from Fortingall Hotel would then construct the bonfire on the top of the mound, *Carn nam Marbh*. When it was blazing, everyone joined hands and danced round the mound, clockwise and anti-clockwise. The whole village gathered to take part in the ceremony. Then, as the fire went down, some of the younger boys took burning faggots from the flames and ran throughout the field with them, finally throwing them into the air and dancing over them as they lay on the ground. Later still, when the last embers were glowing, the boys would leap over the fire, marking who should leap furthest. When the bonfire was finished, the young people went home and ducked for apples while the older people went to the Hotel and had a dance there. There was no guising apparently on Hallowe'en as the huge bonfire occupied everyone's attention during the evening.

The last great bonfire was lit in Fortingall about 1924. The festival died out there, not because of lack of interest on the part of the people, but because it was stopped by the keeper who claimed that the large-scale stripping of whin from the hill deprived the game of cover.

NOTE

[1] Duncan MacGregor dates the big Fortingall market *Féill Ceit* to this date also, and thinks there may be a link between the date of the market and that of the celebration of Hallowe'en. Stewart (1928:187), however, gives the date of *Féill Ceit* as being December 6th and 7th. The ground outside the gates of Fortingall Church is still a market stance and the public have the right to park their cars there to this day.

REFERENCE

STEWART, ALEXANDER
1928 *A Highland Parish*. Glasgow.

ANNE ROSS

C. BOOK REVIEWS

The Dewar Manuscripts, Volume One. Scottish West Highland Folk Tales collected originally in Gaelic by John Dewar. Edited with Introduction and Notes by the Rev. John Mackechnie. Glasgow: William Maclellan. 1964. Pp. 400; 35 photographs; genealogical tables. 63s.

When J. F. Campbell of Islay was publishing his West Highland Tales, John Dewar, a woodman on the Argyll estates, was encouraged by him and the 8th Duke to gather

Gaelic folktales in Argyll, Dunbartonshire and Lochaber. He began this in 1859, but most of the collection was made between 1863 and 1871. Many of his original Gaelic field copies, and duplicates, are now in the National Library of Scotland, but Dewar made fair copies, consisting of five volumes which, with two notebooks, are now at Inveraray Castle. At the request of Campbell of Islay these were translated into English by Hector Maclean the Islay schoolmaster in 1880-81; and his translation, in nineteen volumes, is also at Inveraray. It is this English version that the Rev. J. Mackechnie is now in the process of editing; the original Gaelic is unfortunately not included. The book is most expensively and handsomely produced (though the binding of this reviewer's copy will obviously not stand hard wear); and the excellent photographs, particularly the sketches and portraits of Campbell of Islay and the pages from the Dewar MSS., are of much interest. It is regrettable that works of scholarship cannot hope to be published in this lavish manner.

The book contains some fifty stories, varying from less than a page to over twenty. With the exception of one Fenian story they are all "clan" or "historical" tales, i.e. they are traditions of historical or supposedly historical events, seen as the personal adventures of more or less famous clansmen. In the circumstances they are naturally concerned chiefly with the Campbells or clans having close connections with them; and they refer to the period between the late sixteenth and the early nineteenth centuries. The question how far these traditions are, or can be, really "historical" is one that is of little primary interest to the folklorist *qua* folklorist, since he is mainly concerned with them as expressions of oral traditions, but it will be the first asked by historians. Campbell of Islay's own views are quoted on p. 25; he regarded them as "the popular view of great events looked at from below . . . microscopic and accurate for details, but hazy, vague, distorted, and mythical, for all that is beyond the people." It must be remembered, à propos of the many traditions here printed belonging to the period of the '45 and afterwards, that in theory Dewar could have heard them from men who got them at first hand from people who themselves actually witnessed the events described. Unfortunately the editor has not thought proper to give what Campbell of Islay himself generally scrupulously recorded in his notes; the names, ages and places of residence of the tellers and any details available about the sources from whom they got their

tales. This, the indispensable and universal modern practice, may go a long way towards answering questions of this kind. It is to be hoped that this unexpected omission will be rectified in a future volume.

The fact is that a great opportunity has been missed here. Some of the events, such as the Appin Murder, are well known and fully documented from true historical written sources, and it would have been extremely useful to have set out, in systematic if summary fashion, the exact points where the oral tradition differs from the written, where it agrees with it and where it amplifies it, pointing out not only cases where the former is evidently not authentic but also any instances where it has a probable air of greater authenticity; and also investigating the question whether printed sources (e.g. for the Appin Murder) can have influenced the oral tradition. It is true that a good deal of material taken from historical sources is quoted in illustration in the enormous learned-looking *Notes* (said on p. 16 to have been "cut down as much as possible"), but the problems in question are not seriously dealt with. Large parts of the Notes could well have been dispensed with to make room for this. But one should not ask too much; perhaps this too will be handled in some other volume.

