

IX—REVIEWS.

- 1.—*Northumberland*, by Herbert L. Honeyman. "The County Books Series." London, Robert Hale Ltd. 15s.

Our honorary secretary has produced, as might have been expected, a most readable and stimulating book. Robert Hale's series of County Books, to which he has contributed a volume on Northumberland, are not simply short histories of the counties, nor yet are they visitors' guides, though they do combine history with topography. They aim at giving a general picture of each county and of its people, and for that purpose their general editor has selected authors who are thoroughly familiar with their district and know what they are writing about. In recent years there have been far too many county books written by strangers whose hasty impressions furnish letterpress to crude coloured plates. Here we have something different. Mr. Honeyman, though not a native, is a Northumbrian by adoption; and his chapters on "The Folk and their ways" and on "Arts, Letters and Sports", shew how thoroughly he has absorbed the spirit of the land. They are excellent short surveys. His instances are well chosen, and his criticisms are penetrating, as where he says (p. 238): "In Scotland love songs are for male voices. In Northumberland it is the ladies who sing."

Everything that Mr. Honeyman has to say about architecture is well worth reading with close attention. He is specially interested in church buildings. One may note how he attributes to a single architect a feature common to various churches built in the latter part of John's reign, namely "a trefoil-shaped or shouldered rear-arch" (pp. 53, 183, 216). Architectural parallels of this kind are well worth

examination, for they create a presumption of common authorship. Mr. Honeyman gives another example on p. 169. Pillars of the same unusual plan occur in Beverley Minster and in the collegiate church which the Percys began to build in Warkworth Castle; whence it seems evident that they employed the same architect at both places. He finds (p. 188) what is probably the correct solution for the building up of horses' skulls in Elsdon church tower, regarding them as an acoustic device for giving resonance to the bells. And he makes the likely suggestion (p. 236) that the rough sandstone sculptured figures of Roman and medieval times were intended to have a coating of lime *gesso*. He is as much interested in later buildings as in medieval architecture, and does full justice to Newcastle's most considerable architect, John Dobson. He reminds his readers (pp. 130, 170) of a fact that is apt to be forgotten, the Northumbrian parentage of "Capability" Brown, who did so much for the laying out of the grounds of our great country houses.

In his topographical survey he is necessarily selective. It is no easy matter to give a clear impression of the landscape and character of so varied a county as ours; but, by taking it section after section, and basing his division of districts chiefly upon river systems, he succeeds in his object of characterizing each in its turn—sea-coast, moorland, hill-side, river valley, city and industrial waste. His fifteen pages of description of Newcastle are particularly worthy of commendation. And the volume is illustrated by excellent photographs, among which the view of Shafto Crags has a peculiar charm.

If the book has a blemish, it lies in the frequency with which its author tilts at modern conditions. His criticisms may be well justified, but they are sometimes out of place. And it is dangerous in writing the history of the past to introduce modern analogues. The result is undue simplification, and it provides a wrong approach to a bygone age. In attempting to understand the medieval mind we have to rid ourselves of modern ideas.

Subject to this criticism, the historical sketch which occupies just over half the book serves its purpose well. The geological changes are briefly but accurately set out. For prehistoric times Mr. Honeyman points out the existence of what he calls "a cultural fault" (p. 199), that is a division of cultures between the west and the north-east of the county. It may be, as he argues on p. 10, that cup-and-ring markings (which are only found to the east of this dividing line) were not intended to remain visible but were turfed over after being incised, though that does not make an explanation of these mysterious symbols any easier. He is always suggestive, as in his surmise (p. 17) that Stagshawbank fair owes its site and its origin to Roman traffic with the Caledonians. There is no need to follow him in this review down the centuries, beyond pointing out one or two slips which should be corrected in another edition. Thus on p. 31 we have Oswin for Oswiu. The Northumberland king who performed the remarkable feat of keeping on his throne for thirty-two years in the ninth century was not Aella (as stated on p. 33) but Eanred. It was Admiral George Delaval, and not (as given on p. 107) Sir Ralph, who employed Vanburgh to build Séaton Delaval. And the Delavals cannot claim the unbroken male descent attributed to them on p. 180; a fifteenth-century Delaval heiress carried her name and estate to a Woodman of Horsley. But these are very minor errors in a book which gives one so much to enjoy and much to think over.

EDMUND CRASTER.

- 2.—*The Archæology of Ireland*, by R. A. S. Macalister. Second edition. Revised and rewritten, 1949. Methuen. Price 30s.

