An Hour with the Editor

SCOTTISH HISTORY

III.

The three centuries of Scottish history following the overthrow of the Picts by Kenneth MacAlpine were an era of stress, but also one of progress. Tradition is so mixed up with history in these times that it is difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins. Indeed one might almost say that we can only be sure of general facts, and that the details, which have come down to us are largely imaginative. It is certain, however, that the territory over which the Scottish kings reigned was considerably enlarged at the expense of their Saxon neighbors, although some of the acquisitions were accompanied by acts of homage, whereby in the years to come the English sovereigns were able to make out a claim to be the overlords of the kings of Scotland, for it was in Kenneth's time that the chroniclers began to adopt the name Scotland for the country. The Danes and Norwegians made frequent incursions, but were stoutly resisted, so that although they took possession of the Hebrides and maintained a few settlements upon the northern coast, they never were able to possess themselves of the land to any great extent. The hardy adventurers, who established their rule in Normandy and even gave kings to Sicily, and who for a time ruled in England, were unable to make headway against the Scots. Canute was able to exact submission from Malcolm as vassal of the English crown in respect to Cumberland, but that is all the Danish king accomplished in respect to the northern kingdom.

Speaking of this period, Sir Walter Scott says that the kings pass before us "in gloomy and obscure pageantry, like that of Banquo in the theatre." Some of the names with which we are familiar appear for the first time. Thus we hear of Duff, of whom little is known except that he was king; of Grig, whose name without good reason was expanded by later writers into Gregory in imitation of the Roman Gregorius; of Duncan, whose reign might have been forgotten if Shakespeare had not preserved an imaginary tale of its ending in the tragedy of Macbeth. The tragedy of Macbeth, as told by the great dramatist, has little historical basis. Duncan was not killed in Macbeth's castle, but fell on the battle-field at Bothgowan in 1039. Lady Macbeth's real name was Greaoch. She was granddaughter of Kenneth IV., and though she may have been inspired by enmity of the reigning house, which wore a crown to which she might have made good a claim, if Scottish custom had at that time recognized the descent of the crown in the female line, she played no part in the death of Duncan. The story of the three witches, who have so important a role in the drama, is not an invention of Shakespeare, but is a part of the old legend, which relates that three women of more than human stature and of supreme beauty, appeared to Macbeth in a vision and foretold the future which history tells us he actually experienced. Banquo, of whom Shakespeare would have us think was the founder of a royal line, and from whom at one time the Stuarts were supposed to have been descended, is purely a fictitious character.

Among the Scottish kings during this era the names of Malcolm III. and David are the most conspicuous. Malcolm was son of Duncan, who drove Luach, Macbeth's imbecile son, from the throne. He was known as Ceanmohr, which means great head, from what was almost a physical deformity. But whatever may have been his defect in this respect, Malcolm was a king of more than ordinary merit. He was brave, intelligent and progressive. During the reign of Macbeth he was forced to take refuge in northern England, and in consequence was brought closely in touch with the civilization of the southern kingdom. He also became very friendly with the Saxon kings, and when William the Conqueror overran England, Malcolm welcomed to his court as many of the Saxon refugees as cared to come, whereby he not only strengthened the military prowess of Scotland, but also promoted the progress of the country towards civilization. Malcolm married Margaret, sister of Edgar Atheling, who was heir of Edward the Confessor. She accompanied her brother in his exile to Scotland after the Norman invasion, and is described as a woman of rare beauty and great accomplishments. Her influence over Malcolm was very great. Personally he retained many of the wild and almost savage instincts of the race from which he sprang, for his sojourn in England had not fully eradicated these, but Margaret's influence seems to have almost completely changed his nature. He became merciful to all who might under other circumstances have incurred his resentment, he gave great attention to religious matters, and in every respect was an excellent king, that is for the time in which he lived. Between him and the Conqueror and the latter's succesosr, Rufus, there was almost constant strife, and the early part of his reign was marred by the territic revenge he took upon the bishopric of Durham because of the defeat of a force of Danish allies, which had sought to invade England. He laid the country waste, and carried away so many prisoners that for many years there was hardly a house or hovel in all Scotland in which there was not an English slave. William the Conqueror was not a man to brook such an indignity, and the work of the expedition which he launched against Scotland was terrible. At this time all the country north of the Humber and south of the Tees was in the hands of the Scottish king as a vassal of England, and over this region William's forces swept like a devastating tempest, destroying everything and slaying such of the inhabitants as did not seek refuge in Scotland itself. Among these refugees were many Normans of distinction, who for one reason or another had incurred the wrath of William. These made a valuable addition to the Scottish population, and introduced the spirit of chivalry among the fierce warriors of the North. Malcolm was killed in battle. He attempted an invasion of England in the reign of Rufus and was slain while laying siege to Alnwick. His wife was ill at the time, and died from the shock occasioned by the news of his death. She was subsequently canonized. A pretty legend has been preserved. It is said that when it was proposed to move her body from the rather humble tomb in which it had been placed to a resting place of greater honor, the coffin could not be raised. The monks consulted together, and at length it was suggested that the difficulty arose from the fact that the body of her husband had not been similiarly honored. Steps were at once taken to prepare a place where the bones of Malcolm might rest beside hers in the new tomb, and as soon as they had been taken up the mysterious force, that held her coffin in place, became relaxed, and husband and wife were in death not divided.

THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

Rabbi Charles Fleischer, speaking in Temple Israel, Boston, said: "I maintain that only the closest affiliation of the Church with the workday world of normal human interests will preserve religion as a precious influence." He went on to say that a reactionary tendency is in evidence in all religious organizations, which are drifting away from the practical affairs of life and making a claim that "spiritual bankruptcy" will be the result of the contact of religion with temporal matters. He says that this is manifest as well among Jews as among Christians, among those who claim to hold "liberal" views as well as those who boast of their orthodoxy. He concedes that the work of the Church is mainly spiritual, but believes this spirituality should find expression in the relations of men towards each other, for "the conscious relation between man and God can only be expressed in human conduct." Therefore he says, "The Church must prove its use or else pass out of existence as other than a social luxury or curiosity. There is no room in the life of the future for a church which aims to be merely a church of the future life." The substance of the Rabbi's contention may be stated to be that religion is spirituality exhibited in everyday life. The most orthodox Christian will hardly dissent from this view. The inference from this, and the Rabbi does not hesitate to draw it, is that religion must concern itself with the whole range of human activity. It ought not to be something apart from daily life, from the ordinary course of business, from the field of political endeavor, from the arena of social reform, not something to be reserved for set times and places, or to be essentially associated with certain ceremonies or to be relegated so far as its practical exposition is concerned to certain paid teachers called by various names, but the very essence of living. Its object ought not to be to make people fit for an existence in the hereafter alone, but to enable them to take the most out of the present life. This is not unlike what Paul wrote to the Corinthians, when he said: "Whether therefore yet eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all for the glory of God." Again we find him saying to the Romans: "We have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Indeed if one begins at the first chapter of Matthew and reads to the last verse of Revelations, it will be seen that it is religion expressed in daily life which Christ and His Apostles inculcated. So much is this the case that one might almost say that the doctrine of a future life is rather taken for granted than taught expressly in the New Testament.

