Oh, mother dear, go mak' my bed,
And make it soft and narrow;
For the lad that died for me today,
I'll die for him tomorrow.

Now this fair maid, being sore with child
To the one she loved so dearly,
Has turned her pale face to the wall,
And died with grief and sorrow.

I am engaged in a study of *The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow* in Scottish tradition, and would be indebted to any reader who could supply me with a version or versions of it. Information regarding the history of the ballad, details of when, where, and from whom the version was learned, and comments on the ballad's popularity in any Scottish community would also be most useful, and will be gratefully acknowledged.

RICHARD BAUMAN

The music was transcribed and prepared for publication by Miss GILLIAN JOHNSTONE

Book Reviews

Scotland, from the earliest times to 1603. A New History of Scotland, Vol. I. By William Croft Dickinson. Nelson. 1961. vii+408 pp., with a map. 42s.

This book, the first volume of a two-volume *New History of Scotland*, covers in one broad sweep the entire field of Scottish history to the year 1603. Starting with an introductory chapter in which briefly he discusses general historical and geographical trends and influences, the author passes from the prehistoric inhabitants of Scotland to the people and customs of the Scotland of James VI, interspersing his narrative of political events—which must be seen as a framework rather than as a direct contribution to the political history of Scotland—with passages on the Church, administration, constitutional development and social life in country and town. To do all this in the course of one volume implies that the late Professor Dickinson was writing for the general reader, not the historical specialist, and this position he makes quite clear at the outset. It is essentially as a general work that his achievement must be judged.

In the earlier chapters Professor Dickinson has relied largely on the acknowledged work of other experts, which he has absorbed and translated into a clear and concise narrative of the beginnings of Scotland. But interesting although this is, one almost wishes this preliminary had not been necessary; for it is not until he reaches the twelfth century and the story of feudal society and Normanised administration that the author begins to display his own interests by the vitality of his writing. This vitality persists in all the passages on administration, central and local, and is particularly in evidence in the chapters on burghal organisation and everyday life in the burgh, subjects on which he himself has contributed much of our present knowledge. In the chapters on the medieval Church a lucid account is given of ecclesiastical organisation, monastic and secular; but, from the very beginning, there seems to be a tendency to emphasise those aspects of the Church and its government which developed into the abuses which made the Reformation necessary. This is, of course, permissible as a general theme; but there is insufficient description of the positive contribution the late medieval Church had to offer, and hence the reader does not gain a full and balanced picture. Yet, when he comes to the Reformation itself, Professor Dickinson gives a clear, fair and well-balanced account of that complex political and religious situation, which, within the limits of its conciseness, should be compulsory reading for all students of this controversial topic. This is a remarkable achievement when one considers the difficulty, once the sixteenth century is reached, of compressing quantities of complicated historical material into the mould required by a volume of this type.

Individual readers will inevitably find points for disagreement in the treatment and emphasis given to the various subjects, but this is one measure of the stimulus that reading this book can give. And those readers knowledgeable in particular periods or subjects will equally inevitably find minor points of fact or minute detail which are inaccurate. For example, it is not strictly correct to say (p. 81) that after 1237 frontier administration was conducted by Wardens of the marches of the two countries; these officials did not exist until the fourteenth century, and, prior to this, frontier negotiations were carried out by the sheriffs of the border counties as part of their normal shrieval functions. Again, the emphasis given (p. 375) to the parliamentary enactment in 1587 of the terms

of the General Band, an administrative device for controlling the turbulent borderers, obscures the fact that the General Band had been used for at least 35 years before this with a considerable degree of effect. But these, and such as these, are trivial points in themselves, and the fact that they can be made should in no way blind us to the greater achievement of Professor Dickinson's work.

