect, and he is guilty of "idealizing" his women. Affirmation and idealization, once accepted as legitimate in art, are now *a priori* flaws, and the critics allow themselves too easy an acceptance of the kind of "Modernist" biases so frustrating for Gunn over many years, just as they seem willing to repeat without reassessment the familiar prejudice against "Gunn's philosophical inclinations" (p. 46).

At any rate, only *The Silver Darlings* is considered partially in terms of its "unconvincing" aspects. Others—the realistic ones—are admired for being "convincing," while less realistic works are seen as deviating from realism for legitimate artistic ends. In *Greenvoe*, "we should not look . . . for amazing, strong, or very individual characters" (p. 153). In *From Scenes Like These*, a character can be introduced for functional reasons so long as it does not have "too many functions to fulfil" (p. 133). In *Docherty*, a character can be effectively used as a "mechanism" even though he "has always been less than a fully formed or highly individualized character" (p. 171). "Character" in *Lanark* is necessarily a very different element from "character" in *Scenes*. Such recognition of the functional and conventional elements of fiction makes for the most impressive portions of *Ten Modern Scottish Novels*. And in fact, a more consistent and dominant rhetorical approach would have been desirable. For it moves quite easily into that newer post-structuralist kind of criticism called "reader response" criticism, and examines the processes of reading fundamental to any authentic critical analysis.

The essay on *Docherty* does this. I cannot help but wish the essay on *Lanark* had done so, too. It is a lucid and persuasive

retrospective analysis, arguing for, without insisting on, a certain order of interpretive reconstruction. The assumption is that this book's (and why not every book's?) appreciation depends chiefly on hindsight, and so, Murray and Tait "read" *Lanark* in the light of Book Four. Four is placed last—the order is Three, One, Two, Four—but the order is more chronological and conventional than the format suggests. Books One and Two, the realistic novel of the unhappy, self-destructive young artist Thaw, is inset as flashback in the fantastic-dystopian story of Lanark, Thaw's posthumous alter-ego. On p. 484, the "Author" explains this to Lanark: "The Thaw narrative shows a man dying because he is bad at loving. It is enclosed by your narrative which shows civilization collapsing for the same reason." But on the previous page the "Author" has said: "I want *Lanark* to be read in one order but eventually thought of in another." The most important and interesting formal question, then, is WHY read first in another order? How does one order become transposed, in the reader's experience, into the other? The answer could only come by way of a careful process-analysis of the actual experience of reading the book, and this is not given in or by analytic reconstruction. The dynamics of reader response are only intermittently part of the method of Murray and Tait, and some may regret it.

The other general limitation becomes apparent when we return to the somewhat uncharacteristic essay on Gunn. In the case of *The Silver Darlings* (and to a lesser degree with Gibbon and MacColla), biographical reconstruction has permitted an understanding of the writer at work, his circumstances, motives, methods, dilemmas. It is too soon to expect this for most of the other novelists. But this is a necessary next stage of critical study. We need to go beyond formal-rhetorical criticism to discover what it meant to be a writer of fiction in modern Scotland, what kind of work was involved, what problems presented themselves, what cultural circumstances helped determine the production of fiction. We need, in short, the sort of insight offered by such a book as Michael Parnell's *Eric Linklater*.

Parnell's is the kind of book an earlier century would have named Genial Biography, done in the recently revived mode that Lytton Strachey described as the "method of enormous and elaborate accretion." Far from being "critical" (as the subtitle

states), it is conceived and written with an almost unqualified sympathy and affection for its subject. This kind of biographer—I happen to believe it the most valuable kind—needs humility, gusto, and exhaustive thoroughness. And with these, Parnell is amply endowed, not to mention a relaxed, readable, affable style.

He also has a near-ideal subject. However quick-tempered (especially *en famille*), Linklater was himself affable, modest, and genial. And he was a writer who provided in several volumes (three autobiographical, others partly so) a graphic, detailed, candid account of his own life and personality. He seems to have been a man of little mystery but some complexity. As Parnell presents him, he built a brash, confident, even brusque exterior to conceal a sensitive, reserved, self-doubting inner self (p. 18). He was short-tempered, crusty, but had a special gift for lasting and generous friendship (pp. 30, 189). Essentially modest, he persistently undervalued himself (p. 42), cultivated the image of a clown who could expect to fall on his face (pp. 46, 137). The façade of toper and idler hid a laborious craftsman, extraordinary in learning and in tireless experimentation, and repeatedly disappointed when reviewers and/or readers did not take his work seriously.

The mystery is not in the man but in the reputation, the evident pattern of undervaluation, the striking fact that Tait and Murray could exclude him while including a number of inferior artists. Parnell makes much of this mystery and suggests explanations, but the mystery remains. And to solve it, one probably must take a harder and more detached look than Parnell permits himself at what some readers—not all of them jaded reviewers—repeatedly saw as the limitations of his work. A close friend of mine, a fine reader, exemplifies this when he describes Linklater as an excellent craftsman with nothing important to say. And I remember well some of the sceptical comments when I included a twenty-seven-page chapter on Linklater in a 400-page "survey" of Scottish fiction, because I considered him second to none as an artist in fiction. On the other hand, Anthony Burgess is typical: "Eric Linklater, one of the finest craftsmen of the century, shamefully undervalued" (p. 318). And Evelyn Waugh, who wrote Linklater about *The Merry Muses*: "What boobies most of the reviewers are! I think they positively dislike correct syntax and a rich vocabulary and I am sure they

resent your being Scotch" (p. 312).

There may be a clue here. For Linklater himself often identified what he had to say with craft or art, and one of his favorite theses (worked out especially in relation to his vision of the Vikings) was that conduct is essentially an aesthetic matter. It is somewhat like Neil Gunn assuring us that the atom at the heart of life is delight. I happen to be persuaded by both, but epicureanism has not, I think, been taken seriously as an ethical position of late. More moralistic readers might well have felt, with the author of one of Eric's earliest school reports, "On the whole he is doing fairly well, but is handicapped by a sense of humour" (p. 16). And it is typical of Eric's self-deprecatory self-presentation that he loved to tell such stories against himself. Parnell honestly concedes that "Eric quite often contributed a fair proportion of the trivia which helped develop a public image of him as a superficial entertainer rather than the deeply serious artist he was" (p. 192). And it is arguable that the better and more frequently a prolific artist is known, the more he is identified in his books with his own public image, which may be one good reason that some writers—e.g., Spark and Jenkins—strongly resist acquiring any public image at all. Once Neil Gunn had allowed himself to acquire a public image as one with esoteric "philosophical inclinations," some readers fixed all his subsequent books with that image without even reading them.

It did not help, of course, that Linklater was "essentially a Tory," a traditionalist, a monarchist, a proud historian of military men and royal houses, critical of literary modernisms, and of course highly prolific, professional, anxiously writing to keep up with the bills. But part of the mystery may well lie in the distinctive vision of his fiction. Parnell's summary of that vision is so marvelously done as to deserve full quotation:

Having been so close to oblivion himself, and having seen so many strangers, acquaintances and dear friends succumb to what he had so narrowly escaped, he came to value life more precious than others, and to feel obliged to celebrate it, to live it more fully, to honour it more completely than people who had not known such a crisis; and in this attitude lay the seeds of the celebrant artist he was to become. At the same time he had seen by what

slender threads life is supported, how easily it may be aborted, in what filth and horror it may become embroiled; and in this experience originated the peculiar flavour of much of his art where the farcical may lead to sunny uplands of pure delight or to more grotesque or macabre imaginings where the cruel side of life almost takes precedence. (p. 26)

It produces, typically, says Parnell (pp. 196-7), a "*melange* of hilarity, wit, romance, realism, cruelty, grotesquerie, farce and verbal dexterity." But a *melange*, whatever its delights, may lack "integrity," wholeness, sometimes. And what is important now, for readers who will yet discover Linklater, is to single out first those books where *melange* becomes something more: *Men of Ness*, *Juan in America*, *Private Angelo*, *A Man Over Forty*, *Position at Noon*—any one of which deserves a place in the sequel to Murray and Tait.

Understandably, the genial biographer in Parnell resists such a selective or sifting process, and this is, I think, the only notable flaw in his admirable book. Nothing is omitted; hence, everything seems relatively important. Eric seems to have been almost incapable of saying or writing anything unwitty, unquotable; hence, the temptation to quote everything. The "wind-down" of the final years, if the biographer does not move somewhat arbitrarily toward closure, tends to become huddled or repetitious. But above all, the reader needs critical selection, prioritizing, a shape, a scale of what events and works matter most, if he is to glimpse that "figure in the carpet" (Leon Edel's image) which biography must reveal.

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Mary Ellen Brown. *Burns and Tradition*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press. 1984. xv + 176 pp.

When Alan Dent published his *Burns in His Time* in 1966, he opened his first chapter with the question: "Yet another account of the life-history of the most overwritten and overpraised poet in the whole of the world of literature?" Although one would be

reluctant to subscribe to the two superlatives in this question and to the extremeness of its claims, one might well be inclined to ask a similar, though less querulous, question almost twenty years later: "Is another book on Burns really necessary?" Let me, at the very outset of this review, assure those who may have had such a question in mind that they can lower their deprecating eyebrows and stop shrugging their despairing shoulders: We may not need many more books on Burns, but we need this one. Why?

Some of it has to do with the reasons for which books on Burns are written. David Daiches, for example, intended his *Robert Burns* (1952) to be primarily "a critical examination of his poetic achievement" and concerned himself, among other things, "with the place of Burns in the Scottish literary tradition." Thomas Crawford, on the other hand, in his *Burns: A Study of the Poems and Songs* (1960), tried to answer what he perceived to be "a real need to give [his poems] once more the praise which is their due, reinterpreting them in the light of modern revaluations of eighteenth-century poetry," and Alan Dent himself, after immediately rejecting the applicability of his initial question to his own book, sees it as "primarily an attempt to set Robert Burns in his period and to communicate the flavor and tang of that period." If the motivations behind these three studies and their avowed intentions are complementary rather than repetitious, then Mary Ellen Brown's *Burns and Tradition* adds yet another complement, both personally and professionally, contributing a folklorist's "documentation and illustration of the multiplicity of ways folklore affected Burns's art, exhibiting his debt to his own folkloric matrix and the traditional and repeated aspects of life, especially the oral artistic communications, which were part of it" (p. 3). Indeed, the original stimulus which led the author to such a searching undertaking was humble and almost accidental, her discovery of Burns as "the probable editor/source of one version of a widely known ballad, 'Still Growing,' whose history [she] was studying" (p. xiii), at the time. In a way, that initial encounter with Burns and the resulting quest for Burns, the elusive, complex, many-sided phenomenon—the creative poet, the re-creative song-writer, the assiduous bearer of tradition, the acquisitive collector, the knowledgeable artist, the sensitive but manipulative editor, the self-conscious national bard, the symbol of Scottishness—is never

absent from any of the chapters and pages of her book. It colors the questions she is asking and it shapes the answers which she finds. Her determined interrogations, her analyses and her interpretations, the very structure of her presentation rely on and benefit from that first seedling act, that seminal confrontation with the puzzling multiformity, the composite blend of the man who was Robert Burns. The folklorist is here aware of more than the usual clash or integration of creativity and tradition, for each poem, each song, each text, each melody demands a different explanation as to the role Burns played in its honing. He was shaped by tradition, shaped it, created it, became part of tradition himself. The puzzle is hardly ever fully unraveled; even the most intense desire to clarify does not always lead to indisputable clarity.