The actual content is of course of immense interest. There are old favourites here, such as a version of "Atholl's Sheep and Lochiel's Wolves" (no. 11), or "Little John MacAndrew" (no. 44), but there is a great deal that is new or far less familiar, and all is full of fascination. A story of Rob Roy; traditions of Prestonpans; Culloden and the escapes of some of the participants, particularly the adventures of Charles Stewart of Ardshiel told at great length; and the Appin Murder; not to mention many stories of earlier times; are told in the usual terse, "nervous" Gaelic style. According to the version given, the murderer of Colin of Glenure was Donald Stewart, nephew of Stewart of Ballachulish, and his confederate in the ambush was Stewart of Fasnacloich; and Alan Breck was bribed to leave the country and "confess" to the murder by letter from abroad, a device which of course failed to save James of the Glen.

We must all be grateful to the editor for the painstaking labours which have gone to make available this impressive and tremendously interesting body of Highland oral tradition, and the volumes yet to come are eagerly awaited. Maclean's translation seems to have been printed on the whole much as it stands, though certain words of the editor's about making it

"attractive to the modern reader" (p. 14), about "departures . . . to achieve a more readable version" (p. 16), and about modernisations of the text to avoid wearying the reader (p. 50 f.), hardly inspire confidence. *Modernisation* is scarcely the word that could be applied to such a principle, in editing at all events, but it does not appear to amount to very much. One trusts it will be abandoned in the next volume, though the exact reverse is unfortunately indicated on p. 51.

Speaking of other collectors of Scottish folklore since Dewar, the editor appears to regard Kenneth Macleod as the last (p. 47). This is less than generous to numerous people, notably to that distinguished Campbell and doyen of collectors at the present time Dr. John Lorne Campbell (not to mention the members of the School of Scottish Studies of the University of Edinburgh). The attitude towards the Campbells expressed in various places will not awaken an answering echo in every Scottish heart. The ascription of the portrait facing p. 80 to "J. Y. Hurleston" should read "F. Y. Hurlstone" (vide the DNB.). It would be tempting to wax even further critical over certain aspects of the presentation, edition and annotation, but the reviewer will resist this temptation. One may end by remarking the curious error into which the writer of the blurb has fallen in saying that the editor "for a period held the Chair of Celtic at Edinburgh University".

KENNETH JACKSON

The English Ministers and Scotland, 1707-1727. By P. W. J. Riley. The Athlone Press. 1964. xiv+326 pp. 50s.

Scotsmen in 1707 reacted to the Union with deep and conflicting emotions. George, first Earl of Cromarty, had sought to encourage the work of uniting the kingdoms by expressing the wish: "May we be Brittains, and down go the old ignominious names of Scotland (and) of England." But Iain Lom, bard of Keppoch, was firmly of the opinion that Scotland had been sold by her nobles, as is shown in his comment on the Duke of Hamilton:

"Iarla Bhrathainn bhiodh mar ris,
Cha bhiodh mealladh 'sa' chùis ac',
Toirt a' chrùin uainn le ceannach
An ceart fhradharc ar sùilean."

It is not at all unnatural that Scots continue to strike emotional attitudes for or against the Union. An examination of the ways the Union has figured in folklore, newspaper editorials, and general public opinion from 1707 to the present would be a valuable exercise in the field of Scottish Studies. So far, however, historians too have usually preferred to strike attitudes rather than examine them. Not every writer on the Union seems to want to know what really happened. This makes Dr. William Ferguson's article in the *Scottish Historical Review* of October 1964, and Dr. Riley's present book, especially welcome. Dr. Ferguson's article looks at the antecedents of the Union: *English Ministers* is a detailed examination of its immediate results.

Dr. Riley's theme is a dual one. Firstly, he shows how aspects of the Scottish administration—the customs, the excise, the Court of Exchequer—were modernised and anglicised after 1707, and how administrative problems arising from the Union, such as the disbursement of the Equivalent, were tackled. Secondly, he traces the interaction of political developments and administrative ones. A statesman of the time, like Robert Harley or James, Earl of Seafield, saw all this as just one theme. Nowadays, when the propriety of a Sunday newspaper's writing on the opinions and influence of top civil servants as if they were politicians has been called in question, we are bound to see the political and the administrative as two separate themes. The ability to combine them meaningfully and readably is pretty rare in historians, and the way Dr. Riley fuses them constitutes the peculiar excellence of his book.

The mainly political chapters of the book are very detailed. Dr. Riley does more than simply describe what Scots politicians were up to at Westminster, and sketch in enough English background to give the reader his general chronological bearings. Events in Scotland are inexplicable without some understanding of the inner workings of English politics. As Dr. Riley says, Anne's ministers were "concerned with Scotland as a field of tactical manoeuvre in which success could improve their respective positions at Westminster". This concern was intensified by the Union, but began long before 1707.