In his foreword the author hopes that his volume will "stimulate interest and help to further the study of Scottish History". The careful reader will in fact find himself stimulated to ask questions throughout. Is there more to be learned about the medieval trade of Scotland, and to what extent did it fluctuate from period to period? How did some families improve their social position at the expense of others, and what was the basis of their increasing power in this upward social surge? Again, while on the subject of social mobility, is there any historical evidence to support the hypotheses of the geographical movements of people made by Dr. Nicolaisen in the course of several of his place-name studies in this very periodical? Was Scottish foreign policy completely dominated in the later medieval period by the concept of the French alliance? What was the nature of the Scottish "civil service" in the sixteenth century, who staffed it, and what effect did these men have on the Scottish administration? These are some of the random thoughts of one reader only. To answer them much more basic historical research will have to be carried out; and, if Professor Dickinson's book stimulates historians to try to find out the answers to these and other similar questions, he will indeed have performed an additional noble service for Scottish history.

Professor Dickinson has written, within the limits of a single volume, the history of medieval Scotland made necessary by his own life-time. He does not supersede the existing political narrative of Hume Brown, but supplements it with an account of these subjects which have interested Scottish historians throughout the first half of this century and which reflect many of the broader historical interests of the present day. This, based partly on his own meticulous scholarship and partly on the work of others, is presented in a lucid but authoritative manner; even when the subject becomes controversial or complex, the narrative, without simplification, retains its unobtrusive confidence. This volume can be read with profit by all—by the general reader interested in the story

of his own country, by the schoolboy or university student as a textbook, by the specialist in search of stimulation.

THOMAS I. RAE

The Northern Isles. Edited by F. T. Wainwright. Pp. xii+224. Edinburgh: Nelson. 1962. 30s.

This is a volume to be welcomed with real pleasure, for, to paraphrase Matthew Arnold's famous definition of criticism, it is a summary of the best that is known and thought to-day about the early history and prehistory of those northern isles of Scotland, lying on the outer fringe of the western world as it was known of old. In dealing with periods regarding which written records are either scanty or entirely lacking, a certain degree of speculation is inevitable, yet this work is as factual and objective as such a study can well be.

It is a composite work, the outcome of one of those Summer Schools of History and Archaeology inaugurated and organised by the late Dr. F. T. Wainwright whose early death was a tragic loss to Scottish research, and to whose work a Preface by Mr. Stewart Cruden pays a well-deserved tribute. He was not only Editor of this volume, but a main contributor also, and his team of other experts could not have been better chosen.

After a brief Introduction by the Editor the first contribution is a short chapter on the Physical Background by Professor A. C. O'Dell of Aberdeen University. This is an admirably clear statement of the facts, though a reference to the Old Man of Hoy scarcely holds water. Since on early maps he can find no mention of the name, he suggests that this conspicuous sea-stack may well be the result of comparatively recent coast-erosion. In a short note on the name, however, in a *Festskrift til Dag Strombäck* (1960) I drew attention to its older name—The Stower—which represents the O.N. *staurr*, a pillar or post &c., a name which may be compared with Bod Storr in Skye which has also been Englished to The Old Man of Storr. Thus the stack must have existed there long ago when Norsemen applied that name.

The next four chapters may be considered briefly together: The Earliest Inhabitants, by the late Professor V. G. Childe; Neolithic Structures in Shetland, by Mr. C. S. T. Calder; The Bronze Age, by Professor Childe also; and The Brochs and Broch-Builders by Mr. J. R. C. Hamilton, whose name is so closely linked with the Jarlshof excavations in Shetland. It

is regrettable that in these chapters are certain mutual discrepancies which might have been reconciled had the Editor survived to make a final revision.

The earliest inhabitants of these isles—a long-headed race (now commonly referred to as Megalithic, from the nature of their tombs) are generally held to have arrived sometime about 1500 B.C., and Mr. Calder in fact specifically states in regard to Shetland that their surviving evidence, structural and industrial, suggests that they settled on these shores about the middle of the second millennium before Christ. Besides many of their burial cairns Mr. Calder has been instrumental in bringing to light some of their actual house-sites, of which some sixty have now been identified, as well as two other foundations which he regards as sites of temples. The presence of a somewhat larger structure adjacent to one of those temples has led Mr. Calder to suggest that it may have been a dormitory for the temple priests. That site is locally known as the 'Benie Hoose", but, if dating from Neolithic times, it is an astonishing coincidence that *beni-hus* is cited in Jakobsen's Dictionary as an Old Shetland term for a chapel (= O.N. *bæn-hús*, prayer-house or chapel)!