This does not mean that some of the strands are not fairly clear and discernible. For the pre-Edinburgh (pre-1786) period, Brown's probings over and over produce assessments such as these: "Burns both represented and transcended his class" (p. 1); "He was a product of what had gone before and what was and his artistry often lay in uniquely blending, juxtaposing, or representing this" (p. 2); "His use of proverbs and sayings from oral tradition, phrases from traditional songs, not to mention the whole stanzas and refrains which provided the basic material for many of his songs suggests a compositional technique akin to oral formulaic composition . . . disregard for a definitive text links Burns to the world of traditional oral composition" (p. 5); "Artistically Burns here [in *The Cotter's Saturday Night*] combines his knowledge of English and Scottish literary traditions; but far more important, he limns the traditional matrix . . ." (p. 17); "Burns relied heavily on aspects of his traditional culture, on folklore, for the general content, the language and, to some extent, the structure of his poetry and songs" (p. 23); "Burns . . . raised actuality to artistry" (p. 24); "Burns' debts to his own milieu are many and varied—content and form, language and context or situation" (p. 26); and so on.

From 1786 on, Burns's collection, use and imitation of traditional songs becomes more conscious. The voice of Burns is more and more regarded as the voice of Scotland. The Burns of the *Kilmarnock Edition* becomes the Burns of *The Scots Musical Museum* (and of the *Merry Muses*). The collector and self-collector becomes, in addition, the annotator and commentator.

But, "as a poet, he probably could not help touching up here and there in what he provided, much as he did with his own poems and songs, many of which went through successive editions, multiple recreations, bearing some relationship with the oral recreative process" (p. 34). In fact, he was so much in tune with, so sensitive to, "the traditional aesthetic sensibilities that some of his own compositions and editions were picked up and transmitted orally, in chapbooks, and in published editions, re-entering the popular musical repertoire from which their inspiration had sprung" (p. 34). This is Brown's extended and more substantial encounter with the Burns of "Still Growing." In her quest for an individual's part in the production of particular items, she, like Burns in his editing, is "aware of the inherent problems involved in discovering who an author was, recognising the unpredictable nature of oral and popular channels of transmission" (p. 37). She also notes that Burns, like many a folklorist later, is concerned with variation, localization, routes of dissemination and place of origin of the songs he has collected and annotated, even if his editing methods, somewhat to our modern chagrin, reflect the practices of his time.

While the first three chapters of Mary Ellen Brown's book are well described by the title, *Burns and Tradition*, the remaining four are perhaps better bracketed with the help of a title such as *Tradition and Burns*, for they give a succinct account of how Burns himself has been used by tradition, both through his songs and poems and as a person, and how, paradoxically, his voice has frequently become anonymous though hardly ever nameless. The three major facets of this process are: (1) The acceptance or re-acceptance of many of his poems and songs, especially the latter, into oral tradition and their consequent loss of any definitive fixity of form of exact verbal inviolability, of invariable wedding of one text and one tune, despite the strenuous efforts of many Burns enthusiasts. (2) His idealized role as a central figure in legendary tradition which turns him, even as an exciseman, into a benevolent hero or, in a less personal sense, endows "him with the qualities and traits of the ideal Scot" (p. 83). The personal experience stories, legends, jokes and anecdotes about him attract motifs and elements from elsewhere and from the lives of, or stories about, other folk-heroes, in the process of constructing a patchwork quilt of a narrative oral biography. Thus, Burns sometimes

becomes less than he really was but usually more, much more. (3) The inevitable sequel or concomitant of this legendary hero-building, i.e. the public, and later institutionalized, adulation of "Scotland's national bard," from the very first Burns Club, founded in Greenock in 1801, only five years after his death, via the national and international frenzy of the commemoration of the centenary of his birth in 1859, to the ubiquitous Burns Night or Burns Supper celebrated by Scots the world over, on or near January 25—Burns elevated (?), ritualized into a calendar custom, Burns immortalized as both "a representative of every man" and simultaneously as "the embodiment and symbol of the nation" (p. 125).

When I say that this second half of Brown's book is even better than the first, I have no intention of denigrating the first three chapters which are excellent enough to look after themselves. What I like about the second half is the opportunity it, even more than the first, affords the folklorist Mary Ellen Brown to apply her considerable skills and expertise to the investigation of typically folk-cultural phenomena, from the variation in repetition of Burns songs in oral transmission and performance, via the legend-forming narratives about the man, to the complicated, yet fundamentally highly regularized folkloric event which, even more than St. Andrew's Day, has become the focal and vocal rite of Scottishness. Yes, *Burns and Tradition* (including *Tradition and Burns*) is a necessary book, and not only Burns lovers and folklorists should be grateful for it. It does not just fill the "gap" of the cliché phrase, it adds an essential dimension to Burns studies almost two hundred years after Clarinda.

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Frederick A. Pottle. *Pride and Negligence: The History of the Boswell Papers*. New York, Toronto, London: McGraw-Hill. 1982. xiv + 290 pp.

The story that Professor Pottle tells stretches from 1776, when James Boswell executed the first of several legal documents that would control the disposition of his private papers after death, to

79, when the end of the publication of the trade edition of the private Papers of James Boswell came at last into view. The figure who dominates much of the book is the energetic, colorful, and histrionic Lieutenant-Colonel Ralph Heyward Isham, and Professor Pottle's narrative, as he notes, is "principally designed to show Isham's gradual reassembling of Boswell's scattered archives" (p. 188).

That narrative has its dramatic episodes. Boswell's invaluable journal (including the London Journal of 1762-1763 and the Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides), correspondence, proofs, and other papers are the prizes in a treasure hunt including Malahide Castle, Fettercairn House, an ebony cabinet, a croquet-box, a stable loft. Indeed, such drama seems part of Boswell's legacy. More than three quarters of a century before Isham came on the scene, a significant portion of Boswell's correspondence with his friend William Johnson Temple was discovered by one Major Stone of the East India Company Service. Stone, Pottle reports, "went into the shop of a Madame Noël in Boulogne and received his purchase wrapped in an English letter bearing the signature of James Boswell. He asked if there were any more of the same kind and was assured that there were; Madame Noël had bought them in a bundle with others from a hawker of paper and knew nothing of their history" (p. 54).

Boswell's papers were not simply misplaced. Some of them were also, at various times, protected by a family policy of secrecy (Boswell's sexual exploits and his deferential attitude to Johnson seemed to have troubled his descendants about equally); thought to be destroyed; withheld from publication by editors who found the journal morally repellent and therefore unpublishable; tied up in complicated legal decisions; and kept secret for five years as a result of a "conflict of loyalty," as Pottle charitably terms it, that must be read about to be believed (Chapter X, "Operation Hush"). The labors of collection, scholarship, fund-raising, and sheer canny doggedness required to present these papers to the world, in a form that will stand as one of the finest editorial achievements of our century, is little short of herculean.

The reader who looks past the dramatic discoveries and tangled personal relations in this account will find that its heroes of patience and dedication, tireless in their work and unflinching in their accuracy, are Frederick A. Pottle and Marion S. Pottle.

Without their vision, persistence, care, and selfless. this must be deduced from Professor Pottle's modest (learned from other sources), eighteenth-century study time would have been strikingly poorer than they. Along with the publication of the final volumes of the journal, the recent appearance of the second volume biography of James Boswell (by Professor Frank Brady; the was by Professor Pottle) will, I venture to predict, inaugurate a new spate of critical and historical studies of Boswell's writings, disclosing to us a literary terrain even more interesting and significant than the one we have come to know since readers first "discovered" Boswell with the publication of the *London Journal, 1762-1763*, in 1950.

What does a massive editorial undertaking like the Yale Editions require? While Professor Pottle, unlike Boswell, is not particularly lavish in his self-revelation, *Pride and Negligence* nevertheless offers a number of clues about the workings of a first-rate scholarly intelligence. The first requirement is a passion for completeness that makes even a lucky find also the occasion to speculate on what may still be lost. Speaking of "uncatalogued or only partially specified manuscripts," Pottle writes: "With them, our joy at the recovery of indubitable strays must always be mixed with the fear that what has reappeared is less than what disappeared, that more remains to seek than we like to think" (p. 122). The passion for completeness applies to the accumulation of historical data as well as to the gathering of manuscripts. How, asks Pottle, did the Rev. Charles Rogers come to believe (wrongly) that Boswell's manuscripts were destroyed? Perhaps William or Alexander Boswell inferred as much from a note of Edmond Malone's and passed their belief on to Elizabeth (Boswell) Williams, who told Rogers. No one knows for sure. And, Pottle adds, "It really does not much matter except to those who like to fill in, even if by pure speculation, the links which connect one bit of historical evidence with another" (p. 59).

But recovery, filling in, the speculative establishment of connecting links—these are only part of the story. What has been recovered must also be presented. As Professor Pottle remarks in a different connection, "Nobody can give anything directly to the world; there must exist trained intermediaries" (p. 72). To present an author's text to the reading public, especially an

author deeply immersed in the daily particularity of two centuries ago, is to render that text not simply available but readable, knowable. Boswell longed for a way to deliver Johnson unmediated to readers of the *Life*, but the expert editor must be a magician of mediacy, bringing nearer to us what is distant without eroding its essential otherness. The Yale Boswell Editions have succeeded admirably in that task, and Professor Pottle's explanation of various editorial decisions sheds light on its complexity and importance.

Both of these procedures, recovering manuscripts and presenting them in edited form to a reading public, are necessarily governed by a fantasy of completeness—acquiring *all* of the manuscripts, annotating *every* potential obscurity. The epithet "definitive," scattered so liberally by reviewers of editions, biographies, and histories, expresses the two sides of that fantasy: that absolute thoroughness and accuracy are attainable, and that if they are attained this particular task will never need to be undertaken again.

