

NOTES AND NEWS

present Lecturer in Archaeology at Edinburgh, as Professor of Archaeology in the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire at Cardiff. It may come as a surprise to many readers of *ANTIQUITY* outside Great Britain that a University of Ancient Britons has waited sixty-five years before it has recognized officially the study of its own remote past. The ghosts of Edward Lhwyd and Sir John Rhŷs will haunt with pleasure the hall at University College, Cardiff, when Professor Atkinson gives his inaugural lecture.

THE SCHAFFHAUSEN CELTIC EXHIBITION

The Keeper of Antiquities in the Ashmolean Museum kindly points out that our note on the Schaffhausen Exhibition in the last number of *ANTIQUITY* was misleading in one detail. Three objects from Oxford were exhibited (although they did not appear in the printed catalogue), namely the Minster Ditch scabbard and two bronze 'spoons' from Penbryn. We are glad to be able to add the Ashmolean to the very small list of those museums and private individuals who sent material from Britain to this Celtic Exhibition.

THE ANGLO-SAXONS AND THE B.B.C.

Two years ago the B.B.C. arranged a series of special broadcasts on Roman Britain, and last year a similar series on the Anglo-Saxons. This year it is to be the Normans. These broadcasts are seldom discussed outside the broadcasting review columns of the daily and weekly papers; yet serious discussion is wanted and welcomed by producers of these programmes and of The Archaeologist on Network Three and Buried Treasure on B.B.C. Television. We are happy to print here the comments of Miss Rosalind Hill of Westfield College on the Anglo-Saxon broadcasts.

The work of the B.B.C. in stimulating a popular interest in archaeology has been an unqualified success. Indeed, we have reached the stage when archaeologists have to be cautious in mentioning new discoveries for fear lest the inrush of enthusiastic spectators may hinder their work.

Can the same interest be aroused for the study of history, and in particular for the history of England between A.D. 597 and 1066? In a recent series of broadcast talks the B.B.C. obtained the services of a body of learned men, each of them a first-rate authority in his own field, who held eight discussions on the subject of Anglo-Saxon England. The result, according to evidence obtained by the producers, was to give great pleasure to people with some knowledge of the subject, but not to capture the imagination of the general public. My own limited researches among university students tend to confirm this opinion. Those who knew something of the outlines of Anglo-Saxon history were interested, even to the extent of regretfully foregoing their suppers. Those who knew nothing of the period were completely baffled.

It was unfortunate that the course was started in the middle of the period with the reign of Alfred, 'the one person in whom the [English] sense of belonging can be personified'. Most English people under the age of forty have been brought up without any strict training in historical chronology, with the result that their ideas of history are inevitably muddled. Nevertheless, most people understand a story better if it has a beginning, a middle and an end. The use of the 'flash-back' seems to be of doubtful value even in romance, and it can be extremely unsafe in history unless the student has already grasped the main outlines of the period. An intelligent person with no specialized knowledge could not but be interested to hear an expert lecture on Bede's Northumbria or Alfred's Wessex; he could hardly be expected to assimilate a few scholarly remarks on both, presented in reverse order with no very clear indication of the relationship between them.

The whole popularity of the 'Brains Trust' or 'Any Questions' programmes seems