The more purely administrative chapters are noteworthy for the amount of virgin soil they upturn. In recent years scholars such as Athol Murray have done fresh work on the administrative records of the period, and Dr. Riley has utilised this where possible; but for much of the time he is pioneering.

He brings out clearly the importance of Baron John Scrope of the Court of Exchequer, as co-ordinator of government business in Scotland, and liaison between Scotland and London. Scrope's expertise stands out against a background of chaos in several aspects of the new administration. Some myths are put in perspective too. The Porteous Riot and Burns's "The Deil's Awa Wi' Th' Exciseman" remind us of the unpopularity of the revenue service in eighteenth-century Scotland. The traditional picture of the customs officers is of "Inglish ignorant forners" (and sabbath-breakers). Dr. Riley shows that in fact Englishmen were in a minority in the customs establishment of 1707. He demonstrates that the nationalist element in the protests against the customs men was contemporary and not a later invention, but then proceeds to describe the more prosaic, and more real, causes of friction—the intrigues of Sir Alexander Rigby in the customs commission, disparities between English and Scottish measures, and the natural dislike of taxes and duties, especially increased ones.

Where Dr. Riley's material is most complex, his handling of it is at its best, as in the chapter on "The Equivalent and the Revenue". The tangled affair of the monetary Equivalent "for such parts of the English debts as Scotland may hereafter become liable to pay, by reason of the Union", has never before been so authoritatively described. Dr. Riley's conclusion, that, in disbursing the Equivalent, the commissioners' "proceedings seem to have been marked by adherence to the law", stands in striking contrast to Dr. Ferguson's picture of widespread secret payments to friends of the ministry before the Union. But there is no essential contradiction here, and Dr. Riley wisely stresses the aura of publicity in which the commission worked, rather than any exceptional public morality of the commissioners. "They had to keep within the law because they were accountable for the money, and carefully watched by hostile eyes."

From the point of view of the artistic shape and unity of the book, the final chapter "Walpole and the Scots" is probably a mistake. It takes the development of Scottish politics from 1714 to the dismissal of the Duke of Roxburgh from the third Secretaryship in 1725, and, in barest outline, some considerable way beyond. This period has its own problems, being, in its lack of clear-cut ideological issues, in some ways even more complex than Anne's reign. Very occasionally, in this chapter, Dr. Riley oversimplifies the tangled skein of political alliances

in the interests of brevity. It is going too far to describe the Lord Advocate Sir David Dalrymple as "an Argyll man" in politics, even though the Argathelian faction on occasion worked with him. Dalrymples in politics usually walked alone, and Sir David, though one of the most likeable members of the family, seems also to have been one of the most unwilling for long-term compromise with other political groups.

There is a rather more important point of controversy. Dr. Riley is on sure ground when he says that eighteenth-century ministers disliked a patronage manager who sought to use his control of Scots patronage to make himself independent of his colleagues: this was why the Scottish Secretaryship was allowed to lapse. But Dr. Riley overstresses this point when he argues that the exercise of Scottish patronage in the second half of the eighteenth century by James Stuart Mackenzie and Henry Dundas was "due to special circumstances rather than being part of the normal pattern". The "special circumstance" of the Dundas ascendancy lasted three decades, and it is hard to believe that he was ruling a patronage empire such as had never existed before. And in fact Archibald, Earl of Islay, later third Duke of Argyll, had had a directly comparable role under Walpole and the Pelhams. It would be wrong to over-estimate the capacity of even the indefatigable Newcastle to manage Scotland from London, or to underemphasise the real power of Islay, despite his cheerful preparedness to write obsequious letters to his political bosses.

Nevertheless, it is good to have Dr. Riley's insights into the later period set down for us, however briefly. In a vignette such as that on the Commission of Police, he can materially advance our knowledge and understanding. Some history books by their title suggest a narrow and specialised theme, and yet by their contents not only carry out the task proposed by the title, but also cast a broad illuminating light both before and behind. This is such a book.

JOHN M. SIMPSON

Ulster Dialects—An Introductory Symposium. Ulster Folk Museum. 1964. xiv and 201 pp., 10 maps. 20s.

This is the first publication of the recently established Ulster Folk Museum, which now has in its care the dialect material collected from 1951 onwards by the Belfast Naturalists' Field Club. It is also the latest publication in dialectology

within the British Isles. On both counts it ought to be something of an event. But what is most conspicuously lacking is what might have been most eagerly looked for in a venture of this kind—especially one which emphasises that it is an *introductory* volume—namely, the presentation of a theoretical and methodological background. This unfortunately is not to be found. There is nothing here like Hans Kurath's *Handbook of the Linguistic Geography of New England* or Angus McIntosh's Ann Arbor lecture "On Planning a Dialect Survey" or his subsequent "Introduction to a Survey of Scottish Dialects" which launched the Linguistic Survey of Scotland. Over in Ulster the libations have been offered, the corded bales have been ready for ten years, but no one seems to have had an eye on the *sea*.