There is not much use in expecting the Church to influence the lives of the majority of men for good if all it professes to do is to prepare them for a life of happiness beyond the grave. Christendom is racked with great problems. It is historically true that the influence of Christianity has been for the elevation of the masses. Christianity teaches true democracy, and the problems which democracy presents are the direct fruits of its teachings. To be more explicit: The housing of the poor, the installation of sanitary safeguards, the maintenance of hospitals, the hours of labor, the wage question, all the relations of employers and employed towards each other as we are beginning to understand them today, and, to use a broader expression, the relation of capital and labor towards each other, are all the direct outcome of the teachings of Christianity. Yet, if the truth must be told, these things which God hath joined together man has put so far asunder that we are told on the one hand that the Church is a capitalistic institution, and on the other hand that movements for the betterment of the masses are wrong because they tend to disturb the existing order of things. Jesus was of the family of a carpenter. They had no Carpenters' Union in those days, but if there had been, do you not believe that He would have been in full sympathy with the spirit of mutual sympathy and support upon which it would have been based? This may seem sacrilegious to some people, and if it does it only furnishes evidence that to such people Christianity is not a thing for everyday life and the workshop, but only for Sunday and the Church. If the Church cannot work in harmony with every rightfully intended effort for the betterment of mankind, it is not true to its mission, and all such efforts at social reform as cannot be harmonized with the principles of Christianity are based upon error. Christianity is essentially a religion for the masses. We are told that "the common people heard Him gladly." Can it be said with truth today that the common people hear with any emotion whatever what is set before them as His message? It is to be feared that the answer to the question must be in the negative. And yet the message is the same today as it was nineteen centuries ago; and surely it will not be claimed that so long a period of Christian influence has unfitted men to accept it. There has been a great change in social conditions since even the Middle Ages, and yet greater chance since the days of Imperial Rome. Knowledge has become more general and more profound. Many things that were then accepted as facts are now known to have been rank fallacies. New ideas of individual rights are held. New relations between the different classes of society have been established. To the tyrant of three or four centuries ago the thunder of excommunication had a terrifying sound, and would stay his hand in the middle of bloody vengeance. To the suffering slaves of a brutal civilization the promise of joys to come in a future life was sufficient to enable them to bear their most grievous burdens. Their condition was hopeless here; they could hope only for the hereafter. But what effect would a threat of excommunication have today? We have seen in France and Spain the Roman Catholic Church defied, and its leaders have been far too wise in their day and generation to attempt to exercise the powers which once were at its command. The Gospel of a future life in which men shall wear crowns and play upon harps would fail to dissipate the discontent of what is sapping the very foundations of society in more than one quarter of the world today. Christianity, if it is of divine origin, must be adapted to the wants of men everywhere and at all times. This will be readily conceded even by those who adhere most staunchly to the old order of religious teaching, and they will defend such adherence by saying that Christianity is the religion of the life to come, and that this is available to all men in whatever walk in life they may be placed. But the sober truth is that the very great majority of people are chiefly concerned with the affairs of this life, not as we are often told from the pulpit, with the amassing of wealth and the enjoyment of pleasure, but with the promotion of the welfare of themselves, their families and their associates. Unless the Church concerns itself also with these things it will fall short of meeting the needs of the time, and its influence upon the progress of humanity will grow less as the years pass. Religion is essentially spiritual, but the "fruit of the spirit is righteousness," and righteousness is something more than a mere profession. If it does not find expression in outward acts, it is no better than was the barren fig tree, and we all know what happened to that.

THE EARTH

III.

The river systems of the Western Hemisphere are a very interesting subject of examination. They are governed necessarily by the mountain ranges, which not only serve to determine their course, but by their influence upon precipitation control the magnitude of their flow. Before speaking generally of American rivers, mention may be made of the very important geographical fact that many of the world's greatest drainage areas find their outflow into the Arctic Ocean. As the rivers bring down very great quantities of fresh water they give rise to the formation of vast ice-fields, and thus materially influence the character of the Northern seas. Captain Mikkleson is authority for the statement that the impenetrable character of the ice lying a short distance north of the northern coast of Canada is due to the outflow of the Canadian rivers. Pouring a tremendous flood of watre into the Arctic Ocean we find in Europe the Northern Dwina, the Pechora and numerous smaller streams, in Asia the Obi, the Lena, the Yenisee, the Indirgirka, the Kolyma, the Omolu and some smaller streams, and in America the Mackenzie, the Coppermine and the Great Fish, besides minor rivers. The aggregate length of these rivers with their tributaries is many thousands of miles. Indeed, it is not improbable that the Arctic receives the outflow of as great a river mileage as the Atlantic ,and much more than the Pacific Ocean, although the volume of water carried to the sea by the northern rivers is probably considerably less than that carried by those flowing into the Atlantic.