It is twenty-one years since Professor Macalister first published his *Archæology of Ireland*. In spite, however, of

his unassailable position as the leading archæologist in that country, the book never was quite the success that might have been expected. For this there were several reasons, and it would be ungracious to rehearse them now, but undoubtedly the fundamental disability of the book was that it tried to do too much; to cover, that is, within some 350 pages the whole Irish story from the remotest times down to, and including, the Mediæval period. This proved a strain to which the volume was unequal, and from which it never quite recovered.

Now Professor Macalister offers us a second edition, but it is, in fact, a new book and a far better one. The whole volume is now devoted to ground that was covered by little more than half the first edition, and the story stops at the transition to Christianity. In consequence, the framework has been tightened up, and the detail is more sharply drawn.

All this is very much to the good, and there are other changes. A vast effort, as everyone knows, has been put into Irish prehistoric archæology since 1928, not least by colleagues and good friends from the United States. The national effort also has increased its *tempo*. There is a mass of new information to be incorporated; this has been done, and done most skilfully.

No one who knows the author's work will expect to find himself in agreement with all his conclusions. All the old individuality and some of the old idiosyncrasies are there; but, whatever the subject, of one thing we can always feel assured, that on every point involved a fearless independent judgment has been exercised, and courage is a quality more directly needed in Irish archæology than in ours. We, in this country, happily reach our conclusions without risk of any worse consequence than a mild scholastic disagreement. In Ireland, as we know, and not only from the preface to this book, the subject is so loaded with misconceptions and prejudice as to amount almost to superstition, and the scholar who speaks his mind must expect to run the gauntlet of many

antagonisms—racial, cultural, and often political. This is a state of affairs of which those who have not worked within it can have little conception, and it is a factor operating in Irish archæology of which, in this country, too little account is taken.

This is not the place to discuss in detail all the author's views, but one may be pardoned for regretting the new and ponderous terminology in which Professor Macalister seeks to clothe his re-grouping of the cultures of Irish prehistory. If a word more obnoxious than "deuteromegalithic" can possibly exist, it must surely be "epimegalithic"!

The standard of illustration is much improved both in number and quality, and some of the former meanly executed figures have been redrawn. This applies, among others, to the famous representation of a stag captured in a trap, but it is unfortunate that in the matter of these traps the author quotes no authority more recent than 1898. In fact, the whole subject was reviewed, with many additions to the previously existing list of stag-traps, by Holger Rasmussen in *Fra Danmarks Ungtid* (pp. 112-28) so recently as 1940.

For giving to his book this new turn, we can only be wholly grateful to Professor Macalister. *The Archæology of Ireland* may now be placed alongside Mademoiselle Françoise Henry's *Irish Art in the Early Christian Period* to which indeed in its new dress it forms a companion volume. Together these two books will provide, not only for the specialist but for the general reader as well, an account of the material culture of Ireland (and much more besides) from its earliest days to the English Conquest—an account which, whatever we may think of some of the details, is at least coherent, intelligible, and up to date.

J. D. COWEN.

3.—*Haunted England*, by Christina Hole. Second edition, revised. B. T. Batsford. 12s. 6d.

Owing to production difficulties, we have had a lengthy wait of ten years for the appearance of the second and revised edition of this delightful and illuminating work. Even the most disbelieving of us love a ghost story, and here we have disquieting tales in plenty. From Northumberland to Cornwall, from Kent to Cumberland. Taking it, therefore, as conclusively established that such visions do appear, and accepting all the mass of testimony, this is a most purposeful and authoritative survey of the occult lore and legend of England. Miss Hole is able to make time stand still, whilst we are transported to that vast and shadowy region of the twilight world. Corpse lights illumine the path of omens and premonitions. Silent coaches drawn by headless horses career wildly up grim avenues to even more sinister houses. Phantom hounds bay, and silent armies march. Headless bodies patter up and down corridors. Radiant boys to malicious poltergeist, all are included. Little has been omitted from this skilful survey. There are no long and dreary statistics of scientific investigation, but the subject matter is divided under well-ordered headings. One must always bear in mind that this is a *Survey* of English ghost lore, so Miss Hole must be forgiven if she does not dwell at length on some that seem to be particularly interesting manifestations.

To those of us who live, or have lived, in haunted houses, it is of extreme interest to find parallels in many of these occult happenings. To be guided through this invisible sphere of shadowy and impalpable entities, with such wit and wisdom as the author displays is an exhilarating (if blood-curdling) journey. Of our own particular North Country ghosts, there once more appears the "Cauld Lad of Hilton", and the even "'Caulder' Lad of Gilsland".

