

his own impressions with those of earlier travellers, and strengthening impressions with history, biography and hagiography. His sensitiveness to colour and touch are keen; we are all conscious of the intense light that strikes us as we pass the thresholds of Valence or Sisteron, but what a feeling underfoot of Provençal houses is called up by 'the wide, shallow treads of the staircase', or of the mistral by 'the wind which tears at your hair' on the roof of Tarascon castle! The country is grasped from within and the book is blessedly free from the amused aloofness with which centuries of British travellers have written about the foreigner and his ways.

C. M. GIRDLESTONE

SCOTLAND OF THE SAINTS. By D. D. C. Pochin Mould. (Batsford; 21s.)

In the last twenty years a notable series of Batsford books has done much to save the topography of Scotland from the ravages of the undisciplined imagination and the rhapsodic pen at whose mercy it has so long been exposed. In the present volume, Dr Pochin Mould ably maintains the Batsford tradition of excellence both of text and illustration in her consideration of Ichalumchille, St Columba's Iona, and the other sacred sites of Dalriada and the western Highlands.

In so far as it is this limited area which is the subject of the book, the title is misleading. Yet the book itself avoids that unpleasing impression of a collection of dead flotsam and jetsam heaped up on provincial shores by the tides of a larger history, which one so often gains from the regional study. In this, of course, the author is helped by her subject itself, since it was from these western regions, and Iona in particular, that the main tide of Scottish history was to flow. Nevertheless, to manoeuvre this tide successfully, as Dr Pochin Mould does, avoiding both the shoals of sentimentality and the rocks of special pleading (whether confessional or merely antiquarian) is a difficult task. All who love Iona will welcome her fine portrait of Columcille, founder no less of the Scottish nation than of the Scottish church.

R.T.

MONTEVERDI: CREATOR OF MODERN MUSIC. By Leo Schrade. (Gollancz; 21s.)

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI: LIFE AND WORKS. By H. F. Redlich, translated by Kathleen Dale. (Oxford; 21s.)

That two major studies of Monteverdi should have appeared at the same time and at the same price is an event of some importance. In this case it is also, for the reviewer, an event of some difficulty; for these books, though very different, have each their own virtues and their own weaknesses, so that it is hard to recommend one at the expense of the other.