In addition to those house-sites themselves, Mr. Calder has found attached to some of them a number of field systems bounded by stone dykes. And that those Neolithic settlers cultivated such fields and grew grain he has proved conclusively by finding not only their rough stone implements and trough-querns, but at one house-site on the Ness of Gruting in Whalsay "a large quantity of barley preserved in a carbonised state", and containing seed that remained recognisable as such after some 3,500 years! It had lain undisturbed under a bed of pure peat-ash nearly two feet thick. Those house-sites, he says, are separate from each other, but the majority form groups along the seashore in positions akin to the crofts of to-day.

Bearing in mind the above facts supplied by Mr. Calder as to the age and siting of such huts, the second paragraph of Mr. Hamilton's chapter seems curiously at variance. "The open farm-steads", he writes, "the temple buildings, the chambered tombs reflect the rich and successful colonization of the islands in the generally peaceful conditions of the *late third* and second millennia B.C." And he continues: "The siting of the small farm-steads on high ground, now barren peat-clad moorland, belies the warmer and drier climate of the Sub-Boreal phase, when seafaring, too, up the Atlantic coastal route

from Iberia to Shetland was freer from prolonged gales and storms." Can the above predicate—belies—by any chance be a misprint for—betokens? The whole paragraph indeed might well have benefited from an editor's revision.

The only Neolithic house-sites so far known in Orkney are those revealed by Prof. Childe at the famous hamlet of Skara-brae and the kindred but more ruinous site of Rinyo in Rousay. In his classic volume on Skarabrae (1931) he could push the origin of that settlement back only to an upward limit of 500 B.C. At a later stage, however, his discovery at Rinyo of pottery of the type characteristic of the early chambered cairns enabled him to push back that site as well as Skarabrae a millennium or so further to a period more or less contemporary with those cairns, i.e. roughly to the middle of the second millennium B.C. Now from some of these cairns, e.g. Unston, evidence of agri-culture has also been found in impressions of seeds of barley on some of the pottery found therein. So apparently those first Neolithic settlers in Orkney were grain-growers also as were those in Shetland. Yet strangely enough at Skarabrae, which was excavated with meticulous care by Childe, he could find no certain evidence of grain-growing any more than of the use of metal of any sort. And Mr. Calder in fact suggests that the Shetland colonists must have by-passed Orkney, a conclusion by no means easy to understand.

In Prof. Childe's first chapter the most striking (and from him not a little surprising) suggestion is that the motive force which drove those first megalithic folk all the way from the Mediterranean west and north even to these northern isles of Britain was a spiritual urge comparable to that of Christian missionaries later. He returns to that idea twice, and in regard to their remarkable tombs writes: ". . . the tomb should be compared to a church rather than a castle. The leaders would owe their status and authority to spiritual prestige rather than temporal power. They would indeed be comparable to the Celtic saints who journeyed about and gathered around them lay disciples from a devout peasantry. Some such hypothesis of missionaries from the south-west winning the allegiance of a British peasantry by their reputation for sanctity or magic power would neatly explain the transfer to Orkney of a peculi-arly British or Britannico-Hibernian material culture combined with rather exotic idealogical equipment".—An interesting if not very convincing hypothesis.

The Bronze Age of these isles is a rather nebulous period, its

most conspicuous surviving monuments being the rings of Standing Stones at Stennes in Orkney, and the early huts at Jarlshof in Shetland. Childe's chapter on this period is comparatively brief, probably in view of the fact that in previous works he had dealt more fully with the relics and problems of that age.

The longer chapter following on the Brochs and Broch Builders by Mr. Hamilton is (apart from the second paragraph already mentioned) a most penetrating and suggestive discussion of all the knotty problems arising in connection with those gaunt towers and their relation to hill forts and other kindred structures. Nowhere else can one look for a better summary of the main facts, even though after all the broch problem remains a conundrum.