"Cauld, cauld, aye cauld.
And ye'se be cauld for evermair."

The benign and gentle "Silky" whose spirit roamed the corridors of Denton Hall, and the other and less happy "Silky" of Black Heddon. Willington Mill, with all its story of unruly poltergeist occurrences, still provokes much controversy. Too much has already been written about the now world-renowned Borley Rectory. In this new edition of *Haunted England*, the tale of this unhappy rectory is given in two short paragraphs, which conclude with the wise and thoughtful words: "The study of ghost lore suggests that some places are nearer the edge of the spiritual world than others, and here perhaps lies the only explanation as yet available of Borley's curious history."

Miss Hole displays, as always in her writings, a vivid knowledge of England, and of England's life and countryside. She recaptures a lost world of beauty and simplicity. From the vortex of the present day with all its sinister forebodings, it is good to be transported to another more shadowy. Less grim perhaps is the wail of these unhappy ghosts than the bomber in training, droning its way across the skies. It is unfortunate that this valuable contribution to the field of occult literature should be marred by the particularly unsuitable illustrations. There are, no doubt, those who will delight in John Farleigh's art, as artist he is, but such a type of drawings is scarcely in happy unity with the text of the book.

W. RYLE ELLIOT.

- 4.—*The Splendour that was Egypt*, by Margaret A. Murray, D.Lit., Fellow of University College, London. 8vo. 6¼ in. × 9¾ in., xxiii + 354 pp., XCVII pls., 24 figs. in text. London, Sidgwick and Jackson Limited, 1949. Price 30s.

It has been apparent for some time that there is a need for a popular account of ancient Egypt, especially now that great interest is being displayed in the historical and cultural

backgrounds of the countries of the Near East. Such an account should express in clear and literary form the results of sound scholarship, and, without entering into technicalities, should adumbrate at least some of the controversial topics which for many persons add a zest to the exciting pursuit of ancient history. To write such a work is no easy undertaking, for it requires up-to-date knowledge in all departments of a very large subject, and it may well be asked whether the standard demanded can be attained in all sections by a single writer. It is not many years since a very readable assessment of the value of ancient Egyptian studies appeared under the editorship of Professor Glanville (*The Legacy of Egypt*, Oxford, 1942), and not a little of its success may have been due to the fact that its contributors were many, and all were scholars prominent in their own spheres.

It is with some misgiving, therefore, that one discovers in the writer who has addressed herself to this task, and who, after many years' association with Egyptian archæology and with the late Sir William Flinders Petrie, should be well qualified to negotiate it successfully, the desire to dissociate herself entirely from scholars and scholarship. "When an author", she quotes, presumably from the words of Petrie, "collects together the opinions of as many others as he can and fills half of every page with footnotes, this is known as 'scholarship'." To the word "scholarly" in another of her works, recently published, the same writer appends in parentheses the comment "Anglicé, dull." This pathetic failure to perceive the purpose of scholarship, and the inability to distinguish between the scholarly and the scholastic, will not help to establish confidence in the soundness of Dr. Murray's judgment. The discriminating reader will be unable to put complete faith in her account, for he will be constantly a prey to the uneasy feeling that fresh evidence may have been ignored and contrary opinions discourteously waved aside, the last a failing from which the late Sir William Flinders Petrie perhaps did not entirely escape.

Petrie is Dr. Murray's idol: indeed one receives the

impression that it is the splendour not so much of Egypt as of Petrie that it is her real desire to extol, for she finds it necessary to devote a whole chapter to his praise and two photographic plates to his person, and the unsuspecting student might well be led to suppose (as the writer perhaps intends that he should) that there are and were no other figures in Egyptian archæology. "Little knowledge", she states, "has been added to the vast amount that he laid bare to the world", and with this fixed idea in mind has tried to put before us the civilization of Egypt as seen through his eyes, and Egyptology as it was fifty years ago.

