

BLACKFRIARS

churches and their contents are coming to take a harmonious place in the setting of modern life. This excellent illustrated review is valuable as a guide to what is being done in this matter, especially in Belgium, France, Germany and Holland. In the number October-December, 1933, there are good articles on the architecture of Julian Barbier and V. Marrés, and M. A. Couturier, O. P., writes instructively on the paintings of Georges Desvallières. There is also an article on the new Paschal candle at St. Joseph's, Antwerp, which, in its fruity luxury, is everything that such a candle should not be. In the number January-March, among other good articles we note one on the churches of Karl Wilbe in Germany, a discussion of regional architecture and an impressively illustrated account of the altar furniture of a church in Syria, where the influence of dogma can be felt in majestic simplicity. In the number April-June we note an account of the churches of Ch. Henri Royer in the devastated areas, a study of how the Germans solve the problem of the position of the organ in a church, an article on the work of Dom Bellot and his school, and a brief notice of the windows of Raphael Ladeur. In general, the review is to be recommended to English Catholics: it may prove a much-needed inspiration.

A.M.

HISTORY

CYMRU'R OESAU CANOL gan Yr Athro Robert Richards. (Hughes a'i fab, Wrecsam; 15/-.)

The author has produced a book of scholarship which should yet have a considerable popular appeal. He has provided his readers with a survey of social life in medieval Wales and he has done it in such a fashion that the book should appeal to several types of reader. The difficulty of the task and the extent of his success can be gauged by comparing *Cymru'r Oesau Canol* with some English books of the same type.

The book starts with two excellent chapters which serve to explain what is meant by that elusive term a 'period' in history and to define and explain the position of the medieval civilization in the development of Europe. In other words Professor Richards enables the general reader to see the period in its relation to the whole sweep of European civilization. Such an introduction is, for the general reader, of capital importance and it will certainly do the more expert reader no harm.

This is followed by a series of chapters dealing with the life of the countryside and the town, the parish and the monastery.

REVIEWS

The chapter on the Forest is particularly useful for the significance of the Forest is frequently overlooked.

In the Middle Ages the Welsh possessed an international reputation as a warlike race, firmly convinced that 'nobilitas cum pace perit.' Their light-armed spearmen and archers, conspicuous in scarlet and, later, in white and green, were prominent in all the Plantagenet wars and their speech and the ferocity of their fighting—no less than their love of plunder—were known from the Grampians to the Pyrenees and the Syrian desert. They appear in Professor Richard's pages without any of the adventitious aids of romanticism: badly paid, they took everything on which they could lay hands; as did their descendants at Badajoz and Ciudad Rodrigo.

The arrangement of a short bibliography at the end of each chapter is excellent and the numerous illustrations are really good—that is, they illustrate the reading matter instead of merely providing pictures. The system of short notes on the pictures at the end of the book is first-rate. The author's arrangement gives the book a unity which enables him to avoid the main danger of such a work—the appearance of being 'scrappy.'

There are one or two minor flaws, however. Mr. Richard's statement on p. 39, that Ireland was not affected by Roman influence is somewhat dubious and the uninstructed reader might be pardoned for supposing that the Albigensians (p. 416) were merely sophisticated adherents of a cultural revival. The statement (p. 295) that Poitiers provided a successful repetition of the tactics of Crecy is, to say the least, unfortunate. The book would have gained immensely by the inclusion of one or two maps. It is to be hoped that, when a second edition appears, this will be remedied. Something on the lines of Mr. Horrabin's maps—but drawing its inspiration from Professor Rees's magnificent map of S. Wales and the Border. Difficult, perhaps, but, one hopes, not impossible.

Cymru'r Oesau Canol will be a book of permanent importance—not only to Welsh but also to continental historians.

T.C-E.

WINSTON CHURCHILL AND JAMES II. By Malcolm V. Hay. (Harding & More; 2/6.)

Mr. Churchill's proneness to make reckless charges has recently got him into political hot water. In the field of history, an instance of the same propensity has brought him up against Major Hay, whose *Chain of Error in Scottish History* lately won him considerable recognition. In Mr. Churchill's in many ways