This is not to say, however, that flotation has not been attempted. Mr. G. B. Thompson, Director of the Museum, draws attention in his Preface to "material and non-material evidence in all periods of human history". So that, "oral tradition is as much a part of our work as material culture . . . often the name of an object is a dialect word". These words, of course, belong to one type of linguistic piety ("ohne Sachforschung, keine Wortforschung mehr") and a whole theory of linguistics and linguistic geography lies concealed within them, which we might have expected the rest of the book to uncover or discuss. But nothing of the sort happens.

There is, certainly, something which comes out not so much as a theory, more a way of life which has touched Ulster very closely—the advance of English on an Irish substratum, often resulting in a form of Anglo-Irish which Dr. Henry has elsewhere spoken of as "the outcome of adaptation rather than a relic of adoption". This perennial and self-conscious interest is one facet of what Franz Boas called that "secondary reasoning and re-interpretation", which, in the area in which he worked he was unable to observe for *language*, but which field-workers in Ulster and Scotland can hardly ever hope to avoid. One or two of the contributors, especially Dr. Henry, have considered it in other places, but here it is touched on quite lightly although Professor Gregg gives it a complete if rather short section. It alone justifies the inclusion of Mr. Adams's second contribution, a careful study of recent language censuses (with maps) and it must also justify Dr. Henry's contention (p. 147) that "dialect boundaries may be predictable and follow older divisions. The spread of a new dialect . . . may be almost like pouring new

matter into an old mould". If we are going to have controversial matters like predictable dialect divisions and substratum theories, there is no doubt, as Ernst Pulgram pointed out some years ago (*Language* 25: 243, *cf.* Martinet *Rom. Ling.* 5: 155) that we will require non-linguistic as well as linguistic evidence, and if it is *this* which is making the Dialect Archive tick within the general workings of the Folk Museum, then surely we are entitled to have it clearly and cogently stated and discussed; and all the more so since Dr. Henry wants us to push our studies very far back indeed, because "the mould was fixed in ancient times and modern developments continue ancient associations". But, surely, there is a question of priorities here. From the point of view of linguistic *theory*, we ought to begin with the linguistic evidence and with nothing else whatever. We can push our way along the area where the isoglosses bunch and notice with detached curiosity that there is a vague coincidence with whatever we know (and this, of course, has its own problems) of an ancient political or racial boundary. But when we observe a salient, this is *not*, as Dr. Henry says, a "minor detail"; it involves a major reconnaissance and is of the very stuff of linguistic geography. It is a pity that Dr. Henry has allowed himself the image of a "fixed mould"; his thought was freer, when (*Lochlann* 1: 58) he wrote: "A linguistic survey . . . is a fact-finding quest depending for its success on the susceptibility of the investigator to impression and on his freedom from preconception".

We seem, at one point, to be nicely on the way to a unified theory when Mr. Adams, in his Editorial, writes: "We have tried to include papers which survey in all its aspects the whole field which the archive is intended to cover, and . . . the papers are so arranged as to lead readers to whom the study of dialects is new from a general view of the subject towards some of its more technical intricacies." But a "general view" turns out to be Mr. Braidwood's article on "Ulster and Elizabethan English", done on the conventional historical lines which have served Germanic Philology for the past hundred years, and which, it must be confessed, are a little dated for a modern linguistic survey. And the "technical intricacies" turn out to be Professor Gregg's descriptive piece for Larne (another, more modern, theory). There is no reason at all why one should be more or less general, or more or less intricate than the other. Dr. Henry comes nearest to giving us a discussion on the relative values of the phonological and lexical approaches in

linguistic geography, but—perhaps because his article was originally given as a talk to The Field Naturalists' Club—this is not developed.

Finally, since no coherent theory is forthcoming, we are left with a certain solid satisfaction at having learned a good deal about Ulster dialects, yet at the same time with that uncertain feeling that someone has missed out something vital, somewhere. What can it be? Undoubtedly, it is a point of view—*le point de vue qui crée l'objet.*