Dr. Wainwright's chapter on the Picts and Scots which follows may be regarded as in large measure a condensation of the matter previously appearing in his *Problem of the Picts*, the first volume emanating from the studies of his Summer Schools. But his next chapter on the Scandinavian Settlement, the longest and perhaps most generally interesting in the book, is something of a *tour de force*. Here his wonderful powers of assimilation and his acquaintance with the whole subject and its extensive literature are most impressive, and result in a luminous survey containing little that might call for serious criticism.

The choice of Mr. Ralegh Radford for the chapter on Art and Architecture—Celtic and Norse—was also most happy. One of Britain's most distinguished archaeologists and a man of wide experience, through his peculiar acquaintance with early Celtic remains both in Ireland and Britain he has been able to shed much light on the origin and nature of the numerous Celtic church remains in these northern isles. For several years now he has also been engaged on unravelling the tangled complex of Celtic and Norse remains on the Brough of Birsay in Orkney, and has there been brought into close personal touch with the subject here discussed.

A brief chapter by the Editor on the Golden Age and After deals with the Saga period and subsequent history of the isles, and a still briefer Appendix on the St. Ninian Isle excavations brings the composite volume to a close. It should be added, however, that the 19 pages of References and Abbreviations at the end are most instructive and greatly enhance the usefulness of the book, while bound up therewith at the end are also

24 illustrative plates of quite first rate quality. Altogether this composite work will be found indispensable by all students of Scottish history and of these northern isles in particular. And it is singularly pleasing to record that the volume is dedicated to the memory of Professor V. G. Childe whose work in the field of Scottish archaeology together with that of his great predecessor Dr. Joseph Anderson, has done so much to bring *lux in tenebris.*

HUGH MARWICK

Scottish Literature and the Scottish People 1680-1830. David Craig. Pp. 340. London: Chatto and Windus. 1961. 30s.

The strength and weakness of Dr. Craig's work are illustrated by the statement with which he begins his book. He wishes (p. 11) "to form a 'social history' of literature for Scotland from the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth century" and "to find particular facts and particular passages of poetry or fiction in which the life of the people seems to reveal itself most genuinely, and hence to give actuality to themes such as community, society, class, speech-idiom, tradition—which are so apt to remain vague." The concept is bold, and particularly in the chapter on "Religion in Scottish Fiction", Dr. Craig obtains valuable results. On the other hand, he is attempting in fewer than 300 pages to write the history of a century and a half of literary and social activity. Inevitably his book leaves an impression of incompleteness, and sometimes arbitrariness. The concepts "life," "people", "community", "society", "class", are partially subjective, and so necessarily vague. Dr. Craig's attempt, often anachronistically in terms of Marx (1818-83) and Engels (1820-95), to impose precision, does not always convince. Dr. Craig too is overdependent on the work of Van Wyck Brooks, recently characterised by the American scholar Leslie A. Fiedler as "finally a nostalgic and sentimental evocation of our past, more decorative than insightful, more commemorative than analytic" (*Contemporary Literary Scholarship*, ed. L. Leary, New York, 1958, p. 163). Dr. Craig's treatment of language is inadequate, and he seems almost unaware of the bulk of earlier Scottish literature. He makes amazingly few specific external comparisons, even with later eighteenth century and early nineteenth century England and its literature. On p. 19 he classifies Pope (1688-1744) and Fergusson (1750-74) as contemporarics. To some extent this typifies an over-easy approach to chronology and period.

