Old English Scholarship in England from 1566-1800 by Eleanor N. Adams
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Peter the Venerable's pleas are, and lovable as he shows himself in what otherwise might have proved a very bitter controversy, his own admissions in his later Statutes show that St Bernard's just criticisms went far deeper than matters of mere 'minute accuracy' and 'meticulous observance' (pp. 517, 520). Still plainer, if possible, is the evidence of the York monks who went out to found Fountains; it was not that their unreformed brethren neglected only the mint and anise and cummin of the Rule, but that they sat up drinking, quarrelled with each other, and violated not only the letter but the spirit of which they had sworn to obey (cf. Dugdale-Caley, vol. v, pp. 294 ff.). The 'grey cowl' (p. 523) need not refer to Savigny: the original Cistercian 'white' was really grey, and is frequently so called. Lastly, the decrees of the Council of Rouen (A.D. 1231) which Miss Allen has been unable to run down are printed on cols. 175 ff. of the fourth volume of Martene's Thesaurus. A few lines fit the Riwle so exactly that they seem worth quoting here (§iv). 'Propter scandala quae ex monialium conversatione proveniunt, statuimus de monialibus nigris ne aliquod depositum recipiant in domibus suis ab aliquibus personis; maxime arcas clericorum vel etiam laicorum causa custodiae apud se minime deponi permittant. Pueri et puellae qui ibi solent nutriri et instrui penitus repellantur.' The parallel passages in the Riwle are (Morton) pp. 418, 423. It is impossible to conclude without apologizing for what might well seem hypercriticism in the face of so solid a monograph as Miss Allen's.

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Old English Scholarship in England from 1566—1800. By ELEANOR N. ADAMS. (Yale Studies in English, iv.) London: H. Milford. 1917. 8s. 6d.

Many of us who, like Thackeray, love to read about good eating and drinking, do not less love to peruse even the bare accounts of what past students have collected and digested and edited: the names of Parker and Camden, and Spelman and Selden and Hickes, of Humphrey Wanley and David Wilkins and Thomas Tanner, have a sound not only solemn but melodious to the modern ear. Miss Adams's book is both humiliating and stimulating to us of the twentieth century. We may find here, carefully marshalled and told with some real depth of feeling though with no superficial ornaments of style, the story of what may be called the early and heroic periods of Old English Scholarship, and of its ensuing, though not final, decay. The main explanation of this decline lies in a single sentence on p. 110: 'The impetus for English investigators had always been controversial or antiquarian; to them the stronger appeal lay in the contents of early literature, not in linguistic study.' Even now, English scholars constantly turn aside from scientific philology with a silent excitant alii; and, if we must err on one side or the other, it seems nobler to pay undue attention to a writer's meaning than to his words. But, without the philologer's patient and persistent pursuit.
of little details, the meaning itself might often escape us; to the labour of transcription and collation we owe an almost incalculable debt; and among the tragedies of literature few are more moving than the lives—revealed often only by a glimpse here and there—of those for whom such patient underground labour has been its own and its only reward. The account of the Oxford Saxonists on pp. 93—96 reads almost like a page from Roger Bacon's story of the Sisyphean task with which he and his fellow-innovators had to grapple; we there meet successively the consumptive William Elstob, early worn down to the hilt, his sister Elizabeth, keeping body and soul together by taking pupils at a fee of 2s. 8d. per week per head, and the 'lad of ten or twelve, who had phenomenal skill as a copyist of Old English manuscripts.'

We have found great interest also in the Appendices; especially in Elizabeth Elstob's eloquent defence of her favourite studies, and in the long extracts from different scholars' letters, mostly published here for the first time, illustrating the labours and struggles of all these early students. Miss Adams has made us all her debtors for a very interesting chapter in English literary history.

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*Studies in Literature.* By Sir ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH. Cambridge: At the University Press. 1918. 8vo. 10s. 6d.

*Shakespeare's Workmanship.* By Sir ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH. London: T. Fisher Unwin. 1918. 8vo. 15s.

Anyone occupied with the business of attempting to teach literature comes to these volumes prejudiced in their favour; for it was their author who was responsible for the decisive and even defiant claim that the first part of that business was literary. This gospel, set out in the now famous lectures *On the Art of Writing,* was a difficult one for the unconverted scholar, the scholar perhaps of History, the History of Literature, Philology, or Language; nor was it an easy one even for the converted. Many more than now do so would seriously attempt to teach literature if it were not so uncommonly hard to teach. 'The critical perception of poetic truth' is itself, as Arnold used to tell us, 'of all things the most elusive.' What would he have said of the far further difficulty of communicating a faculty for this perception to the young and inexperienced?

But let us not despair. Something can be done if the teachers will try with a single enough devotion, and certainly nothing by their not trying. The best perhaps would be that they should stir the mould a little, force a realisation that there are differences, free the mind from the lip service of literary shibboleths, and enable their pupils to feel the broad outlines of distinction for themselves. To secure finally that each student should himself come in contact with the poets' feeling and respond to that feeling with an individual disturbance would doubtless be to reach the unattainable. It would mean that Literary Schools