It may be, of course, that to ask for a theoretical background is asking too much, since the book is a symposium and not all the contributions were written specially for it—although this is not true of those of Mr. Braidwood and Professor Gregg. The editor, in fact, has had to point out that it has not been found possible to achieve a unity even in a comparatively trivial detail like phonetic transcription. If this is unimportant —although there seems to be no good reason why it should not have been done—then, to say the least of it, it is rather messy to have to fiddle between article and article with what sailors call Irish pendants, as when, for instance, after a good deal of phonetic erudition in the section on Phonetic Symbols, which includes exemplifications from ten languages for a simple matter like a voiced velar fricative, we are told in the next article (p. 3) that in Belfast dialect "*mail* becomes *meeal* and *bad* becomes *bawad*, as near as it can be expressed without recourse to phonetic script". Scotsmen—and others—will want to know what they are paying for. Or again, when Mr. Braidwood takes the trouble to caution us (p. 48) against jumping to the conclusion that Ulster forms like *han'* (= hand), *spinnel* (= spindle), *fowk* (= folk) are necessarily of Scots origin, we are alarmed to notice that Mr. Adams is already in at the deep end (p. 1): "The north-eastern dialect . . . spoken in most of Co. Antrim . . . is an off-shoot of the Central Scots dialect as spoken in Galloway, Ayrshire and Renfrewshire, and still preserves the marks of its Scottish ancestry in most of the area in which it is spoken. Such features are: . . . the loss of *b*, *d*, *g* in words like *thimmle*, *hannle*, *single*, *finger* (rhymes with *singer*); the loss of final *d* after *n*, *l*:—*han'*, *owl'* for *old*, and of *l* after short vowels: *wa'* for *wall* . . ." But these features are common in Scotland (and Northern England) over a much wider area than Galloway, Ayrshire and Renfrewshire. It is not, perhaps, that Mr. Adams does not understand this—he is more precise, for example, when (p. 2) he notices *old*, *cold*, etc.

which come out as *owl*, *cowl*, instead of the expected *auld*, *cauld*—it is simply that in his article he has tried to characterise Ulster dialects eclectically and non-systemically by phonic criteria, neglecting phonemic and distributional, and neglecting in any case Kurath's advice about the *unequal* value of each of these in assessing speech areas. Phonically, as Mr. Adams must know, anything and everything can happen between Rattray Head and Bloody Foreland. It is precisely here that a theoretical background would have been of service.

In a book entitled *Ulster Dialects*, we ought to be made quite clear about the difference between "dialect" and "a distinctive form of the standard language". Both of these are used on p. 1, and on p. 163 Professor Gregg's article, "Scotch-Irish Urban speech in Ulster" is sub-titled "A Phonological study of the regional standard English of Larne, County Antrim". On p. 164 Professor Gregg states that "the links will . . . be traced between Larne speech and its linguistic background—the neighbouring Scotch-Irish *rural* dialect" (his italics). On p. 177 he writes: "It would indeed be true to say that what might be called the 'non-standard' speech of certain suburbs [of Larne] is an almost unaltered version of the country dialects belonging to the immediate vicinity". On p. 9 Mr. Braidwood speaks of "the high proportion of rural to urban population, encouraging the survival of country speech or dialect". Is the dichotomy, then, between urban "forms of the standard language" and rural "dialects" (which also includes "non-standard" urban forms)? If so, this, however unsatisfactory, is as near as we get to an explicit definition and disentanglement throughout the book. If, however, the two have been tacitly defined in some such way as has been developed, for example, by David Abercrombie, it should have been stated explicitly and, if necessary, discussed.

Certainly, Professor Gregg begins his article with a paragraph of theoretical discussion, but unfortunately this does not take us very far, for as he himself says it is a theoretical description of the origin and development of dialects and not a methodological discussion. In any case, it is as old as Henry Sweet. No mention is made of contemporary theory—Weinreich, Moulton, Pulgram, Trevor Hill. But, as it stands, Professor Gregg's article is a careful synchronic statement, giving us manipulable and comparable structural material, and also touching on the notion of levels in a linguistic hierarchy. And, most important, he has obviously done a considerable amount of fieldwork.

Mr. Braidwood in his essay on "Ulster and Elizabethan English" (which is by far the longest in the book) finds it necessary early on (p. 46) to damp down one or two of those brave emotional outbreaks which occur in Ulster in a dry season, namely, the claim that over there they speak pure Elizabethan English, the tongue that Shakespeare spake. He has no difficulty in doing this. Nevertheless, he himself emerges from the fray with the smell of fire on him, not only in his concern, stated several times (pp. 10 and 22, for instance) to "establish links between Ulster dialect and Jacobean English", but more precisely in the statement (p. 50) of what procedures he proposes in the treatment of the major sounds of Elizabethan English—"the procedure followed . . . is to say something first of Elizabethan pronunciation and then to adduce Ulster (sometimes Anglo-Irish) parallels".

This he does, although the order of the doing seems strange. He leans heavily on Adams, and heavily on the negative evidence of hypercritical (not to mention just plain *dead*) orthoepists like David Patterson (1860), "One who Listens" (1897) and on P. W. Joyce (1910) for Anglo-Irish, *et al.* But will it do? Merely to cast round like this for exemplificatory material from this or that source without regard to the checks and balances of the actual *systems*, will not do. To set up a coherent but conjectural Elizabethan system is one thing; it is another to spot ("adduce Ulster parallels") from Adams, Patterson, Joyce, "One who Listens", Mr. Braidwood's own schooldays, or what have you, to the neglect of particular systems, or the territorial and lexical distributions of the phenomena.