In Professor Pottle's book, however, this fantasy of what might be called "terminal success" is countered by a powerful—and ungrudging—awareness of the surprises of time and the necessary incompleteness of individual human labors. The first sentence of the book's prologue establishes that awareness: "The story of the recovery of the Boswell papers is interesting enough to be told in detail and important enough to be subjected to periodic revision" (p. 1). The final sentence of the book looks equally toward the future. "By the time these volumes appear [the projected twelfth and thirteenth volumes of Boswell's journal], we shall undoubtedly have announced one or two volumes more of the research edition of the correspondence, and perhaps also one of the research edition of the journal" (p. 225). No closure, no ringing finality, just the sense that there will be more accomplished, and more to do, at some future date. Indeed, *Pride and Negligence* itself, though Professor Pottle hopes it will "be found readable as a book in its own right," serves a purpose beyond its own: to introduce Mrs. Pottle's comprehensive *Catalogue of the Papers of James Boswell at Yale University*.

If we look backward rather than forward, we find the same combination of control and responsiveness, of need for a constraining plan and openness to contingency. Indeed, the

complicated history of *Pride and Negligence* at times seems to reenact the tortuous and deferred appearance of Boswell's own papers. The book, we are told, is "a hybrid" ([p. lviii]), "completed in an earlier form more than twenty years ago" (p. xi), and originating in a still earlier narrative published in the *de luxe* edition of *Boswell's London Journal* in 1951. In 1958, Professor Pottle began to revise that early version, finishing the revision in 1960. In 1962, he was asked to restructure the revision, but not until he could consult an alternative narrative, focusing on legal questions, to be provided by David Buchanan. Buchanan became interested in the entire case, however, and produced a "full and extended account" which he submitted to the Editorial Committee in 1970. Upon reading this account Pottle discovered that it could not be united with his own and urged independent publication (David Buchanan, *The Treasure of Auchinleck*, 1974). In 1982, Professor Pottle published his account, the volume under review. What marks this little tangle of deferred publication, and the Yale Editions as a whole, is both a powerfully established plan, never abandoned, and a willingness to modify that plan in extraordinary ways.

One hesitates to draw morals from a history of academic scholarship, even so lucid and absorbing a history as Professor Pottle's, though his own title suggests that such a practice may not be wholly foreign to the book's spirit. I cannot help thinking, though, that some such combination of traits as I have outlined above has much to do with the excellence of the Yale Editions. I am even pleased to discern in those traits, however dimly, an oblique and unintended tribute to that figure whose life played itself out between the constraints of various "inviolable plans" and an irrepressible openness to the unforeseen.

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The Companion to Gaelic Scotland. Ed. Derick S. Thomson. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1983. xx + 363 pp.

The publication in late 1983 of *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland*, edited by Professor Derick S. Thomson of the Department of Celtic, University of Glasgow, was an event of

major significance in the Gaelic world. For several years previously there had been rumours that a volume of this kind might be undertaken; by 1980 contracts had been issued to over 70 contributors; and by 1983 the dream had become reality. The completion of the work within some five years of its formal commission is an eloquent tribute to the editorial and organizing skill of the compiler. To bring together so diverse a variety of contributors, to collate their entries, to edit, regularize and (if necessary) to harmonize the material—all of this demanded more than the average amount of patience, tact, commitment, and enthusiasm. Professor Thomson's achievement has been nothing less than to produce a work of reference which not only offers the non-Gaelic world a thoroughly reliable guide to a vast field, but affords Gaelic people themselves an immensely useful survey of their history, literature and general culture. At the same time, Thomson has produced the first compendium of this kind which is devoted solely to the specifically Celtic dimension of a nation's culture. There is as yet no corresponding work of reference for Wales or Ireland; should such works be undertaken, *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* would surely serve as an excellent model.

Companion-volumes of the type represented here are already well known in other fields, and their production has become a minor industry in recent years. Such volumes frequently deal with subject-areas like Biblical background or exegesis, maritime history, architecture, horticulture, or aspects of English literature. Less common are volumes which embrace the distinctive qualities of a particular country, or of a major cultural strand within it. Yet Scotland is now served by two books of this type—the present volume and *A Companion to Scottish Culture*, edited by Professor David Daiches, and published in 1981. In Daiches' fine work, the Gaelic strand is well acknowledged within the broader sweep of the book's remit; in Thomson's *Companion*, the Gaelic strand is pre-eminent, although Anglo-Saxon, Norse, Lowland Scots and English elements are considered where these are relevant to the topic in hand. In this way, the volumes of Thomson and Daiches are complementary, and taken together they provide a splendid source of information about the development of the Scottish nation.

The Companion to Gaelic Scotland is designed to allow ready and easy access to the information which it contains. As with

Daiches' *Companion to Scottish Culture*, its entries are arranged in alphabetical order in the manner of a dictionary. In theory one might suppose that such a presentation would lead to a somewhat disorderly mass of disparate contributions; in practice, however, it works well. There is a high degree of cohesion, and the whole structure is underpinned by blocks of related entries which amount to "books within a book," and which often cross-refer to the smaller items. The smaller items are themselves interwoven by a fairly generous sprinkling of cross-references from one to another. Further formal binding is provided by the "Guide to Contents by Subject" at the beginning of the book, and by the comprehensive final Index, covering references to people, places and subjects mentioned in the text. The final Index is preceded by an extremely valuable Bibliography which lists works cited in the text. At the same time, it links in with many of the biographical entries, and offers a remarkably concise overview of the course of Gaelic scholarship.

The contributors of the various entries in *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* are identified by means of initials at the foot of each article. These initials relate to a list of contributors at the beginning of the volume, where the names are given in full. There are a couple of minor errors here; the same initials are not always consistently used for the same writer, and both Fred Macaulay and F.A. Macdonald are given the initials *FM* in the list of contributors (p. xii), when it is clear from the entries that the former is represented correctly by *FM*, and the latter by *FMcD*. It must be said, however, that, considering the size of the book, the number of typographical and other errors of this sort is remarkably small. Occasionally one notices some inconsistency in the use of printing fonts, particularly in cross-references, where subject-headings are sometimes given in upper-case letters or in lower-case bold letters. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the editor and the publishers have made every effort to create a reference work which is easy to use, and which has very few technical mistakes; those which do exist will not cause serious difficulty to the reader. In addition to the convenient format of the volume, the publishers have allowed considerable space for illustrations (photographs, maps, diagrams, etc.) relevant to the discussion. These are used to very good effect, and add richly to the texture of the book, with some striking and well-chosen contrasts in places (for example, the full-page

portrait of Marjory Kennedy-Fraser on p. 143, and the picture of less ornate kelp-burners on p. 142). The illustrations also help to break up the text, and this, together with the size and clarity of the type-face, gives a relaxed tone to the volume. The reader is enticed to explore it for the sheer excellence of its presentation.

If the technical arrangement of a reference work of this kind needs careful consideration, so also does the range of topics to be included in it. In this instance, the editor has had to come to terms with a basic concept which can be defined at several levels—literary, linguistic, historical, demographic, ethnological, and geographical—and each of these levels could well be worthy of a *Companion* in its own right. The extent to which each level can be accommodated within a single volume will depend on the publishers' view of a marketable book, as well as on the editor's own appreciation of what will best represent the principal features of the various fields. The editor must decide how much weight to attach to each of the entries within a given field, and his evaluation of weight will make itself evident in the length of the entries which he chooses to include; he may choose to exclude certain fields from any consideration. In making such decisions, an editor will be guided to some extent by the consensus of scholarly opinion, but there will be many instances where he must rely on his own personal judgment. Any editor who tackles a work of this kind will therefore expose himself to some degree of criticism when the finished volume appears. It is in the nature of the undertaking that it cannot be all-embracing, and that it cannot be perfect in the eyes of all. The only legitimate test of its success will be the extent to which it will provide an answer to the reasonable enquiries of a cross-section of its intended readership. In the case of the present volume, that readership is likely to include academics as well as ordinary people, specialists as well as browsers. The danger of satisfying one type of reader, and not another, is inherent in the creation of a book of this kind, and nobody will be more conscious of the difficulty than the editor himself. It is my view that Professor Thomson has succeeded in producing a book which conveys the essence of its subject with great clarity, and which is likely to appeal to a very wide readership.

The first challenge which this book presents to its editor is how to define "Gaelic Scotland" as an entity. What is "Gaelic

Scotland"? Is there such a place now, or was there such a place at any time in history? It is possible to argue, for example, that "Gaelic Scotland" is that part of Scotland where Gaelic is currently spoken as the everyday language of the people; that is, mainly in the Western Isles from Tiree northwards, with some isolated pockets of Gaelic speakers on the western fringe of the mainland. On the other hand, the 1981 Census of Gaelic-speakers in Scotland makes it clear that a very significant proportion of the total Gaelic-speaking population is found on the mainland and in the Lowlands. It is thus evident that, even in the present day, "Gaelic Scotland" is something more than a reserve of Gaelic-speakers in the Western Isles. As Thomson himself notes, however, "it is difficult to achieve an acceptable balance between Gaelic-area particularism and Scottish (i.e. national) generalism" (p. 90). Even so, there are compelling reasons for identifying "Gaelic Scotland" with most of the spatial extent of present-day Scotland. As W.F.H. Nicolaisen demonstrates in his article "Gaelic place-names in Scotland" in the *Companion* (pp. 231-2), "their presence clearly confirms that Gaelic must have been at one time . . . the language of most of Scotland, although its most extensive use may not have peaked in all the areas in question at exactly the same time. The place-name evidence makes it equally clear, however, that there has never been any time in Scottish history or prehistory when Gaelic was the everyday language of the whole of Scotland." The diachronic view of Gaelic Scotland which the evidence of place-names would encourage does, however, lead one beyond the bounds of Scotland at different periods in history. Up to the eighteenth century (and even later), close links existed between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland at the social, literary and military level; and in the nineteenth century, emigration from Gaelic Scotland produced the Gaelic-speaking colony in Nova Scotia, centered on Cape Breton Island. Such dimensions need to be acknowledged in an historical definition of Gaelic Scotland. So, too, does the influence which Gaelic institutions and social customs have exerted on the developing fabric of the Scottish nation, and there needs to be some recognition of the less tangible contribution of Gaelic culture to the output of musicians, artists and men of letters who have drawn inspiration from it. The most obvious danger of treating Gaelic Scotland in this way is the possibility that the reality of modern, present-day

Gaelic Scotland will be subservient to the concept of an extensive heritage which has now, to a large degree, vanished.

