

bewildered by a mass of literature, the relative importance of which he is quite incapable of guessing. But here the relevant articles in English, French and German (very little seems to have escaped Dr Collins' vigilant eye), mentioned in footnotes to the text, have each an appropriate and helpful remark assessing their value, and there is a full critical bibliography at the end of each chapter. In this one-volume history American Catholic scholarship has something of which to be proud.

The historian's task ends when he has presented all the varieties of philosophical experience; there remains the more difficult problem of seeing how they belong together. This is the theme of Professor Hodges' Riddell lectures, in which he directs us to study the standpoints adopted by different philosophers. As he points out, it was Kant who first emphasized the importance of examining the source of first principles in the knowing subject, and this approach was developed by Dilthey in the notion of *Weltanschauung*, and by Collingwood in his analysis of the 'absolute presuppositions' held in each age; moreover, though they would perhaps be unwilling to admit it, modern English philosophers are successfully using a very similar method in their linguistic analyses. In these lectures Professor Hodges demonstrates how very powerful a method it can be in skilful hands, and succeeds in clearing up many muddles in philosophical discussion, arising from unobserved shifts of standpoint; such as the confusion between things as viewed in themselves (ontologically) and as known (transcendentally), which even Kant did not always fully avoid.

Professor Hodges does not confine himself to philosophy; for him the central standpoint is that of Christianity. Hence perhaps his insistence that an act of will, no less than of intellect, is involved in adopting one's own standpoint; the attitude taken up to reality is, he emphasizes, eventually a matter of conscious choice from among mutually incompatible possibilities. While this is certainly so for religious faith, it may be thought that unaided reason is somewhat more capable of discovering philosophical truth than Professor Hodges is willing to allow. And it is scarcely possible to agree with his suggestion that our choice of standpoint is determined by its power to open up new areas of thought and experience for us. The medieval philosopher believed he could judge between the truth and falsehood of rival systems. Was his standpoint really very naïve?

LAURENCE BRIGHT, O.P.

THE ROMAN FRONTIER IN WALES. By V. E. Nash-Williams. (University of Wales Press; 30s.)

The history of Roman Wales is still unwritten, and in consequence

the two most crucial problems in Welsh history are still unsolved. How was it that the Celtic social structure as well as the Celtic language survived through nearly four centuries of Roman rule? To what extent and by what means was Wales to be affected by influences from this Roman period? Dr Nash-Williams has made a contribution towards the solution of both problems; but he surely did not intend to make more than a very partial one.

Like some other scholars recently, he suffers from the advertisement on the jacket of his monograph. This asserts that, besides much else, he aimed to present a comprehensive review of the evidence for the organization and occupation of Wales and a conspectus of the history of the occupation. If this were accurate he has failed. There is no assessment of the economic significance or duration of the Roman mine-workings in Wales; gold mines like those at Dolaucothi, lead mines like those at Talargoch. There is no consideration given to the question as to how the Ordovices were organized and as to whether they had a cantonal headquarters like the Romanized *civitas silurum* at Caerwent. There is no attempt to estimate the evidence for Irish settlements during the late Roman period and no discussion as to how far historic memories have been preserved in early Welsh tradition. It is characteristic of this choice of method that there is no reference to Cunedda and only two passing references to the site at Caerwent.

For this volume is primarily a detailed and meticulously accurate account of a field survey of Roman military remains in Wales with over a hundred illustrations including maps, plans, drawings and photographs. It is in fact precisely the kind of book described in the author's foreword, if not in the publisher's advertisement. It is essentially scientific in approach and is marked by the scientific scholarship and *expertise* that every archaeologist has come to associate with work of Dr Nash-Williams. It is the completion of a chapter first begun by Sir Mortimer Wheeler.

But though it is only a single chapter in the history of Roman Wales it is possible to draw three general conclusions from it. The first is that Wales was conceived as within the frontiers of Rome, not beyond them; there were 700 miles of Roman road within Wales itself and twenty-four auxiliary forts dependent on the two great fortresses and in the early fourth century the fortifications of the Irish shore stretched as far west as Caer Gybi in Anglesea. The second is the security of Roman rule in Wales, except during its beginnings and towards its close; at least throughout the second century, and perhaps for much of the third, the forts within Wales were only manned by skeleton garrisons and there are traces of civil settlements outside their walls, as at Cardiff and at Carmarthen. The third was that the chief factor hindering

Romanization was a geographical one; the extent of forestland as well as hillside even more than the habits of a pastoral people prevented the development of a 'Villa' system, and therefore of a Roman system of land tenure, and therefore of a Romanized social structure. But this does not imply that Rome had had no impact of the way of life of the chiefs of the Ordovices or of the Decangi or of the western Silures. So much has been learnt recently through the discovery of the hill fort of the third and fourth century Votadini on the summit of Taprain Law in East Lothian. The primary need for early Welsh history is the siting and excavation of some Ordovician Taprain Law.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

BYWYD AC AMSERAU'R ESGOB RICHARD DAVIES. Gan Glanmor Williams. (University of Wales Press; 8s. 6d.)

Here is a book which will add to the already assured reputation of the University of Wales Press. Richard Davies has for some time stood in need of a modern biography built on the foundations laid by Archdeacon Thomas, and Mr Glanmor Williams has put every student of Welsh history in his debt. His book should be of particular interest to Catholics in Wales and should help them to an understanding of the eventual success of the Elizabethan settlement in the Principality. Davies, the son of a priest, and of patrician descent on both sides of his family, represented that alliance between Renaissance scholarship and the new religion which yet had its roots in the traditional culture of his country. The palace at Abergwili provided a suitable setting for his great Renaissance household and court, and Davies' reputation for scholarship kept him in touch with the circle round Parker. He may very well be the origin of Spenser's Diggon Davie in *the Shepheardes Calender*. In the Welsh version of the New Testament and the Book of Common Prayer his influence extends to our own day.

As there is no doubt that Mr Williams' book will remain for some time the standard work on the subject, it may be permissible to suggest that before the next edition two minor points may merit consideration. To begin with, the author fumbles on pages 2 and 3 over the question of clerical concubinage at the beginning of the sixteenth century. I should have thought it improbable that his parentage should necessarily have tended to draw Davies to the Protestant side. There would seem no reason on page 23 to use the English 'John a Lasco' to designate (in Welsh) the Polish 'Jan Laski'.

In conclusion, it may be remarked that for the ordinary reader who wishes to grasp the spirit and method of the Elizabethan settlement at its best, and so at its most effective, a book such as this is of far more value than the average desiccated outline. For instance, the attitude of the