Dr. Murray begins her chapter on prehistory with the neolithic period; the reader will probably be surprised at the omission of any account of the Merimda culture, which is generally believed to be earlier than the Badarian, and of the Ma'ādi culture, known from the excavations of the Egyptian University, which comes near the end or at the end of the Predynastic Period. As for dates in prehistoric times, the writer explains Petrie's system of "sequence-dating" for cultures that cannot readily be assigned to dates B.C., but, apart from a few scattered references like S.D. 40 for the Gerzean culture, fails to demonstrate the effectiveness of the system by giving the sequence-dates for the cultures mentioned. When the writer, in Chapter II, comes to deal with history, she becomes very definite about chronology, and assigns to the early dynasties dates which, once calculated by Petrie, are earlier by some eight or nine centuries than those which scholars tend nowadays to accept, beginning with 4777 B.C. for the accession of Menes. As if to condone this we are baldly told that dates "are still a matter of uncertainty", and perhaps it was second thoughts on the subject which led the writer to relent so far as to include, in a chronological table towards the end of the book, an alternative set of dates, those of Breasted. Calculated so long ago as 1905, and often since then the subject of revision, these were not the best choice. Would not some consideration of the newest calculations have been an acceptable,

indeed a prudent inclusion? For example, a recent date proposed for Menes is 3189 B.C. It need not be assumed that in a popular work of this kind such difficult matters ought to be critically examined, but at least some hint should be given that scholars have not the confidence in Petrie's dates that the writer has. Even Petrie himself abandoned them, for whereas 4777 B.C. is given as Menes' date in the first edition of his *History* (1894), by the tenth edition (1923) this has been altered to 5546, in the periodical *Ancient Egypt* for 1929 we find him proposing 4553, while in the 1931 volume of the same periodical this figure has been reduced to 4326 B.C.

Throughout Dr. Murray's account of Egyptian history one feels that it is the writer's lack of familiarity with modern developments which causes her so often, like the older historians of the last century, to fall back on the statements of Manetho and the classical writers, whom she sometimes quotes without comment even when there is serious evidence that their statements may be untrue. Are we expected to believe, for example, in the face of the evidence of the Westcar Papyrus, the unqualified statement from Manetho that the kings of the Fifth Dynasty came from Elephantiné? And can the writer find no more interesting things to say of the builders of the three largest pyramids at Gizah, about whom historical facts are indeed few but whose pyramid-cemeteries have seen the activities of excavators from three continents and have been the subject of countless reports and monographs, than merely to relate once more what Herodotus says of them? Here in the Old Kingdom was a period more and more clearly appearing in the light of recent discoveries as one of peace and luxury, of great expeditions and dignified buildings, the flowering of a rare beauty in every aspect of art, a golden age endowed with a freshness and spontaneity unsurpassed by the pageantry of the New Kingdom; to which a less pedestrian writer might have paid a fine tribute. That this was not possible is perhaps due to the form in which the book is cast, each aspect of Egypt

being considered in its own compartment only, so that no opportunity arises for an appreciation of the whole, and the general impression is one of the spiritless monotony characteristic of encyclopædia articles.

In this same chapter the First Intermediate Period is dismissed with a single paragraph, in which there is no indication that Manétho's Seventh Dynasty is perhaps fictitious, and not a word about the dynasty of kings at Coptus of whom Manetho is ignorant. Still more surprising, there is no discussion of the kingdom of Heracleopolis which seems to have held Egypt for a time as far as Aswan, and which carried on the defence of the country against the Asiatic invaders in the Delta. This is a period to which much attention has been paid of late, and it is a misrepresentation to suggest that nothing is known of it. Almost all we are told here is that it "appears to have been spent in battles and fighting".

The same criticism of over-simplification by recourse to the classical writers may be made of Dr. Murray's treatment of the Second Intermediate Period, where the reader, instead of being wearied with the probably mythical exploits of "Thummosis, son of Alisphragmuthosis", could have been given a definite sketch of the historical outline of the epoch. It might have been pointed out that under the Thirteenth Dynasty Egypt was still relatively prosperous, for whereas Nubia began to assert her independence in the south, a relief found at Gebal (Byblus) on the Phœnician coast shows that the prince Yinaten (Jonathan?) of that district acknowledged Egyptian suzerainty. This raises the question how far a writer dealing with one country should allow himself to be confined within its boundaries. Now that excavators in the Near East are supplying so much interesting, fresh, and valuable material from sites like Ugarit, Alalakh, and elsewhere, the interactions of the main civilizations are seen to be quite as important as their individual histories, and the chronicler of ancient Egypt will best help to assess her contribution by showing her in relation to her political surround-

ings, not waiting until the force of her arms carries him, as it were, with them into enemy territory and forces him to take cognizance of it. Thus one feels that the writer might have said more about the origin of the "Hyksos" (a subject dear to Petrie), and the reasons for their thrust into Egypt. This is customarily attributed to the arrival of the Aryans, the Hittites in Anatolia, the Kassites in Babylon, and the Hurrians, and to the consequent southward displacement of communities previously residing in Syria-Palestine. Here we are given no word of these things, and the reviewer begins to feel that since he has found so much to criticize in the first thirty pages he had best leave the remaining five chapters untouched if he is not to incur the displeasure of the editor who asked for a short review.