In North America there are three drainage areas. One of these is that lying west of the Rocky Mountains; another lies east of the Appalachian Range, and the third is the great Central Plain, which extends from the Gulf of Mexico to the Arctic shore of the continent. The Plain is divided transversely by a more or less elevated plateau, corresponding in a general way to the dividing line between the United States and Canada. South of this the rivers flow into the Gulf of Mexico; north of it they flow either into the Arctic or the Atlantic, or its great offset, Hudson Bay. The conformation of the great western mountain range of North America is favorable to the formation of rivers. In South America the mountains are too near the coast to permit of this, but in the northern half of the Hemisphere, from and including the Yukon on the north to the Colorado on the south, we find waterways of great magnitude and importance, aggregating in length several thousands of miles and carrying to the sea a great volume of water. The Yukon from its source near the White Pass to Behring Sea is 2,044 miles in length, but if its source be taken to be Teslin Lake or the headwaters of the Pelly, its length ought to be stated as somewhat longer. Including its tributaries, it is navigable by steamers for fully, if not quite, 3,000 miles, having a place in this respect among the five greatest rivers in the world. The Stikine, the Nass and the Skeena may be said to be rivers of the third magnitude; the Fraser and the Columbia have a place in the second class. The latter is considerably the larger of the two, having a length from source to the sea that is estimated at 1,400 miles, against 800 miles, which is generally accepted as the length of the Fraser. In the length of its tributaries and the extent of its drainage basin, the Fraser is perhaps equal to the Columbia, although this is uncertain. South of the Columbia are several rivers which would belong perhaps in the fourth class, and no considerable stream is encountered until the Sacramento is reached ,and this having a length of about 600 miles and being navigable for 240, may be placed in the third class, if not in the second. In respect to length, the Colorado, which flows into the Gulf of California, may be assigned a place in the first class, for it is fully, and perhaps more than 2,000 miles from its source to its mouth. In point of navigability it does not rank, relatively, very high, the total length of its water stretches that can be utilized being under 1,000 miles, of which between 600 and 700 are in the lower part of its course. Its characteristic feature is its canons, which aggregate in length fully 1,000 miles, and from a scenic point of view are unequalled in all the world.

Some Famous Dramatists and Their Master-Pieces

(N. de Bertrand Lugrin)

ADAM GOTTLOB OEHLENSCHLAGER.

"The Adam of Skalds, the king of northern singers." This was the title conferred on this greatest of Danish poets when at the height of his fame he was crowned by his admirers in the cathedral of Lund, on the occasion of the annual celebration of the University. That he well deserved the title his voluminous works go to prove. He has used the themes of the great sagas and eddas of his native land in wonderful stories, dramas and poems.

He was born in Copenhagen in 1779, and his parents for several generations had been musicians. He gave early evidence of the possession of the artistic temperament, and showed an especial fondness for the drama. By no means studious as a youth, he led a happy, care-free existence until he had reached the years of early manhood, writing slight poems, plays and stories purely for amusement, and to give pleasant vent to his imagination.

It was his interest in the drama that decided him while he was still in his teens to take up acting as a profession. He never took more than a minor part, however, and soon grew tired of the calling, leaving the stage to enter the University and to begin the study of law.

Then events began to happen in quick succession that brought about the development of Oehlenschlager's genius. In the first place his interests were kindled, his emotions warmly stirred by the French Revolution then taking place, the many phases of which he studied with passionate absorption. Then one day, an English fleet under Nelson, entered the harbor of Copenhagen, and engaged the Danish fleet, with one result at least, that it moved the budding poet to express his patriotism in vehement song, poetry whose warmth of feeling made one almost forget its faults of technicality.

It was not, however, until the young poet met Henrik Steffins that an impetus was given which set Oehlenschlager upon the road to fame and fortune and kept him there. Steffins was a young Norwegian, earnest, clever, and of a strong personality. He was a deep student of philosophy, art, and literature and gave a series of lectures during his stay in Denmark. Oehlenschlager went to hear him, and was immediately influenced to take up a certain line of serious work.

"The Golden Horns," his first production, is "the work with which the romantic period of Danish literature begins. "The Golden Horns" were two ancient relics which had been discovered some time prior to the writing of the poem, and their history "becomes a symbol for the newly awakened poet; the Golden Horns with their strange carvings and mysterious runic inscriptions are gifts of the gods bestowed upon men to remind them of their divine origin; and the ties, half-forgotten, that bind them to the distant past."

His next work, a book of poems, produced in 1803, was a revelation of the power of Danish poetry. It established the reputation of the young writer at once. "No other Danish book has so wonderful a fragrance of culture-writing, breathes forth such a wealth of glowing memories, of fiery ardour, of the joy of life, and of impossible hopes for the future."

But by far the greatest production of these early years was the fairy drama of "Aladdin." For this work Oehlenschlager drew his inspiration from the old Eastern story. But his poem is a marvel of gorgeous imagery, rich in descriptive beauty, and full of musical cadences. It gives splendid evidence of the young writer's wonderful powers of imagination.