Professor Gregg in another place (*Orbis* **8**), while not minimising the value of a historical approach, insisted that present day word-forms ought to be our starting point, as a question of *priority*, for "from the dialectologist's point of view, the focus of interest should always be on the dialect itself rather than on . . . the hypothetical ancestors". But since such a proposition is nowhere discussed in this book we dither from one point of view to another. One good section on what dialects are considered to be, and what linguistic geography is about would have saved us much. And it is all the more annoying because Mr. Braidwood sometimes does get his priorities right: "Whatever the historical facts, dialect boundaries can be drawn only on linguistic evidence and criteria . . . the historical evidence will . . . give us a place to start and an idea of what to

look for" (p. 10). Probably about the same time as Mr. Braidwood completed his essay, Professor Gregg completed his "Boundaries of the Scotch-Irish Dialect" (Ph.D. Thesis, Edinburgh University Library) which is a full-scale piece of research made by actually travelling along a vaguely defined boundary and attempting to give it greater definition.

Mr. Braidwood's "Historical Introduction—The Planters" is a most useful interpretation with illuminating demographic evidence clearly set out and he does well to remind us that the weight of a smallish number of undertakers is of less importance for Ulster speech than a far larger number of tenants. He is careful to show us, too, how we can be misled by census statistics. For example (p. 25), in Fermanagh the Presbyterians formed only 1·8 per cent of the population by 1861, although the *historical* evidence suggests that the original Scots planters (not, however, the servitors) were almost equal to the English. Yet in general (p. 9) Mr. Braidwood has stressed the importance of the Presbyterian Church in keeping alive Scottish forms of speech. This is fascinating to us, for we cherish our own examples on this side of the North Channel. There was Samuel Rutherford, for example, or Alexander Peden: "In our speech our Scripture and old Scots names are gone out of request; . . . training children to speak nonsense and what they do not understand. These are . . . causes of God's wrath."

Finally, there is appended to the book a useful Register of Phonological Research on Ulster Dialects; and this makes it at length impossible to deny that the entire undertaking is good, hard, substantial work. Nevertheless (to go back to launching) it never really becomes sea-borne. Neither unfortunately do I, for I am aware that my attitude to *Ulster Dialects* is perverse and bucolic in the extreme. In complaining that there is no unified theory I see that the game is up and that I am finally unmasked as that very yokel who, when asked the way, replied: "If I was you, zur, I wouldn't start from here." Well, no matter—I wouldn't.

J. Y. MATHER

The Scottish Highlands: A Short History (*c.* 300-1746). By W. R. Kermack. W. & A. K. Johnston & G. W. Bacon Ltd., Edina Works, Edinburgh and London. 1957. 160 pp. 9s. 6d.

The firm of W. & A. K. Johnston have been known over a long period as the publishers, in many successive editions, of a useful booklet on the Highland clans complete with all their panoply; and one half expected this history to be a celebration

of past glories and lost causes with the usual colourful embellishments. But not so. Here is a sober, well-informed and skilfully articulated narrative, necessarily compressed, yet with a due balance between particular and general—the best all-round work on the subject, despite the modest format; and, as for embellishments, it might be considered matter for regret that there are in fact no illustrations apart from those on the dust-cover. There are, however, five maps.

It is not easy to bring the disparate elements in Highland history into one unified perspective, the more so because of the patchiness of the source material, much of it reflecting ignorance of the Gael at close quarters and a disposition to notice him only when he disturbed the peace. On the latter account the story of Gaeldom has often been told in terms of what were merely its external, and rather unedifying, relations with the Scottish Crown. In this book attention is fixed on certain focal points within the Highland area which generated considerable power of their own—the Lordship of the Isles, followed, on its demise, by the build-up of Campbell hegemony in Argyll; the equally significant growth of Gordon influence in the north-east; and the remarkable rise of the MacKenzies to a position of ascendancy among the northern clans. There are also perceptive chapters on "Clanship under Feudalism", "The Highland Economy", "Highland War" and "The Decline of Clanship". All of which represents a well-rounded piece of work, except for the rather arbitrary and misleading omission of a chapter or chapters on the period between Culloden and the present day.

The author is obviously well read in his subject, much more so than the amount of documentation would suggest. One sign of this is the aptness with which he illustrates even minor points, drawing upon a great variety of sources. Also noteworthy is the succinctness of the writing, which must be the result, not merely of wide reading, but of prolonged reflection. There is, for instance, the frequently asked question, "What were the Highland clans?" One may side-step this question by suggesting that "clan" could at no time be classed as a technical term, and is therefore incapable of precise definition. But, if the attempt must be made, it will be hard to improve upon the short description of them here (p. 63) as "small groups, each of whom, because of kinship, feudal dependence or some other reason for their allegiance, adhered to a local chief".

