

BRITISH ANTIQUITY. By T. D. Kendrick. (Methuen; 21s.)

Archaeological study has now reached a period when it can submit its own past to antiquarian investigation. This book examines the development of antiquarian thought from 1135 to about 1635.

Dr Kendrick traces the history of the Brutus fables from the publication of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, which first introduced them on the authority of his '*vetustissimus liber*', through the middle ages, describing their zenith in Tudor times, the battles which raged over their veracity, and their final overthrow before the more scientific attitude of the seventeenth century.

We read of King Arthur, of the visits of the Phoenicians to Britain, of the Glastonbury legend of Saint Joseph of Arimathea, and of the supposedly Trojan origin of the Britons. We are so accustomed to treat these romances as literary devices, that it surprises us to find how bitter were the quarrels over them. But we must not forget that in 1931 Professor Fleure implied a defence of the legend of the Trojan ancestry of the Britons on the grounds of the Aegean connections of the megalithic culture of the early Metal Age.

Throughout, we see clearly developing an attitude akin to our own, culminating, after many backward steps, in the recriminations of Camden and Brooke: 'Lett him goe to the tombe, lett him looke upon it'. 'I... did ride to Norwich to search the truth of your speech.' At this point we may agree that field archaeology has begun.

This book covers a wide range of sources and introduces many people whose names have not previously been mentioned in connection with the development of archaeological thought. It is written in the pleasant and easy-to-read style for which Dr Kendrick is noted. Except for an occasional tendency to anticipate his subject matter, and the consequent cross-references which are apt to cause a little irritation, the book is everything one might expect from the Director of the British Museum. The sixteen plates, mostly by the author, deserve special mention, for manuscripts are very difficult to photograph well. The production of the book is well up to the usual excellent standard of the publishers.

F. WILLETT.

MAN, SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT. By Brian Hackett. (Percival Marshall; 30s.)

THE STORY OF ENGLISH ARCHITECTURE. By Hugh Braun. (Faber; 12s. 6d.)

The evolution of the physical background of human life is a story which has often been told, but which can still bear re-telling in a fresh way, or in the light of new knowledge. To trace this evolution from

the most primitive beginnings to the present day **within the compass of a single volume is a formidable task**, whether the field of study be general or limited.

Mr Hackett discusses at length the influences and events which gave shape to the communities in which men live, and shows how, in a changing social structure, town and countryside gradually assumed their present shapes, haphazardly at first and later under the influence of conscious attempts at planning. Readers unfamiliar with the terminology of town and country planning will probably find him at his best when he describes the development of landscape design, through the formality of landscape design, through the formality of the Versailles tradition to the great work of the English School of Landscape of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and the book would have had a wider appeal if the whole story had been told in the plain English of these passages.

Mr Braun has chosen the opposite extreme. The clear, straightforward style in which he has previously told the story of house and castle is here abandoned in favour of a conversational manner which only achieves an irritating condescension; and the frequent use of such adjectives as 'cosy' and 'quaint' detracts seriously from the value of a book whose author's intentions were obviously excellent. The illustrations are not up to the standard which we have come to expect in the last twenty years, and the conscientious reader would be saved much searching if they had been gathered together, as are Mr Hackett's, at the end of the book.

Both accounts suffer in balance from a failure to appreciate the true position and influence of the Church in medieval society; but while Mr Hackett takes a conventional view, and readily acknowledges the work of the Church in the educational field, Mr Braun allows his prejudices to ride his pen. The error in the date of the arrival in England of St Augustine may be only a mis-print; but there is no doubt about his disapproval of the Church in general and the monastic orders in particular, and it is with obvious relief that he states, at the end of his fifth chapter, that 'at the time of the Reformation in the reign of Henry VIII, the Church which had been so important and powerful during the Middle Ages disappeared altogether'.

DONOVAN PURCELL.