There is, however, one aspect of this general air of archaism which calls for comment. That is Dr. Murray's treatment of Egyptian proper names. Like other Semitic and Hamitic scripts, Egyptian writing gives only the consonantal structure of words, and it was left to the reader, who of course knew the current pronunciation, to fill in the vowels. When, after centuries of desuetude, Egyptian writing was deciphered in the last century, it fell to the Egyptologists of those days to fill in the forgotten vowels as best they might. At first little progress was made, and while investigations were going on artificial but pronounceable versions of Egyptian proper names were created for use in everyday parlance. The system which Dr. Murray uses dates from that epoch. It must not be forgotten that these forms resemble the Masoretic vocalizations of Biblical names in being artificial. Their use may be forgiven if it is realized that they are makeshifts, and there are other writers than Dr. Murray who still use them. It is proper to point out, however, that there is now plenty of information regarding the pronunciation of Egyptian proper names. Careful study of Coptic and contemporary renderings from sources like the Tell el-'Amānah Tablets have given important clues to the nature of the original vowels and their behaviour when constrained by the

rules of grammar. A very strong objection will be taken to Dr. Murray's frivolous and inaccurate description of the serious and patient efforts of contemporary scholars to recover the pronunciation of the ancient tongue (p. 294). It is now established beyond doubt that the best of the Græcized forms of the royal names, which were based on contemporary pronunciation, are much nearer the mark than renderings based on the consonantal skeleton but decked out with guessed and often misplaced vowels. Thus "Ammenemēs" is nearer the correct pronunciation than "Amonemhat", "Amenōphis" than "Amon-hotep", and "Psammētichus" than "Psamtek". On the other hand, the same skeleton, when supplied with scientifically elucidated and correctly placed vowels, provides something even better than the Greek. Thus "Amenhotep" is better than "Amenōphis", and "Amon-hotep" comes in a bad third. Scholars who have given due thought to the vocalization of Egyptian may hesitate which of the first two forms to choose; they may decide, as many do, to restrict the Greek names to royalties; or they may prefer where possible to use forms like "Amanhatpi", which is based on cuneiform transcriptions. But they will all ultimately agree that "Amon-hotep", "Psamtek", "Thothmes", and the rest, must be consigned to the dustbin.

Dr. Murray is of course hampered in her attempt to explain Egyptian writing by the fact that her public is unlikely to number many who are familiar with Near-Eastern languages, and her efforts to use simple terms only conceal from the student the difficulties involved. Yet if he be prepared to face these difficulties by learning the accepted method of transliterating Egyptian (what the writer calls on p. 293 "the scientific method of using dots and dashes"), he will find that hieroglyphs are not after all very difficult.

It is also clear that the writer is herself somewhat at sea in linguistic matters. The Greek equivalent of "Men-kau-Rê" (p. 294) is properly "Mencherēs", "Mycerūnus" being a poor form contaminated by confusion with the name of a

much later king, Bocchōris or Bochorinis, to whom much of what Herodotus says of "Mycerūnus" in fact relates. Likewise the "slightly comical effect" of the name Cheops would have been avoided if the writer had been consistent in transcribing the Greek letter χ with KH. It is a pity that a book needed so urgently as an ambassador of Egyptian studies should contain so many unorthodox and undigested opinions.

M. F. LAMING MACADAM.

5.—*Nubian Treasure*, by Walter B. Emery, M.B.E., M.A., F.S.A. An account of the Discoveries at Ballana and Qustul. 6 in. \times 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in., x + 72 pp., 48 plates, sketch map and plans. Methuen & Co., London, 1948. Price 30s.

This is an altogether admirable example of popular exposition; a process which the author defends as follows in his unassuming preface: "The results of excavations are usually published in scientific reports written for the specialist, and even for him they are, for the most part, intended as works of reference. The new information published in these excavation reports is periodically gathered by the historian and ultimately appears in some study which may or may not reach the mass of the reading public. Archæology and history thus remain, to a large extent, the interest of a few, and I feel that the science has little right to existence unless its fruits are made easily accessible to the layman, who, although he may not have the time for detailed study, is certainly entitled to share in the fascination that the records of the past undoubtedly give." This may seem a hard saying to some of our readers, but it contains a truth which certainly cannot safely be ignored by such a Society as ours.