It may be that Highland history, especially in its social aspect, has still to be given an extra dimension that must be lacking until the Gaelic sources are fully laid under contribution. In the present work some rewarding incursions are made into this field, on the whole with commendable good judgment and accuracy. It may be useful, however, to draw attention to some errors. *Conveth* (p. 31) cannot possibly be connected with *cuid oidhche*; it stands for *coinmheadh*, "quartering, billeting". The word *dùthchas* (often misspelled *duchus*) is wrong in the context in which it occurs (p. 102), where *dùthaich* is required. The latter is the term for the "country" occupied by a clan: whereas *dùthchas*, the corresponding abstract noun, denotes their right, established by use and wont, to occupy it.

The following further points may also be made. It is unsafe to say (p. 123) that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a good many of the more obscure families had no surname. The usual Highland surname simply identified the bearer as the descendant of an ancestor more or less remote. At a time when communal and individual memories were long it must have been possible for almost anyone so to identify himself; though no doubt occasion for doing so, at least in a situation requiring the use of an anglicised form in writing, arose only for the few. William, Earl of Seaforth, did not live abroad during the last twenty-five years of his life (p. 149). He was pardoned in 1726, returned to the Highlands, and died in Lewis on 8th January 1740. The Clan MacKenzie, of which he was chief, have propagated several fictions about their own early history, one of which is that, as stated here (pp. 104-5), their chiefs lived in Kintail until the fifteenth century.

There are some other matters which might call for fuller comment if space permitted. Only a query can be inserted as to whether the parallel between the Highland clan and the Irish *tuath* is not overdrawn (pp. 32, 63-4). It must also suffice to note in one sentence that most of the so-called "modern" metres (p. 154), first met with in Gaelic verse of the seventeenth century, show signs of being in fact very old, and form part of the evidence for the existence, alongside the poetic tradition whose vehicle was the literary language, of another tradition, depending wholly upon oral transmission in the vernacular, and leaving few traces from earlier times because it was ignored, perhaps even despised, by the class of literary men who inscribed verse in manuscripts.

These are points of detail which might possibly be attended to in another edition—for it may be anticipated that there will be a demand for such. The book is sound value in small bulk, and certainly deserves to be in circulation for a long time.

W. MATHESON

Living with Ballads. By Willa Muir. The Hogarth Press. 260 pp. 30s.

A sub-title to this stimulating and important book might be "A Psycho-Analytical Study of the Scottish Peasantry, on the Evidence of their Ballads". The making of Ballads has come to an end in Scotland. The simplest explanation for this is that the Scottish peasantry have ended their Sunset Song. Now we have capitalist farmers and agricultural labourers, none of whom makes Ballads any more, though some have inherited them.

Mrs. Muir does not follow this economic hare. It darts across p. 77, where she quotes doubtfully "that the farming people of North-Eastern Scotland were led out of the Middle Ages as late as 1713, when Alexander Grant of Monymusk introduced from Holland the use of turnips as a field crop for feeding cattle". Mrs. Muir chooses the psychological approach.

She begins with autobiography. As a girl she played singing games and recognises the connection with Ballads: they are both sung. She also knows that these singing games are nearly all in English, not Scots. They are sung by girls while the boys play football. They are sung in Primary Schools, but not by older girls in Academies. She is able, from experience, to go on to the Ballads which countrymen sometimes sing, but not town workers. She knows the printed work of Gavin Greig, and the Ballads of Jeannie Robertson from recordings.

Her first introduction to a traditional Ballad was at an early age in north-east Scotland, when the countryman Harry sang to her "Captain Wedderburn's Courtship" in the impersonal style of the true Ballad singer, a style that contrasted with Sandy's very personal "Come all ye . . ." Harry proved himself an authentic folk singer, and demonstrated that "Captain Wedderburn's Courtship" is an artistic production. As T. S. Eliot wrote: "Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality. . . . The emotion of art is impersonal."

The book has many flashes of insight that illuminate the

background. But may I put a question mark beside the following:

> "Ballads need not be sung unaccompanied by an instrument; after all, very many years ago, Achilles, when Patroclus came to find him in his tent, was singing a Ballad to the Phorminx."

Our Scottish traditional Ballad has come down to us unaccompanied:

> "Harping, he said, ken I non,
> For tong is chefe of mynstralcie".

Oral poetry, Mrs. Muir continues, is unlettered and emotional, and to be understood through one's feelings. This is true within limits. The emotion must not be expressed directly by the Ballad maker, but through Eliot's "objective correlative"—in this case the *dramatic* Ballad. In a sense, a Ballad may be falsely romantic in a lyrical style, attempting to express emotion directly—a tendency shown by later Ballads.

To explain Ballads, there is a chapter on the Sumerian *Gilgamesh* of the third millennium B.C., followed by Homer and Norse Sagas. I wish *Beowulf*, in the same language, had been included.