Professor Thomson has obviously chosen the wider, historical definition of Gaelic Scotland as the foundation for his *Companion*, notwithstanding the restriction of a mere 363 pages in which to encapsulate the essence of fifteen centuries of development from the founding of Scottish Dalriada about 500 A.D. This is entirely consistent with Thomson's academic and literary activities over the years, since as teacher and writer he has sought to promote a fuller understanding of the role of Gaelic and Gaelic culture in the life of the Scottish nation across the centuries. He has done so primarily as a scholar of language, literature and history, and as a promoter of Gaelic publishing. It is understandable, therefore, that he should give particular prominence to these topics within the *Companion*, and indeed these are still the topics which require to be stressed in the present time. It is entirely appropriate that the development of the Gaelic language itself should lie at the heart of the book. The section on the Gaelic language comprises the single largest block of related entries in the work (pp. 89-114), with a wide-ranging general survey contributed by Thomson himself, and a series of more specialized articles on such subjects as the principal divisions of Gaelic dialects, the divergence of Gaelic from Irish and Manx, Gaelic orthography, and the demographic history of Gaelic speaking, as well as fairly technical articles on calquing, morphology and mutations, Gaelic phonemic structure, and Gaelic phonetics. This section has much to offer the specialist and the novice in the field, and it is particularly useful in drawing together the substance of many books and studies. Besides contributions from well-known linguists, there are also pieces from more recent scholars who are opening up new lines of enquiry.

The second largest block of entries in the *Companion* is devoted to Gaelic verse, and occupies the whole of section V (pp. 292-302). The entries describe the different types of poetry produced in Gaelic Scotland (and sometimes contemporaneously in Ireland)—bardic, courtly and satiric, heroic (i.e. Gaelic "ballads" or "Fenian lays"), Jacobite, panegyric, political (seventeenth century), political (twentieth century), and several other categories. Surprisingly, there is no entry on the political verse of the nineteenth century, which was a time of great

political activity among the Gaelic people (see the entry on Highland politics on pp. 237-8), and which produced much poetry in the period of the Clearances and the later Land Agitation. The articles in this section nevertheless provide a concise and wide-ranging synthesis of Gaelic poetry, and sometimes offer completely new assessments of verse-types which have received little scholarly treatment in recent years (as in Kenneth MacDonald's fine entry on religious verse). Beyond this section, the *Companion* provides a survey of nature poetry (pp. 211-2), several individual discussions of sources of Gaelic verse (for example, *The Book of the Dean of Lismore*, pp. 59-60), biographies and critical articles on leading poets through the centuries, and surveys of Gaelic song (pp. 272-4) and folksong (pp. 77-83). Music in its various forms (bagpipe, harp, fiddle, choral, etc.) is also treated in several entries.

The generous treatment of Gaelic verse within the *Companion* reflects the markedly prestigious position of poetry in Gaelic society throughout the ages. Prose enjoyed less exalted status, although it existed in profusion, and it is noticeable that, in the *Companion*, prose is given less space than poetry as a continuous block. The main section on prose offers surveys of early Gaelic non-literary prose, eighteenth-century religious prose, and post-1800 religious prose (pp. 240-3); there is, however, no general article on the secular prose of the nineteenth century, of which there was a considerable amount, written by the Rev. Dr. Norman MacLeod (see p. 35), Donald MacKechnie (see p. 170), and a number of less conspicuous figures such as John MacFadyen (see p. 188). Some of the secular writings are mentioned in the entry on periodicals (pp. 223-4), and there are further relevant articles on the novel (pp. 218-9) and on short stories (pp. 278-80), as well as publishing (pp. 245-7). Traditional tales and tale-types are well covered (pp. 280-5).

The growth of the various traditions of Gaelic verse and prose frequently shows evidence of contact with non-Gaelic sources of inspiration, and it would be perverse to argue that Gaelic language and tradition have remained "pure" within the Scottish nation. The interaction of Gaelic with other Celtic languages, and often with non-Celtic languages, is demonstrated by many entries in the *Companion*. In the large section on place-names, for instance, the various linguistic strata in Scottish toponymy are unravelled by a group of distinguished onomastic

scholars—Professors Kenneth Jackson, John MacQueen, W.F.H. Nicolaisen, and Magne Oftedal (pp. 226-36). The identification of British (i.e. Early Welsh), Pictish, Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse elements, besides Gaelic ones, in Scottish place-names makes it clear that not everything in Scotland is to be associated with or derived from Gaelic; there are other major cultural and linguistic threads in the tapestry. The section on loan-words into Gaelic, and from Gaelic, is further evidence of a process of absorption (primarily one-way) which continues to the present, and which is not likely to stop. A not dissimilar overall pattern can be discerned in Gaelic political affairs, and in social, artistic and architectural responses. *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* provides a wide variety of entries which will help the reader to determine the distinctive features of Gaelic identity in the Church (whether the early Celtic Church or the later denominations), politics (from the founding of Dalriada to the present day), social institutions, legal customs, archaeology, architecture and art (in its Celtic, Pictish, and more modern forms). Artistic achievements, whether on canvas, in metal, or on stone, are particularly well documented and illustrated in the *Companion*. Some other aspects of material culture are conspicuously absent; these include ships and boats (which loom large in the Gaelic consciousness for obvious reasons), domestic housing, tools and implements, and clothing (apart from the kilt).

The Companion to Gaelic Scotland offers a wealth of information in a number of fields which are hitherto inadequately researched or which have not yet been described in definitive works. In addition to the areas which have already been mentioned in this review, the *Companion* provides a selection of biographical notes which amount to the first biographical dictionary of the Scottish Gaelic world, apart from a minor *Who's who?* which was published earlier this century. The selection includes major historical figures, poets, tradition-bearers, men of letters, politicians, educationalists and scholars down to the present. As every reader will probably have his own views on who is (or is not) sufficiently important for inclusion, the editor is to be commended for his bravery in this sensitive area, particularly in the case of contemporary individuals. On the whole, the selection is useful, but there are several candidates who, in my opinion, ought to be considered for a place in the second edition—for example, Professor J.S.

Blackie, the nineteenth-century Gaelic propagandist, fund-raiser and romanticiser; the novelist, Neil Gunn; the contemporary Gaelic essayist, Kenneth Ross; and some modern promoters of Gaelic, such as Iain Noble, the founder of the Gaelic College in Ostaig, Skye.

The Companion to Gaelic Scotland has been created to fill gaps—gaps in our knowledge of Gaelic, our knowledge of Scotland, and our knowledge of the Celtic heritage of the British Isles. It also aims to correct our perspectives, or to broaden our outlooks, or to stimulate our interests. It has a multiplicity of uses, and it should find a place on the shelves of all individuals and institutions with a concern for the correct study and interpretation of one of Europe's oldest surviving cultures.

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Douglas S. Mack, ed. *James Hogg: Selected Stories and Sketches*. Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press. 1982. x + 211 pp. The Association for Scottish Literary Studies, No. 12.

For the twentieth century, James Hogg is the author of *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. He has written other works of distinction, but readers other than specialists approach his other prose and his poetry seeking a context for the masterpiece that overshadows them. Douglas S. Mack has already made much of that context accessible, for he has edited the *Selected Poems*, *The Brownie of Bodsbeck*, and (in a single volume) *Memoir of the Author's Life and Familiar Anecdotes of Sir Walter Scott*. His selection of Hogg's stories and sketches, however, is perhaps his most valuable service so far to the twentieth-century reader of the *Confessions*, for it does more to reveal the range of Hogg's fiction, especially his range of styles, and supplies many versions of situations that feature in the *Confessions*. The reader can only be grateful for an accessible selection of not only the best (and best known) tales from the Victorian *Tales and Sketches*—including "The Brownie of the Black Haggs" and "The Cameronian Preacher's Tale"—but also equally interesting uncollected items from *Fraser's Magazine*—"The Unearthly Witness," "Strange Letter of a Lunatic," "The Barber of Duncow" and "On the Separate

Existence of the Soul." He will regret only that this discriminating selection is not longer.

Mack edits his selections with intelligent conservatism, trying to avoid the extensive revisions by William Blackwood and Robert Hogg that he detects in book republication of some items. He follows Hogg's manuscripts where they survive and first magazine publication where they do not or where changes were minor. Like realism, however, conservative editing modifies earlier conventions rather than abandoning all convention for the naked truth: Mack admits that he has supplied some stops and other punctuation where the reader could be baffled. This is sound, for a modern edition must consider the needs of the modern audience this collection deserves. A comparison of the version of "Storms" available here with that in earlier collections, which alters Hogg's light punctuation and run-on sentences, reveals a genuine gain in what wine drinkers would call "race." At the end of the volume is a brief note on each story. These notes give publication histories and lists of emendations other than alterations of punctuation. They also gloss, helpfully, the Scottish background, titles mentioned in the text, Biblical allusions, and so on. I would, however, have appreciated a note on "she had him . . . in Hay's net" ("The Barber of Duncow," p. 173): the general meaning is clear from the context, but an expression that eludes the *Scottish National Dictionary* deserves some comment. Finally, there is a glossary that manages to be complete enough for general readers without assuming that an entry is needed every time a Scots term uses *a* instead of English *o*.

All of the selections offer something to the reader of the *Confessions*. There are enough wicked (and debauching) lairds to suggest how permanent a figure of folklore and experience they were—and hence the brevity with which Hogg could treat Robert Wringhim Colwan's lairdship. There are mixtures of Satan with the folk tradition of fairies, though the closest counterparts of the green-clad Gil-Martin are the vengeful fairy women of "Mary Burnet" and "The Mysterious Bride." "The Brownie of the Black Hags" presents the horrifying fascination of wicked victim with oppressor, while "Strange Letter of a Lunatic" is narrated by a Scottish version of Poe's William Wilson, who has been mysteriously wounded in a duel with his tormenting double. In "On the Separate Existence of the Soul,"

an exchange of souls leaves the consciousness of a young improving landlord in the body of his old and traditional shepherd, unable to prove his identity on the basis of consciousness alone. There is also a range of styles and tones familiar from the *Confessions*—sober speculative journalism merging into broad Scots humor in a variety of voices. In "The Barber of Duncow," a free-living man—therefore called Rodger M'Fun—marries, like George Colwan, a Cameronian lass unwilling to play patient Griselda to his Walter: "O Rodger M'Fun! Rodger M'Fun! I shall be unto thee Grizel M'Grief!" (p. 172); partly humorous, she commands sympathy as a murder victim whose ghost appears to all who hear her tale skeptically.