Dr. Craig's study is in three parts, "Vernacular Literature: the Popular and 'Polite' Publics", "Scottish Fiction and Society" and "Language". The second of these achieves most, but the first is the more important as establishing a general background for the whole. Dr. Craig begins with the concept of "The Old Communal Culture", which he holds, remained insulated from "the more refined manners and ideas which the educated classes were learning from France and England". The expression of this culture he traces by way of "The Piper of Kilbarchan" back to "Peblis to the Play" and "Christis Kirk on the Green". Noone denies that eighteeenth century Scottish poetry derives partly from this tradition. Dr. Craig ignores, however, firstly the varied stylistic possibilities of the vernacular, exploited particularly by Fergusson and Burns, and secondly the other traditions of Scottish writing which remained influential during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. One might instance in particular the work of Gavin Douglas, Sir David Lindsay and Alexander Montgomerie. Nor were either Fergusson or Burns particularly insulated from English and French manners and ideas. Dr. Craig's thesis sometimes leads to him misread the evidence. Thus on p. 93 he writes, "Again, in 'The Epistle to Davie' Burns evokes in sharp detail the hardship which was commonplace to the labourer:

To lie in kilns and barns at e'en,
When bones are crazed, and bluid is thin . . ."

He quotes in illustration anecdotes from Hugh Miller (1802-56). Burns, however, intended to evoke, not the hardship of the labourer, but the possibility of himself becoming a beggar, a recurring theme which for Burns held some attractions.

Dr. Craig's treatment of the novel is better; I have already mentioned Chapter VI, "Religion in Scottish Fiction". The greatest weakness of the section is Dr. Craig's tendency to prescribe subjects, and afterwards to criticise the novelists adversely for failing to write in accordance with his prescriptions. "We wonder, 'Did no novelist see anything in *that*, or *that*?'" (p. 140). Dr. Craig's arbitrariness of chronology reappears, for instance in the sentence (p. 146), "By the second half of the century Russia had her Tolstoy, with his intimate knowledge of Moscow and St. Petersburg (as well as of the country), and England her George Eliot and Dickens, with their knowledge of the provincial town and of London," and

in his tendency to treat Stevenson (1850-94), Scott (1771-1832), Dickens (1812-70) and Disraeli (1804-81) as contemporaries falling equally within the period he has chosen to discuss.

In general, the best parts of Dr. Craig's book are incidental. His plan is too ambitious for his resources. Scottish literary studies require at present more detailed and precise investigations in more limited fields.

JOHN MACQUEEN

Scots in Sweden. Jonas Berg and Bo Lagercrantz. Pp. 102. Stockholm Nordiska Museet and Swedish Institute. 4s.

Scots in Sweden was written by the organisers as an introduction to the exhibition shown at the Royal Scottish Museum in August-September 1962, and afterwards in Gothenburg and Stockholm. The booklet, scarcely 100 pages long, does not attempt any consecutive account of Scottish-Swedish relations, but aims simply to give the background information necessary to appreciate the exhibits. Biographical notes on the principal Scots who settled in Sweden or served in Swedish armies are supplemented by a minimum of historical comment.

Lacking adequate secondary sources, the authors had to lean heavily on Th. A. Fischer's unsatisfactory volume *The Scots in Sweden* (1907). (Compare Fischer pp. 71-77 with Berg and Lagercrantz, pp. 25-27, and pp. 94-98 with pp. 26, 28-9.) To their credit, however, Messrs. Berg and Lagercrantz, have managed to supplement or amend Fischer on several matters: the biographies of the Stockholm merchant Blasius Dundee, of the diplomat Andrew Keith, of the soldiers Samuel Cobron and David Drummond (who is not mentioned at all by Fischer); the career of the Tottie family from Jedburgh; Colin Campbell's part in founding the Swedish East India Company; the Scottish artisans in Stockholm; and the Scots in the Danish armies in Sweden in 1502 and 1520-1523.

Several of Fischer's less convincing ideas have been retained. Among the Scottish inhabitants of the port of Ny-Lödöse, both books give Jacob Leslie (or Lesle, lessle, etc.). Now a word "lessle", variously spelt, frequently appears in sixteenth-century Swedish court and port books as a corruption of the diminutive "lille", and was often used to distinguish a man from his father. Unless the christian name is Scottish, or there is other clear evidence, it is safer to assume that "lessle" is used in this sense rather than as a Scottish surname.