Between the third and sixth centuries of our era, Nubia was occupied by the Blemyes or Blemmyes, a Hamitic people

who had begun to penetrate it in the first century, and had developed a characteristic if somewhat mongrel culture whose existence has been revealed by Mr. Emery.

His book describes how the raising of the Aswan dam in 1929 led to an intensive archæological survey of the prospectively drowned area and almost by chance to the re-discovery and scientific demolition of two groups of enormous tumuli noticed by Miss Amelia Edwards in 1874 and (though ignored by later travellers or regarded as non-artificial) filling, she said, her head "with visions of buried arms and jewels". Visions which have now been proved to do less than justice to the amazing truth: for these were the forgotten graves of the princes of the Blemyes. And buried with each great one, in a common tomb, lay his wives and his concubines, his maid servants and man servants, his horses and cattle and even his dogs, his jewels and his weapons and everything that was his. It is not known how the victims died, whether by suicide or execution, for only their skeletons remained except for the dried-up body of a girl and she had been throttled. But the position in which she was found and the unusual amount of jewellery in her bag, have caused Mr. Emery to suggest that she was a thief, caught and killed while seeking to escape.

Mr. Emery gives plans and lucid descriptions of specimen tombs and his excellent photographic plates shew very clearly the gorgeously barbaric gem-studded gold and silver ornaments with which the Blemyes adorned themselves and their horses. They are in the oddest mixture of styles, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine and nondescript motifs jostle each other and there is a very Chinese-looking bronze lion, pop-eyed with astonishment at finding himself in such company.

No praise can be too high for the energy and skill of Mr. Emery and his assistants as displayed in the removal of immense masses of earth and the recovery undamaged, of such numbers of precious objects, many of them fragile when new and more so after centuries of burial. The "layman" for whom Mr. Emery has written, but never "written down

to", may well be grateful to him and even the "expert" will find his appetite whetted for the caviare which is no doubt being prepared for him by the author.

H.L.H.

- 6.—*The Coffin of Saint Cuthbert*, drawn by D. McIntyre, introduction by E. Kitzinger, printed for the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral at the University Press, Oxford, 1950. Royal quarto, pp. 6, frontispiece and 5 drawings. Price 12s. 6d.

The fragments of Saint Cuthbert's coffin have been preserved above ground for more than half a century, but no attempt had been made to reassemble them until the work was undertaken by Mr. McIntyre, the cathedral architect, in 1939. In the course of his examination of them he prepared a series of drawings which are now published at a scale of half the size of the original. Of Mr. McIntyre's drawings which supersede those made by Mr. Footitt for Canon Greenwell's account of the coffin, it is perhaps enough to say that his work will never need to be done again. Not content with faithfully reproducing the decoration, he has been at pains to show with the most minuté care the exact condition of each surviving fragment of wood. And more important even than this, his researches have indicated major errors in Greenwell's paper reconstruction affecting, as Professor Kitzinger remarks, "the content and meaning of the iconographic programme as well as the overall size of the coffin". It is now seen that the coffin was more than a foot shorter than Greenwell supposed and that on the one side there were five and not six, archangels and on the other twelve, and not fourteen, figures of apostles. In addition it has been possible to establish by a process of elimination that the isolated fragment with the letters —VMIA belongs to the side with the archangels. Professor Kitzinger, in an introduction which he confines to a brief preliminary commentary,

suggests that this fragment in all probability refers to the apocryphal archangel Rumiël who is invoked in Irish and Anglo-Saxon prayers. He argues further that the arrangement of the apostles was derived from the Roman Mass canon, since there, and there alone, are they found in the order in which they occur in Mr. McIntyre's reconstruction, and he regards the whole design as the visual representation of a prayer in which the function of the human image is neither didactic nor decorative, but magical, a point to which the use of runic lettering gives additional force.

During the past decade readers of all kinds have been forced to accustom themselves to steadily falling standards of book production. It is, therefore, all the greater joy to receive a book which, though on a more modest scale, may yet be compared both in its appearance and in the interest of its content with that earlier work, on the cathedral manuscripts, in which the Dean and Chapter and the Oxford University Press were so successfully associated. If this new work, which has been prepared under the editorial direction of Lt.-Col. Battscombe, arouses a keen sense of expectation, even of impatience, at its promise of a greater work embracing a detailed study of the whole group of relics associated with Saint Cuthbert, those who have been concerned with its production have only themselves to blame for offering so stimulating an *apéritif*.

PETER HUNTER BLAIR.