Hogg is a Borderer in more senses than one. His feel for life on the Scottish Borders places even his tales of the supernatural on the border between tale and sketch of rural life. "Storms" is the only sketch here despite the plural of Mack's title, but the stories are full of rural experience of harsh weather, harsher lairds, markets, and hiring fairs—those borders between one service and another that Hogg uses with such effect in "Tibby Hyslop's Dream" and "Mary Burnet." Hogg claims to rely on "traditionary tales that seem originally to have been founded on facts" and appeals to "a highly valued friend" before including equally traditional lore, "the antiquated and visionary tales of my friends, the Fairies and Brownies" ("Mary Burnet," p. 71), but in doing so he reminds us that the discourse of his native oral culture was far less formally differentiated than the fiction available to his readership. He shows his mastery of journalistic styles and mocks the technical incompetence of "lady novelists" ("Sound Morality," p. 128), but gravitates to the border of written and oral. "Storms" is an admirable introduction to this volume because it suggests the difficulty of crossing that border: in an account including "traditionary stories" of great storms as well as his own experience of the storm of 1794, Hogg tells how his "literary society" was suspected of "some horrible rite, or correspondence with the powers of darkness" for which God sent the storm as punishment (pp. 15-16). He also records his vision just before he discovers that he has unknowingly crossed the river he fears falling into:

. . . to my utter amazement [I] thought I beheld trees over my head flourishing abroad over the whole sky. I never

had seen such an optical delusion before it was so like enchantment that I knew not what to think but dreaded that some extraordinary thing was coming over me and that I was deprived of my right senses. I remember I thought the storm was a great judgement sent on us for our sins, and that this strange phantasy was connected with it; an illusion effected by evil spirits. I stood a good while in this painful trance—at length on making a bold exertion to escape from the fairy vision I came all at once in contact with the old tower I was not only all at once freed from the fairies but from the dangers of the gorged river. (pp. 10-11)

Hogg situates his marvellous experience on the borders of different realms of understanding—empirical ("optical delusion"), folklore-magical ("enchantment," "fairy vision"), Christian ("judgement . . . for our sins," "evil spirits"), and perhaps psychological ("deprived of my right senses," "trance"). When he goes on to describe the worried women "raising up imaginary evils, or magnifying those that exist" (p. 11), he also creates comedy he may not entirely control. Certainly he shows the varieties of understanding that intersect in his most haunting and ambiguous fiction, in the *Confessions* as well as in the best tales here. For that reason I would like to see another sketch or two here, perhaps including "Nature's Magic Lantern," which explores the kind of phenomenon that George sees on Arthur's Seat in the *Confessions*. Even without such additions, however, the sketch and stories included in this volume provide both a superb selection of Hogg's prose and a splendid context for his masterpiece. They reveal both his creative gifts and the complex and divided experience to which he applied them.

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Sir Thomas Urquhart. *The Jewel*. Ed. R.D.S. Jack and R.J. Lyall. Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press. 1983.

In an age of eccentric prose stylists no seventeenth-century writer is more unusual and original than Sir Thomas Urquhart.

At the same time no one who wrote so brilliantly is so unknown today. Anthologies rarely contain his work. Douglas Bush in his Oxford history of the period gives him only a few lines and those mainly devoted to his translation of Rabelais. This new edition of his most famous work, *The Jewel*, should go a long way to remedying the neglect of a significant, if minor, literary figure.

Published in 1652 in extraordinary circumstances the book is a fascinating account of Urquhart's scheme for a universal language with its ten cases "beside the nominative" and its eleven genders, all which can easily be learned by a "boy of ten." The title refers to language. This is followed by a rousing biography of the life and death of "the admirable Crichton," an attack on Presbyterians, praise of Scottish leaders and poets, and an "ironically distanced eulogy" of the author himself. The editors do a masterful job of showing how all these disparate parts fit together. But even more informative is their analysis of the author's rhetorical technique. Only Urquhart would write of Crichton lying in bed with his future wife in this fashion: "To speak of her hirquitaliency ["strongly voiced delight"] at the elevation of the pole of his microcosme or of his luxuriousness to erect a gnomon ["rod, pin"] on her dyal . . ." Yet he can go from such a dazzling display of esoteric wit to a plain statement about the grief-stricken prince who killed Crichton and "fell flat upon his face like a dead man." The prose is as varied as it is complex.

In addition to a sound and useful introduction that includes an account of Urquhart's life the editors provide copious notes on the text and at the bottom of each page give the modern equivalents of the technical and archaic words. One of the most interesting features of the work is its odd vocabulary, especially its mathematical terminology. My only criticism of this splendid edition is the failure of the editors to relate their author to other prose stylists of the period. The three contradictions they note in the book, his confession he could have written more eloquently, his pretense that he is not the author, and his comment that he wrote without any plan or subtlety are all characteristic of Robert Burton in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. In fact, passage after passage seems very close to Burton, particularly the piling up of lists, the satirical attacks, and the movement from verbal pyrotechnics to simple lyrical expressions.

Sir Thomas Browne also comes to mind in numerous paragraphs, but what the editors do they do well, and we should be grateful for their making such a remarkable and little known book so readily available not only to students of seventeenth-century literature but also to those interested in rhetoric and the development of modern prose style. I might add that few texts of the period are reprinted so handsomely. The edition is a delight to the eye as well as to the mind.

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Barry Menikoff. *Robert Louis Stevenson and "The Beach of Falesá"*. Stanford: University of Stanford Press. 1984. 208 pp.

The subtitle of this handsome book is, "A Study in Victorian Publishing with the Original Text." Professor Menikoff gives an account of the publishing history of Stevenson's South Pacific story "The Beach of Falesá," showing in some detail how parts of the "original text" were altered or bowdlerized in print. After a long and sometimes very interesting commentary, Menikoff then presents that "original text," a "clean" transcript of the "holograph fair-copy manuscript" now held at the Huntington Library.

"The Beach of Falesá" certainly does provide an interesting case-study in Victorian publishing. Stevenson wrote it in Samoa, and obviously, at that distance, he could not exercise complete control over where and in what form the story might finally be printed. Menikoff's first chapter, "The Context," deals with the story's publishing history, and at times this account seems a little confusing, not least because so many people were involved. Stevenson corresponded with Sidney Colvin while writing the story, but he sent the manuscript to Charles Baxter: Colvin, with his own ideas about where the story should go, started writing to Baxter as well. Baxter wrote to the McClure syndicate (who were still publishing Stevenson's *In the South Seas*) and to Cassell and Co., another of Stevenson's publishers. In the meantime, W.E. Henley (Stevenson's former friend, and editor of the *National Observer*) wrote about "Falesá" to Lemuel Bangs, the London agent for Charles Scribner's, yet another of Stevenson's publishers. Bangs wrote to Scribner's, and Burlingame, another

agent, wrote back to Stevenson. Colvin was, at this time, also corresponding with Cassells about the story, making his own arrangements.

As a consequence of all this, the story appeared in print in several different places and in several different forms. Through the McClures, it was serialized first in Clement Shorter's *The Illustrated London News*, from July to August 1892. Not long afterwards, Colvin arranged a "trial issue" with Cassells, printing "Falesá" with another South Pacific story, "The Bottle Imp"; Stevenson corrected the proofs for this edition (only two copies were printed), though he strongly disapproved of putting these two stories together. Finally, arrangements were made for "Falesá" to form part of a collection of South Pacific stories, *Island Nights' Entertainments*, again somewhat ignoring Stevenson's original intentions: this collection was published by Cassells and Scribner's in early 1893.

But the "context" is not the primary issue here; Menikoff is more interested in the alterations and omissions in Stevenson's original manuscript made by these various publishers and editors. The most immediately controversial episode in the story was the scene where Case "marries" Wiltshire, the narrator, to the native girl Uma. Case's "marriage contract," in the original, reads as follows: "This is to certify that *Uma* daughter of *Faavao* of Falesá island of ----, is illegally married to *Mr John Wiltshire* for one night, and Mr John Wiltshire is at liberty to send her to hell next morning." Clement Shorter had wanted the "young folks" to be properly married before (as Stevenson called it) "that night." Stevenson refused, and the contract was left out altogether from the serialized version. Cassells, however, tried to compromise, suggesting that the "marriage" between Wiltshire and Uma be lengthened to something more respectable than just one night. Stevenson finally acquiesced: "Well, well," he wrote, "if the dears prefer a week, why, I'll give them ten days, but the real document, from which I have scarcely varied, ran for one night." Cassells went ahead to change "one night" to "one week" and "next morning" to "when he pleases."

Stevenson had described the "real document" on which Case's marriage contract was based in his account of the Gilbert islands in his *In the South Seas*: a white trader had actually used such a "certificate" to marry a Gilbert islander. Since this particular marriage contract thus essentially typified the Europeans' abuse

and exploitation of the South Sea people (the women in particular), Stevenson was not surprisingly keen to place it unaltered into his story. But, as Menikoff observes, this episode disturbed the "most profound prejudices" in Victorian readers (and editors), "race, miscegenation, and colonialisation" (p. 89): accordingly, the contract was either omitted or altered in print. Stevenson was left to recall the recent fate of Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* in *The Graphic* (to which Colvin later offered another of Stevenson's South Pacific stories), and to summarize resignedly in a letter to J.M. Barrie, "Surely these editor people are wrong."

New editions of "Falesá," notably from Furnas and (most recently) Jenni Calder, have called themselves "unexpurgated" because they had restored the original marriage contract; but, as Menikoff rightly observes, many other alterations and omissions were *not* restored by these editors who, by not checking with the original manuscript, thus contributed to the "easy, uncritical acceptance of a mutilated text" (p. 76). Some changes to the original manuscript were clearly significant: it is important to know, for example, that a passage presenting some "advice" and a "yarn" told by Case to Wiltshire, about saving money and about a Dutch trader called Miller (the passage is approximately 300 words long), was for some unknown reason entirely dropped from all the printed versions of the story. A great many alterations were, however, "minor," involving (to use the title to Menikoff's second chapter) "accidentals": punctuation, hyphens, spelling and capitalization. Menikoff argues that the constant tampering with "accidentals" by editors and publishers also had a significant effect on the story. "Falesá" is narrated by John Wiltshire, a South-Sea trader and a "common, low, god-damned white man and British subject" (the adjective "god-damned" was, predictably, dropped from *The Illustrated London News* version). Wiltshire's narrative style is "eccentric" and colloquial, a mixture of standard English, American slang and "beach-de-mar"; as Menikoff remarks, "even the punctuation mark can aid in the delineation of character, in conveying motive and perception" (p. 45). Menikoff gives a range of examples to illustrate this; some may seem a little stretched, but the essential point is undeniable. Stevenson necessarily chose a style and language that was "easy, idiomatic, and oral," but the printers and editors, interfering with the free flow of the story, made it appear more "formal,

conventional, and written" (p. 51). A part of Wiltshire's character (among other things) was lost with these "corrections."

At one point, Menikoff draws attention to "the most remarkable change of an individual word in the novel," in a description by Wiltshire of Case: he could "blaspheme worse than a Yankee boatswain and talk smart to sicken a kanaka." In fact, the word "smart" is "smut" in the original manuscript, but "the word itself is objectionable, and must be expunged" (p. 75). The change, of course, wrecks the description of the "obscene" character of Case. There is another word-change that has persisted in every edition of the story, and simply does not make sense: this occurs when Wiltshire describes the contents of Case's store. The manuscript clearly reads "poorest" (Case has hardly any stock at all), but the printed versions of the story read "finest." Of course, this kind of blunder cannot be anything but a misreading, but it should be corrected at once in any further reprints of "Falesá."