Equally doubtful is Fischer's suggestion that a Scottish officer said to be "skilled in languages" was a Gaelic speaker. Berg and Lagercrantz, indeed, go still further, stating categorically that "he had a good knowledge of Gaelic." Although the man's name was Campbell, it seems much more likely that the language in question was German or even Swedish, since few of the Scots in Swedish service at any time came from Gaelic-speaking areas.

Berg and Lagercrantz also adopt Fischer's suggestion that the Scottish immigration to Gothenburg in the eighteenth century was a result of the Jacobite failures. Now it is true that over the years a number of Scots found their way to Gothenburg for politico-religious reasons, and that several notable Scottish immigrants were Jacobite refugees (e.g. Carnegies and Erskines). But to explain the whole tendency one would also have to consider economic factors: Scotland's economic expansion and ambitions; her population increase; and her old trade with Gothenburg, then reaching its height.

There are, in addition, a number of slips and misprints, of which the most striking is the promotion of Riccio to Cardinal. Otherwise, the booklet provided a useful and unusually detailed introduction to the exhibition.

As an independent work, however, *Scots in Sweden* is less satisfactory. The exhibition, intended for the general public, concentrated on the more spectacular objects—weapons, coats-of-arms, silverware and portraits—which gave a strong impression of the military and personal relations between the countries; trade and diplomacy, being harder to illustrate, were scarcely represented. The book shows the same strong tendency, which may be justified in the circumstances, but produces some curious results: relatively insignificant individuals are fully, treated, while important political and economic matters are barely mentioned. The main omissions may be noted:—

Although Berg and Lagercrantz deal fairly extensively with the Scottish merchants resident in Ny-Lödöse and then in Gothenburg, they say virtually nothing about Scottish-Swedish trade. Scots resident in Sweden did not necessarily trade with their homeland; yet there was an appreciable Scottish traffic in western Sweden when the Ny-Lödöse port-books begin in 1546, long before Scotland had any trade with Sweden beyond the Sound. Though interrupted by Danish wars and other misfortunes, this continued, chiefly because Scotland needed Swedish iron. In the later eighteenth century, up to 100 ships

a year, mostly carrying iron, might leave Gothenburg for Scotland.

Less than a paragraph is given to Erik XIV's suit to Mary Stuart—an incident which escaped Fischer altogether, but one of some importance. Erik's main aim was an alliance with a western power who could help defend his narrow western coast against the Danes. Although Mary, like Elizabeth of England, refused a formal alliance, the second Swedish embassy to Scotland in 1563 was followed by the arrival of the first Scottish mercenary contingent in Sweden in 1564.

Berg and Lagercrantz give a brief and dubious account of the diplomatic background to Thirty Years' War. They emphasise James VI's love of peace and Gustavus Adolphus's attempts to enlist Charles I as an ally; but ignore James's earlier diplomatic initiative. He used James Spens of Wormiston, the double ambassador between Sweden and "Magna Britannia", as an instrument for several attempts to negotiate a Protestant alliance including Sweden, Denmark, Holland, and the German Protestants. In 1623 detailed proposals were ready for ratification, but were abandoned because of the mutual suspicions of Sweden and Denmark, and Sweden's commitment in Poland. King James, at least, seems to have realised that the great religious war would be fought in Germany, and not directly against Spain or Poland.

Surely, even as an introduction to the exhibition, it would have been better to deal more fully with questions such as these. The limited space could have been better disposed, and the booklet given a wider scope. As it is, *Scots in Sweden* will be useful chiefly as a supplement to Fischer.

In addition to the main essay, there are four other pieces in the book: a Preface by Gösta Berg, director of Nordiska Museet in Stockholm; an amiable if slight Introduction by Eric Linklater; an amusing account of a Swedish dinner-party by a Scot visiting Gothenburg in 1812; and a reprint of the well-known essay which Frans G. Bengtsson derived from Robert Monro's famous account of his adventures in the German wars, *Monro His Expedition* . . . The Linklater and Bengtsson pieces weight the book still more heavily on the military side. The illustrations, mostly from Callot engravings, are excellent, and the book is as tastefully laid out as the exhibition itself.

JAMES DOW