In 1805 Oehlenschlager went abroad to Germany where he met his old friend Steffins, to Paris, to Coppet where he met Madame de Stael, to Rome where he made friends with Thorwalden.

When he returned home he produced six plays which are the best of all his works. "Hakon Jarl" is a tragedy in five acts. It tells the story of how Christianity was first brought to Norway, of how Olaf Trygvason sailed from Dublin and, landing on the shores of Norway engaged in combat the great heathen chieftain, Earl Hakon, and overthrew him. His second tragedy, "Palnatoke," has a similar theme, though the scene is changed to Denmark, and the characters are different. "Axel of Valborg" is a love story, pure and simple, albeit tragic enough. Two cousins fall deeply in love with one another, but the canon law forbidding marriage between those so near of kin, the two are separated in life, to be finally united in death. This play is a masterpiece of dramatic literature. The sentiment is lofty, the treatment of the theme almost so simple, so beautiful, and so pathetic, that "Alel of Valborg" stands in the highest place in Danish literature. "Balder hin Gode" is founded on the old Greek tale, and "Thors Reise til Joth unheim" is an epic in five songs.

In 1810 Oehlenschlager married, and that fact accomplished, his greatest work seemed done. "It must be said that the remaining forty years of his existence, although they added many volumes to the series of his writings, brought but little increase in his fame. He died at the age of seventy, very peacefully and in the full possession of his faculties.

The following lines are from the drama of Hakon Jarl. The Christian King Olaf has been in danger of assassination from one of Hakon's men, but the plot is discovered in time, and Olaf having sought Hakon out in the hut in which he has been hiding, masks himself and tells the heathen chieftain that Thorer, who tried to kill him, is dead himself. Hakon is fiercely angry and rushes upon Olaf to stab him, but is stopped in his mad rush by the younger and stronger man:

Olaf—
So, be quiet now, I say,
And sheathe thy sword again. My followers
Surround the house; my vessels are a match
For all of thine, and I myself have come
To win the country in an honest fight.
Thyself hast urged me with thy plots to do it.
Thou standest like a despicable thrall
In his own pitfall caught at last; but I
Will make no use of these advantages
Which fate has granted me. I am convinced
That I may boldly meet thee face to face.
Thy purpose, as thou seest, has wholly failed,
And in his own blood does thy Thorer swim.
Thou seest 'twere easy for me to have seized thee;
To strike thee down were even easier still;
But I the Christian doctrine do confess,
And do such poor advantages despise.
So choose between two courses: Still be Earl
Of Hlade as thou wast ,and do me homage,
Or else take flight; for when we meet again
'Twill be the time for red and bleeding brows.

Hakon, proudly and quietly—
My choice is made. I choose the latter, Olaf.
Thou callest me a villain and a thrall;
That forces us a smile upon my lips.
Olaf, one hears indeed that thou art young;
It is my mockery and arrogance
That one can judge thy age. Now look at me
Full in the eye; consider well my brow;
Hast thou among the thralls e'er met such looks?
Dost think that cunning or that cowardice
Could e'er have carved these wrinkles on my brow?
I did entice thee hither. Ha! 'tis true
I knew that thou didst wait but for a sign
To flutter after the enticing bait;
That in thy soul thou didst more highly prize
Thy kinship with an extinct race of kings
Than great Earl Hakon's world-renowned deeds;
That thou didst watch the opportunity
To fall upon the old man in his rest.
Does it astonish thee that I should wish
Quickly to rid myself of such a foe?
That I deceived a dreamer who despised
The mighty gods—does that astonish thee?
Does it astonish thee that I approved
My warriors' purpose, since a hostile fate
Attempted to dethrone, not only me,
But all Valhalla's gods?

Jane—I've something on me mind, 'Arry, that I hardly knows how to tell yer.

'Arry—Aht wiv it.

Jane—I'm afraid yer won't marry me if I tells yer.

'Arry—Aht wiv it.

Jane—I'm a somnambulist, 'Arry.

'Arry (after prolonged pause)—Never mind, Jane, it'll be all right. If there ain't no chapel for it, we'll be married at a registry.—Punch.