Another interesting alteration to the original story occurs when Wiltshire first glimpses the native-girl Uma: "She had been fishing; all she wore was a chemise, and it was wetted through, and a cutty sark at that." This entire description of Uma's wet and brief costume in the original manuscript was, again predictably, dropped from *The Illustrated London News* version of the story; but Scottish readers will be particularly annoyed to know that all subsequent editions have retained the "chemise" description but left out the reference to Uma's "cutty sark." Although Menikoff seems a little hesitant about it, Stevenson was clearly referring to Burns' well-known *Tam O'Shanter*: watching witches dancing madly together one night, Tam spies "ae winsome wench" in a "cutty sark, o' Paisley harn. . . In longitude sorely scanty." Wiltshire's first glimpse of Uma is, in other words, explicitly compared to Tam's glimpse of "cutty sark," the near-naked young witch. Obviously, Stevenson's erotic description, with its even more erotic allusion, would not do for these early editors; but again, this bowdlerized passage should be brought back into the text in any further reprints.

On the whole, Menikoff's remarks on these and other alterations and omissions are useful and interesting; but he does not list *every* change made to the original manuscript (for example, the abbreviation of Namu's parable about the gin bottle in Chapter III, pertinent to Wiltshire's disapproval of the gin-

trade on the island). Of course, a list of all the changes involving accidentals and so on would take up much time and space: the original text is presented for us to compare with standard bowdlerized editions if we should wish to. Menikoff is only interested in accounting for editorial changes made to this original text, so he does not remark on Stevenson's *own* deletions in the manuscript itself (which include a deleted final paragraph, added to the story after it had been finished); the typescript of the original text at the end is, as I've said, "clean" and unannotated. Menikoff also structures his introduction to the text around the editorial alterations, which necessarily limits his often interesting general observations on the story—although he does manage, somewhat gymnastically at times, to connect a remarkable number of general comments to his many specific examples of interference with punctuation, hyphens, and so on. Nevertheless, Menikoff's presentation of the "original text" of "The Beach of Falesá," following Roger G. Swearingen's recent edition of Stevenson's first published story "An Old Song," is a welcome and handsome addition to textual scholarship on an author whose "original texts" have, until recently, received little attention.

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Jeffrey's Criticism. Ed., with an intro., by Peter F. Morgan. Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press. 1983. 181 pp.

Francis Jeffrey's name is widely recognized but Francis Jeffrey, the complex man and the first editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, is not well known or understood. The same is true of Jeffrey's criticism. Many scholars are more familiar with Jeffrey's critical reputation (as an anti-Romantic) than with his criticism. This book will do much to let Francis Jeffrey speak for himself, critical warts and all, in his own language. Professor Morgan's impressive introduction provides both the background and the biography needed to give the criticism and the critic proper perspective, without which Jeffrey's criticism could seem merely to express the objections of an effete Enlightenment sensibility. Such a misimpression is unfortunate, for as *Jeffrey's Criticism*

shows, Jeffrey still offers valuable criticism to modern readers.

Morgan's selection of Jeffrey's essays is judicious. Dividing them into five categories, encompassing English poetry, drama, and prose, foreign literature, and esthetic theory, Morgan at once demonstrates Francis Jeffrey's diversity and breadth, and offers readers a helpful sampling of essays on a variety of writers, subjects and genres. In addition to the reviews of the Romantics, *Edinburgh Review* essays about Goethe, Mme. de Stael, Scott's edition of Swift, Continental and English drama, and other topics are also included.

A comparison of Morgan's abridged Jeffrey essays with the originals yields mixed results. At times (as with the review of *The Excursion*) the abridgement is actually beneficial, sparing readers lengthy summaries or perfunctory reviews of previous works. At other times, as with Jeffrey's review of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, canto III, valuable critical observations are lost to abridgement. Obviously decisions about abridgement are arbitrary, but Professor Morgan's editorial decisions about Where, How, and How Much are sometimes curious.

But what of Francis Jeffrey and the Romantics? Made into an infamous, mean-spirited "Scotch Reviewer" by a misinformed, ego-wounded Lord Byron, Jeffrey is still perceived as being primarily anti-Romantic. Morgan's *Jeffrey's Criticism* will help to clarify this issue as well. Jeffrey's reviews of Byron, Keats, and the early Southey are fairminded and their objections well-taken. Of Byron, Jeffrey says, "If the finest poetry be that which leaves the deepest impression on the minds of its readers—and this is not the worst test of its excellence—Lord Byron, we think, must be allowed to take precedence of all his distinguished contemporaries . . . In force of diction, and inextinguishable energy of sentiment, he clearly surpasses them all" (*ER*, Dec. 1816). Of Keats's *Endymion* and *Lamia*, Jeffrey praises their "sweetness," finds few poems "richer in promise," for "they are flushed all over with the rich lights of fancy; and so coloured and bestrewn with the flowers of poetry, that even while perplexed and bewildered in their labyrinths, it is impossible to resist the intoxication of their sweetness, or to shut our hearts to the enchantments they so lavishly present" (*ER*, Aug. 1820). Little "anti-Romanticism" is to be found here. Indeed, the nearest Jeffrey comes to deserving such a label is with Wordsworth.

In his reviews of Wordsworth, Jeffrey's critical weaknesses (philosophical differences?) are most glaring. While freely admitting *Lyrical Ballads*' "strong spirit of originality, of pathos, and natural feeling," Jeffrey waxes (or rather, wanes) splenetic in noting "the perverseness and bad taste of this new school." He further notes that Wordsworth's poetic diction "has no where any pretensions to elegance or dignity; and he has scarcely ever condescended to give the grace of correctness or melody to his versification." He finally worries about "the self-illusion of a mind of extraordinary sensibility, habituated to solitary meditation . . ." (*ER*, October 1807). Jeffrey's critical petulance crested (or ebbed) most infamously in his November, 1814, review of *The Excursion*, the first paragraph of which sufficiently reveals the too-personal nature of his Wordsworth criticism. In his footnote to the review of *The Excursion*, reprinted in the *Contributions to the Edinburgh Review* (1843), Jeffrey regrets much of what he said about Wordsworth and "the Lake School": "I . . . have sometimes visited them [Wordsworth's poetic "faults"] with an asperity which should be reserved for objects of Moral reprobation I have always loved many of the attributes of his genius . . ." (*Contributions*, p. 457). Perhaps most of those early reviews make us concur with Jeffrey's later judgment and chagrin.

To stop with an examination of Jeffrey's critical warts would be, however, to ignore the critical astuteness and rhetorical beauty of the bulk of his *ER* essays. Even with Wordsworth it should be noted—and is, in Morgan's fine introduction—that Francis Jeffrey's objection to Wordsworth's esthetic often bears striking resemblance to Coleridge's in the *Biographia Literaria*. In particular, a comparison of Jeffrey's *Excursion* review and chapters 17-22 of the *Biographia* clearly indicates that some of Jeffrey's principal objections are no more "anti-Romantic" than some of Coleridge's. A second comparison of Jeffrey's *ER* Wordsworth reviews with those of other quarterlies and monthlies reveals that the *ER* was certainly not alone in criticizing Wordsworth and others for their perceived extreme subjectivism and vulgarity of diction. If anything, the *ER*'s lengthy, spirited reviews place it far ahead of its competitors. (In a footnote in the *Biographia*, Coleridge notes that the *Quarterly* simply ignored Wordsworth). Perhaps the best comment of all about Wordsworth's early reception is Coleridge's: "His *fame* belongs to

another age . . ." (*Biographia*, Ch. 12).

Finally, perhaps even those of us who admire and regularly teach Wordsworth too willingly "forget" that if *Lyrical Ballads* and *Poems* contain "Tintern Abbey" and "Ode: Intimations of Immortality," they also include such embarrassments as "The Idiot Boy" and "The Emigrant Mother." As Jeffrey's review of *The White Doe of Rylstone* (*ER*, October 1815) dramatically reminds us, Wordsworth's "new" esthetic *did* produce its share of poetic forgettables. Nor were there anthologies to spare Wordsworth's readers the worst in order to showcase the best. Hazlitt helpfully described Jeffrey as "a person in advance of the age, and yet perfectly fitted both from knowledge and habits of mind to put a curb upon its rash and headlong spirit." It would appear that the age *needed* a Scotch Reviewer.

Jeffrey's *ER* review of Archibald Alison's *Essays on Taste* (*ER*, May 1811) may be the most valuable inclusion of this volume. In the brief headnote Morgan affirms the central importance of "associationist theory" in Jeffrey's criticism, citing Jeffrey's claim that "beauty is not an inherent property." Rather, the "human sympathies" with which we regard "external objects" account for our conceptions and perceptions of beauty. Combining this associationist theory with his belief that the artist is responsible to the society, Jeffrey acknowledges individual taste but rejects the Romantic claim of purely subjective standards of valuing (or creating) beauty. Indeed, it can safely be said that in this 1811 review Jeffrey anticipates the objections Wordsworth will raise in his 1815 "Essay, supplementary to the Preface," which Professor Morgan helpfully discusses in his introduction. In his review of Alison's *Essays on Taste*, Jeffrey offers a sound theoretical credo which seems far less strident because it focuses not on an individual poet or school but on the esthetic itself. Perhaps because of this difference, a reader is more likely to note the range and depth of Francis Jeffrey's criticism rather than its *ad hominem* critical peevishness. In one key essay Jeffrey's two principal literary criteria are presented: that extreme subjectivism is socially and artistically dangerous, even if our notions of beauty are highly individualized; and that anyone "creating beauties for the admiration of others" must be sure that the "objects" of such creating have associations of beauty recognizable by "the greater part of mankind." For responsible artists do not create or speak only for themselves.

Professor Morgan's introduction is impressive. Its organization and presentation are such that all readers will benefit. The introduction is divided into three large sections (each further subdivided) which not only describe Jeffrey and his world but also survey the literature, its old and new champions, its changing esthetic assumptions. Those unfamiliar with Francis Jeffrey or his social/historical milieu will get far more than a perfunctory "background." Those familiar with Jeffrey and his period will appreciate the assimilation and synthesis of scholarship which informs the introduction.

Francis Jeffrey's *Edinburgh Review* criticism remains vital and deserves a fresh reading. Morgan's *Jeffrey's Criticism* affords us that opportunity.

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Manfred Malzahn. *Aspects of Identity: The Contemporary Scottish Novel (1978-1981) as National Self-Expression*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang. Publications of the Scottish Studies Centre of the Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz/Germersheim, Vol. 2. 1984. vi + 228 pp.