That Ballads date from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries suggests a time-link with Chaucer and Dunbar, also in the same culture, but instead there is a more general psychological study of the Christian Middle Ages. It is a Christianity that has absorbed paganism, and it was a pagan rather than a Christian Muse that inspired the Ballads. Mrs. Muir narrows to Ballads what Rémy de Gourmont wrote of all art:

> "There is no Christian art; the two words are contradictory."

This Frenchman attacks St. Paul and Mrs. Muir attacks Calvin, but fundamentally they are saying the same thing. This becomes important when dates are put to stages in the psychological development of the Scottish peasant.

Calvinism, learning to distrust the world of imagination, is consciously cerebral, in contrast to the Aberdeenshire countryside which remained deep in a world of archaic feeling, out of which came the Ballads. Under the influence of Calvinism, respectable Scotsmen shied away from the arts and went in for law, logic, philosophy or theology. But Mrs. Muir has lived in Rome, and surely she will not deny that the same thing has

happened in Catholic Italy, from economic not religious causes. Gerard Manley Hopkins studied most of these subjects —and wrote greater poetry for it.

She continues. After Calvinism, romantic true love began to come into the foreground, along with subjective emotional states beyond the scope of earlier Ballads. The author equates this sign of decadence in the Ballad tradition with a parallel development in the psyche of the Scottish peasant.

The nature of Ballads prevented Calvinism from being embodied in good Ballads. But, remembering de Gourmont's statement, we recognise that in good Ballads there is very little Catholicism.

Seeing began to predominate over feeling as self-awareness strengthened. Calvinism, in attacking Catholicism, attacked paganism, and suppressed the underworld of imagination out of which Ballads arose. Another fertile idea is dropped casually, when Mrs. Muir writes of these Scottish peasants as

> "a relatively unsophisticated people unused, like the Ballads themselves, to the practice of systematic conceptual thinking, a passionate and highly imaginative people accustomed to live mainly in the underworld of feeling. People of this kind are, I am convinced, peculiarly vulnerable to the attack of systematized power-structure, especially under the guise of religion, and Calvinism directed just such an attack upon them."

Of course, Catholicism was also such a systematised power-structure, modelled on the Roman Empire, but the general validity of the theory is in its application to other systematised power-structures, like Communism. A comparison between the Russian Ballad-singing peasants and the Scottish countrymen who made the Scottish Ballads would be enlightening.

But between Catholicism and Calvinism there are resemblances that Mrs. Muir does not mention. For example, the new scrutinising eye of Calvinism cannot have been as new as all that. It must have been present in Catholicism. For confession began in the sixth century, and must have strengthened self-awareness long before Calvin. Also, in Catholicism there must have been a very similar scrutinising eye that clearly saw heresy and witchcraft, long before the scrutinising eye of Calvinism looked at the paganism within Catholicism. There must have been a Catholic fear of social and ecclesiastical disapproval long before Calvinists felt that fear.

But why did this aspect of Calvinism have such a profound effect on the Ballads, when the same aspect of Catholicism did not? This suggests that the burning of heretics and witches was less destructive of artistic creation than the systematic disapproval of Calvinism. Why did Calvinism fail to destroy the artist in Robert Burns?

In analysing Peter Buchan's version of "The Laird of Wariston", Mrs. Muir notes that the Northerners were unwilling to condemn the girl in the Ballad, because they were in the first throes of becoming self-conscious. They were inexperienced in applying systematic moral concepts, with little or no sense of personal guilt (despite centuries of confession!), driven by forces beyond themselves and not looking inside themselves for motives.

This evasion of personal responsibility may lead to sentimentality, like the sentimental glamour of the Highlands. The scrutinising eye of self-awareness turned inward, and brought out metaphors.

It may be that figurative language is lyrical. The wrong Muse? Mrs. Muir suggests this, for "an early Ballad cannot get outside an action to mirror it in an image". To do this, Ballads "would have to become lyrics or stage plays". They did become lyrics in the Jacobite songs, which might have been Ballads, and in the songs of Robert Burns, but the stage plays were strangled—by Calvinism of course.

Science at last destroyed the magic of the Ballads, advancing self-awareness released comedy along with sentimentality. "The appearance of a public who pay to be entertained was bound sooner or later to put an end to Ballads . . ."

But Ballads have not been put an end to. Maybe the creation of, but not the singing of Ballads nor the enjoyment of Ballads. They are still a part of our culture and look like becoming a more vital part of that culture. It is possible to imagine the Ballads and the authentic folksongs of Scotland replacing in time much of the imitation folksongs of Robert Burns, and other imitations.

Mrs. Muir's *Living with Ballads* takes its place naturally in this process of revaluation. The reshaping of a popular culture, hoped for in the last sentence, will take place. The discussion is about something more than just Ballads. Human nature is the subject of this book and it is of the nature of art to provide satisfaction for a human need.

WM. MONTGOMERIE