Aspects of Identity is a study of thirty-three Scottish novels published in the years 1978 through 1981, a time in which "there was a renewal of the debate on Scotland's political, economic and cultural prospects" centering on the 1979 referendum on devolution. The purpose of the study according to Malzahn is to determine what "Scottish literature has to say about 'the Scottish character, and the life worth living,'" and to examine particular images in the literature that relate to values assessment and the definition of national identity. Malzahn is seeking an answer to the question of if the state of contemporary Scottish culture is reflected in the literature as in nineteenth-century America, "if Scottish writers give expression to what will determine the future of their national culture, their national identity."

As a basis upon which to answer this question, Malzahn has selected a large group of novels within a narrow but significant time period—novels that represent a variety of artistic success, linguistic and imaginative achievement, but all linked through

some expression of Scottish culture. Compared with the scope of such a survey as Francis Russell Hart's *The Scottish Novel: From Smollett to Spark*, Malzahn writes, "perhaps this project's saving grace lies precisely in its limitation." Indeed, Malzahn's study is carefully focused and skillfully executed. As he has purposed, he successfully unifies the novels through particular attention to the Scottishness of character, tradition, language, and setting. Even though Malzahn's analyses of the novels are brief, they are nevertheless perceptive and illuminating.

Malzahn divides his discussions of the novels into five major groups according to particular "themes and images"—City vs country; Hell and the Garden; Social class and individual identity; The ever-present past; "Outside" points of view: rôles and challenges; The Scot abroad. His choice of thematic emphasis as well as his selection of novels contributes to the strength of the study. That there is a struggle for national as well as human identity in modern Scottish fiction is made abundantly clear.

Yet, it is both a compliment and a criticism to say that often the reader is left with a feeling of wanting to know more—a compliment to Malzahn's style and insights, but a criticism in terms of the need for further development of the topics. Treating thirty-three novels in 217 pages of text hardly allows for specific, detailed analysis of individual works. Malzahn does not claim to be comprehensive, however, nor is that his purpose; he uses a specific work to illustrate a specific theme rather than attempting to explore in detail a particular novel. As Malzahn is aware, there are some overlapping themes and images; novels could fit into more than one of his categories. Still, in spite of his disclaimers, his approach may tend to lead to distorted or limited conclusions. For example, Malzahn writes:

In the 20th century Scottish novel, Glasgow clearly takes precedence over Edinburgh as a fictional setting. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that industrial Glasgow is a more obvious choice for writers who want to deal with the condition of modern man, than history-ridden Edinburgh.

It would seem that in an analysis of the modern Scottish novel as "National Self-Expression" (rather than simply a study of the

modern novel generally) that such a dismissal of Edinburgh is careless. Certainly Edinburgh is the setting for several novels, and certainly the matter of history in Scottish identity is significant. Additionally, Sir Walter Scott's historical fiction is the basis for the development of the novel in Scotland. Malzahn's comment appears under the subcategory "urban novels," rather than "The ever-present past"; but even in a "city" novel, albeit the city is still Glasgow, the sense of the past is important to the present identity. Malzahn quotes from *Lanark*: "Death is the only dependable exit, but death depends on the body and I had rejected the body. I was condemned to a future of replaying and replaying the tedious past and past and past. I was in hell." Thus while Malzahn is generally in control of his subject, there are some drawbacks to his choice of approach.

Another weakness of the approach, which detracts not so much from the analyses of the novels themselves as from the desire to express a Scottish myth, is the following of the method of and comparing with R.W.B. Lewis's study of nineteenth century American literature and culture, *The American Adam*, and secondarily, Henry Nash Smith's study of the American West, *The Virgin Land*. Lewis explores the literature of nineteenth century America in an attempt to define an American mythology, representative images and ideas that characterize the identity of the new nation. The problem with the use of Lewis as a model for a modern Scottish mythology lies in the matter of history: America was a new nation defining itself for the first time; Scotland in 1979 was attempting to redefine in a new age an old heritage, and technically it was not a "nation." It seems, then, that there are more appropriate models—if such are necessary—to which one could turn for dealing with the issue of modern identity, national self-expression. One such starting point might be the American South in the twentieth century, where following the Civil War and Reconstruction the idea of redefining a regional identity in the context of a larger nation—and universe—gave rise to the production of quality fiction rarely equalled in any literature. Or the story of the American Indian would provide a useful model; Leslie Fiedler's book *The Return of the Vanishing American* especially provides terms that seem appropriate to Malzahn's purpose and the task of defining modern Scottish identity. Fiedler makes the point that "geography in the United States is mythological," that most

literature is defined in terms of Northern, Southern, Eastern, or Western. Not all American literature will fit nicely into a category, Fiedler hastens to point out, but "much of our most distinguished literature is thus mythologically oriented and can be fully appreciated only in this light." Applicable to Malzahn's specific purpose, Fiedler raises two significant points: Firstly, "Can we re-establish the West anywhere at all, then?" Secondly, the modern Indian "has begun to reinvent himself." Given the history of Scotland as a nation and as a region, if a point of comparison is to be made, it seems more appropriate in the discussion of modern Scottish literature and national identity to do so in terms of reinvention or redefinition of identity. Can Scotland be reestablished, and if so where (i.e. geographically or psychologically), and in what terms?

These problems are minor in terms of the achievement of Malzahn's study as a whole; however, in terms of Malzahn's desire for literary criticism to explore and define a particularly Scottish mythology, and as direction for further study, these problems need to be addressed. Malzahn clearly sees his work in this context:

there is still a lot of groundwork to be done before criticism of 20th century Scottish literature may even approximately arrive at an equally coherent, elucidative, and comprehensive description of its subject [compared with American literature]. This thesis is meant to contribute to a development which might eventually lead to such a result, although it is still in its initial stages.

Malzahn's study should not in any way be undervalued, however, because he has provided one of the few significant studies of modern Scottish fiction. He has called attention to the amount, scope, and quality of modern Scottish fiction; he has ascertained the need for and contributed to the development of an understanding of the "Scottishness" in fiction; he has further made us aware of the great body of work for which additional study is needed and to which end his own critical insights have provided valuable direction.

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Paul-Gabriel Boucé, ed. *Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. Manchester: Manchester University Press; Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble. [1982]. xii + 262 pp.

In the Preface to this volume Professor Paul-Gabriel Boucé writes that his aim in collecting these essays is "to present an interdisciplinary approach to a Protean and inescapable phenomenon" and he certainly has gathered together an important collection. Of the twelve essays only two (Norah Smith's "Sexual Mores and Attitudes in Enlightenment Scotland" and Robert Adams Day's "Sex, Scatology, Smollett" are exclusively Scottish, although there are others which refer to matters and writers Scottish—Boswell, Lord Bute and David Hume to name the best-known. In keeping with the orientation of *SSL* this review will concentrate on the two specifically Scottish articles.

Nora Smith's essay goes into considerable detail about church (specifically Church of Scotland) attempts at overseeing the morals of its flock. Adultery was, of course, viewed far more seriously than mere fornication although she details instances of heavy punishment meted out to fornicators too. I think, however, that she has singled out particular instances which were not necessarily the rule in eighteenth-century Scotland. It was commonplace at this time for farm laborers to appear before the minister to be married when the woman was already far gone in pregnancy—in fact many couples who were having intercourse considered marriage only when the girl became pregnant. The eighteenth century saw a steady decline in the power of the church, caused as much as anything by the ascendancy of the "New Lights" who held a more charitable view of mankind's transgressions. Robert Burns was flogging a very tired, if not dead, horse when he drew his immortal picture of Holy Willie who prays that his lifting "a lawless leg" will not come back to "be a living plague,/To my dishonor!" There were those who wished the church still held the power it once did, but the case brought before the Presbytery of Ayr, in a conservative area of Scotland, against Gavin Hamilton in 1785 which triggered the writing of "Holy Willie's Prayer" was won by Hamilton. Ultra-conservative attitudes lingered on well into the nineteenth century, but few members of most congregations paid attention to them.

Smith quotes and refers to comic poems by Allan Ramsay

and Dougal Graham (who was somehow left out of the index) to illustrate behavior of the time, but she does not stress, as I think she should have, that the poems in question (Ramsay's "Lucky Spence's Last Advice" and Graham's "Jockey and Maggy's Courtship") are meant to mock the rigorous morality of the church. That they were able to print these poems (and Ramsay's poem was many times reprinted in the eighteenth century) shows of itself that the church no longer held its members in thrall, and that the courts were unwilling or unable to be of much assistance.

Convivial clubs like the Beggar's Benison cited in the article, were, as Smith points out, outlets for frustrated sexuality, but they were a good deal more than that. The Crochallan Fencibles certainly held ribald get-togethers, but it also helped to show how antiquated were church rules governing things sexual. Like the coffee houses of London, the clubs of Edinburgh brought men together who might not otherwise have met. In addition to the lewd behavior of its members, these societies encouraged their members to write—Ramsay's Easy Club is a good example.

In writing about Smollett, Professor Day has a subject who, while unashamedly Scottish (see his "Tears of Scotland" written shortly after Culloden and published at considerable risk to Smollett with his English readers), nevertheless wrote in the mainstream of English fiction, and as a part of this his fiction has usually been studied. Day makes the point that while there is a good deal of sex in Smollett's novels, it is not "integrated into his fictional fabric, not pervasive, not rich, certainly not 'bawdy, earthy.'"

Today's reader, who, as Keith Walker has pointed out, has rarely seen horse dung closer than on his television set at the trooping of the colors, may be somewhat taken aback by the scatology in eighteenth-century fiction, much of it used for satirical or humorous effect. This fascination can probably be explained by the simple fact that at that time there was a great deal of shit lying around. (Is there here a Ph.D. topic on the lowering of scatological content in literature as the sewer system expanded?) Anyway Day points out that Smollett's use of scatology was gratuitous, not, as with Pope and Swift, used for satirical purposes.

Another subject upon which Smollett dwelt at length in his fiction was homosexuality. Day claims that "of major writers in

English before our own day, Smollett is the only one to deal with homosexuality in plain, explicit language and with some length and frequency." In concluding Day suggests that Smollett's fiction has a linear connection (literal or actual) with modern writers such as T.E. Lawrence, Norman Mailer, Ernest Hemingway and D.H. Lawrence. It would be going too far to claim that Smollett's wit derived from his Scottish upbringing, but there is about it a comic coarseness which can be found in Scottish writing of the eighteenth century, in fact much earlier, and we may suppose that Smollett knew much of it.

Several of the essays in this collection deal with topics which would be common to both England and Scotland: Roy Porter's "Mixed Feelings: the Enlightenment and sexuality in eighteenth-century Britain," and Boucé's "Some sexual Beliefs and Myths in eighteenth-century Britain." Peter Wagner's "The Pornographer in the Courtroom: Trial Reports about Cases of sexual Crimes and Delinquencies as a Genre of eighteenth-century Erotica," while it focuses on English trials, certainly could be duplicated from the trials in Scotland where, because of the stronger influence of the Kirk than of its counterpart in England, sexual misconduct was perhaps even more harshly dealt with—see Norah Smith's article. To ascertain that this form of titillation is a rather constant aspect of human behavior we need only tune in our TV sets today to the live coverage of the trial of some sleazy person whose name for a few weeks or months becomes a household word. All that has changed in two hundred years is that we can witness it live and in color in our living rooms.

Three of the contributions are more or less concerned with medicine: Boucé's, Robert A. Erickson's "'The Books of Generation': Observations on the Style of the English Midwife books, 1671-1764" and Arthur H. Cash's "The Birth of Tristram Shandy: Sterne and Dr Burton." Boucé's is the most wide-ranging of the three, touching on both what passed for medical science at the time as well as folk belief. He does not mention one of the great eighteenth-century "how to" books: Dr. John Armstrong's poetical *The Oeconomy of Love*, first published anonymously in 1736 and several times reprinted during the eighteenth century. In 1768 Armstrong published a revised but still anonymous edition, making the poem somewhat less explicit. Unlike Dr. Robert James's *Medicinal Dictionary* at four pounds (noted by Boucé) Armstrong's volume could be had for a

shilling. No matter how well intentioned such sex manuals may have been, there was a steady opposition to them as we learn from one of Armstrong's biographers who claims that critics considered the work "a degrading speculation, by which he hoped to entice his readers into libertine courses, that he might derive benefit from his medical skill, in removing the consequences of their indiscretion." Armstrong was also the author of a family "how to" book on medicine, *The Art of Preserving Health: A Poem* (1774) which also went through several editions.

It is interesting to note that almost all the contributors stress the fact that their topics need much more study, and every essay in the collection points to other areas of investigation, equally important, which were not examined in this book. Boucé has put together a good collection, and we are indebted to him and his collaborators for perceptive and stimulating articles.

G.R.R.

Roderick Watson. *The Literature of Scotland*. [London]: Macmillan. [1984]. xiv + 481 pp. Macmillan History of Literature.

Roderick Watson's *The Literature of Scotland* is part of the Macmillan History of Literature series. I am pleased that Watson has included the major Gaelic writers, so that his title truly reflects the contents of the book. In *The Literature of Scotland* there is continuity, supplied in part by the division of the material into only seven chapters and also by the inclusion of a necessary minimum of history in its broadest sense.

Watson has tried, consistent with including all the major Scottish figures who wrote in Gaelic, Scots or English, after it became a distinct presence in the literature of the country, to strike a balance in the amount of discussion given to each period. Thus, apart from the "Beginnings of Scotland: two cultures," we are not surprised to find that the shortest section deals with the sixteenth century. I like his chapter on the seventeenth century, of which almost a third is devoted to ballads. He sensibly begins by a section on the ballad collectors: Percy, David Herd, Joseph Ritson, Child and others, but fails to include Gavin Greig's *Last*

Leaves of Traditional Ballads and Ballad Airs (1925), except, in passing, under the twentieth century.

Watson has a good chapter, too, on the eighteenth century. This is a difficult period for the general reader to comprehend, because the sudden international reputation that writers who used English, like David Hume and Adam Smith, brought to the country has tended to overshadow the quite remarkable achievement of writers in both the Doric and Gaelic. Burns is, of course, universally admired, but Ramsay and Fergusson are ignored outside Scotland, and how few non-Scots or Scots are aware of the great flowering of Gaelic poetry in that century. Even the names Alexander MacDonald, Robert Mackay, William Ross, Duncan Bàn Macintyre, and the apocalyptic vision of Dugald Buchanan mean little to modern readers. It is refreshing to read an account of the Ossian fragments which does not merely dismiss Macpherson's work as forgery and ignore the immense influence he had on European literature. It is not even enough to claim that Macpherson was in tune with the developing ideas of Romanticism; coming in 1760 the Ossianic fragments gave Romanticism direction, and Watson recognizes this.

Cutting Burns down to size requires a personal choice of what to develop and what to mention, or even omit, and this choice never seems to find Burns scholars in agreement, so I shall not argue with Watson's preferences. He does a bit of damage to "Holy Willie's Prayer" by quoting stanzas out of order and thus failing to make the point that the poem goes from the general (O Thou that in the Heavens does dwell) portrait of the God of predestination (Wha, as it pleases best Thysel,/Send ane to Heaven an' ten to Hell) to Holy Willie's particular case (. . . confess I must—/At times I'm fashed wi' fleshly lust;) to the enlarged particular of the village (Lord, mind Gau'n Hamilton's deserts!) and back to the general condemnation of all the ungodly (And pass not in Thy mercy by them,/Nor hear their pray'r) thus completing the circle of hypocrisy.

The chapters on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are the longest, the latter accounts for over a quarter of the book. Particularly in the matter of poetry the nineteenth century represents selection on the author's part because there was a good deal more poetry published in the nineteenth century than in this one, but one would not quarrel with Watson's omission of most

of it. On the major poets Watson is judicious: capturing the appeal which Scott had for his reading public, balancing the serious poet in Hogg with the ribald makar of rural Scotland—for sheer exuberance it is hard to equal

D'ye ken the big village of Balmaquhapple,
The great muckle village of Balmaquhapple?
'Tis steep'd in iniquity up to the thrapple,
An' what's to become o' poor Balmaquhapple?

There is a good section on Stevenson. Even though, as Watson points out, *A Child's Garden of Verses* relates to R.L.S.'s own "imaginative life of bedside dreams and games on the counterpane" he had the remarkable gift of being able to write children's poetry without the slightest hint of condescension to them; this has left the poems as fresh today as when they were written a century ago. I was pleased, too, at Watson's mention of the long short story "The Merry Men," unquestionably one of Stevenson's best which is, unfortunately, not well enough known today.

The Scottish Renaissance has produced so many important writers that Watson was obliged to pare down the space allotted to them in order to include as many noteworthy names as possible. With so many very good writers at work in this century it is a pity that Watson was not able to give them greater coverage; the top three or four have already been reasonably well covered in separate books or chapters in books, but it is those just below them whose work needs further investigation. I think of Sydney Goodsir Smith, the subject of a pamphlet by MacDiarmid and a collection of memorial essays published in 1975; Iain Crichton Smith, Alexander Scott, Norman MacCaig and others who have not yet been the subject of book-length studies. Perhaps a book like Watson's will stimulate scholars to fill in these lacunae. More than anything his book underlines the need for good texts, preferably in bilingual editions, of Gaelic poets, not only twentieth-century ones but also for the fine earlier Gaelic poets. Donald MacAulay made a good start with his *Nua-bhàrdachd Ghàidhlig/Modern Scottish Gaelic Poems* of 1977, but there remains much to be done. Given the dwindling number of native speakers, Gaels should at least have their heritage available to them in their adoptive tongue.

No history like this one is without errors, but Watson appears to be remarkably free of them. Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany* was first published in 1723, not 1724; there were over thirty reprintings of the *Tea-Table Miscellany* in eighty years, not twenty-four; Macpherson's Ossianic "poems" are not purely "neoclassical prose poetry," their rhythm owes much to the English of the Bible. "Holy Willie's Prayer" was indeed printed during Burns's lifetime, the printing of 1789 was not, as far as we know, authorized by Burns, but it appeared nevertheless; Boswell is not now regarded as the "busy, confident Scot" by anyone who has read beyond his *Life of Johnson*. But these are very minor complaints. Watson has produced a literary history which is attractively produced, reads well and is accurate in fact and in interpretation.

G.R.R.

James A. Mackay. *The Burns Federation 1885-1985*. Kilmarnock: Burns Federation. 1985. [viii] + 250 pp.

The phenomenon of the grass-roots popularity of Robert Burns is one which continues to astonish. From the beginning he was perceived by readers from all walks of life to be one of them. Those with supposedly refined literary taste may have been somewhat condescending to his poetry (as they were towards him at times in Edinburgh), but there was never any doubt in the readership which he had among the common people that he spoke directly to them, and in terms which they understood. Unfortunately the subscription list was not printed in his 1786 volume as it was in that of the succeeding year, but it would have contained, we may be certain, a majority of the "little people" of whom the poet was so fond, and among whose number he always counted himself.

It was actually not until after his death that the great increase in editions of Burns's works occurred; true, there were 3,000 copies of the two states of the 1787 Edinburgh edition of his poems sold; there was an authorized edition published in London that same year and pirated editions in Belfast and Dublin, as well as in Philadelphia and New York the following year, but the explosion came about 1800 when there were 76

genuine editions in a decade as well as chapbooks, collections containing individual songs and ephemera. From then on the reputation of Robert Burns never looked back.

The first official posthumous recognition of the poet was, of course, his rather elaborate funeral in Dumfries. There followed not long after the first Burns supper which celebrated his birthday, and soon after that the first Burns society was founded. There were also St. Andrew's societies which began celebrating the birthday of Scotland's Bard. Festivities came to a feverish pitch as the centenary of the poet's birth approached; the whiskey industry must surely have doubled its output in anticipation of the toasts to be drunk, and victuallers the world over rubbed their hands in anticipation. Boston, never a place to be outdone in a party, gathered together 278 lovers of Burns for an eight-course meal at which there were offered eight sorts of roasts, nine other sorts of meats, and no less than a dozen varieties of wild fowl! How Emerson managed to make one of the finest tributes ever to Burns after this meal boggles the mind.

There were other serious celebrations in 1859, and as 1896 (the centenary of the death of the poet) drew near there were grandiose preparations for what turned out to be a much larger celebration of the fame of Scotland's Bard, including the most important Burns exhibition ever mounted. But a decade before this the number of Burns clubs had proliferated to the point that there was a need for a "caretaker" association to bring all the societies together, and so in 1885 there was formed the Burns Federation. This major step in bringing Burnsians together was followed in 1892 by the first *Annual Burns Chronicle and Club Directory*, a publication which is still much to the fore today. The purpose of the *Chronicle* was twofold: to print the news of the affiliated clubs, and to publish scholarly articles about Burns. The Federation has been fortunate from the beginning with dedicated, able and long-lived Editors for the *Burns Chronicle*: three of them, Duncan McNaught, James C. Ewing and James Veitch, served for 82 of its first 86 years. In fact looking through the lists of office holders of the Federation one is struck by how long many of them held office, a tribute to the high quality of their stewardship—and they have all served in a voluntary capacity.

James A. Mackay, Editor of the *Burns Chronicle* since 1978, has written an informed and interesting history of the Federation

as it commences its second century. The Federation certainly has come a long way in its first century; during this time there have been formed over 1040 Burns Clubs worldwide which today boast a membership of over 80,000. Not the least of the achievements of the Federation is Mackay's history, and we may look forward next year to his bicentenary edition of the Kilmarnock edition of Burns's *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. Like the reputation of Burns himself, that of the Burns Federation is well assured.

G.R.R.