

added to the name Stephen, and the note on p. 89 is scarcely intelligible. I do not know what authority there is for the assertion that the duke of Beneventum paid homage to the pope (p. 87). The condemnation of the church on the ground of the barrenness of its baptismal formula (p. 105) seems somewhat unreasonable, and I must protest against calling Desiderius Didier, and against such expressions as 'the Sabbath' (p. 156), 'Armenian princess' (p. 196), and 'English kinsmen' (p. 281), where Welsh are meant. 'Ætius' on p. 212 may be ascribed to the printer.

E. W. BROOKS.

*Studies in John the Scot.* By ALICE GARDNER. (London: Henry Frowde. 1900.)

MISS GARDNER has written an excellent little book on the most ancient of British philosophers, John the Scot. Without pretending to be a work of historical research or philosophical science it succeeds admirably in accomplishing the authoress's aim of telling the 'reading public' who her hero was, and entering just so far into the consideration of his teaching as may induce many who find such speculations as his congenial to seek a closer acquaintance with them in his own works. Nothing could be clearer or more satisfactory than the passages at the end of ch. iv. and the beginning of ch. v., in which Miss Gardner shows the significance which the treatment of points of theological controversy by John the Scot may have for men of our own day, despite the unfamiliarity of the language and method which he employs. Some of the theological and philosophical expressions used are open to criticism. No one who knows anything of Plato regards the 'idea of a transcendent God' as 'specially characteristic of him' (p. 27). To describe John the Scot as a 'subjective idealist' (p. 124) seems to me quite misleading. 'Soul,' again, is not the right translation for *animus* on p. 125; 'spirit' would have been better. *Animus* is here (as *spiritus* elsewhere) used by John as equivalent to *intellectus*, the *νοῦς* or 'understanding,' considered not (as by Kant) as the inferior, but (as was usual before Kant) as superior to *ratio* or 'reason.' The 'soul' or *anima* is indeed sometimes distinguished by John from the *intellectus*, as including the *motus vitalis*, *sensus*, and *ratio*, which intervene between the body and the *intellectus* on the scale of being.

Although they in no way affect the value of the work for the general reader, it is to be regretted that Miss Gardner has admitted certain passages which recent investigations into the early history of medieval universities should have rendered impossible. Thus on p. 135 she speaks of John without question as having been 'head of the Studium of Paris,' though on p. 3 she admits that the authority for this statement is 'not undoubted.' Miss Gardner seems to have had before her Mr. Poole's 'Illustrations of Medieval Thought,' in which he indeed mentions his suspicion that the passage so describing the philosopher in a letter of Pope Nicolas I has been inserted by a forger, in order to support the claims of the university of Paris to a mythical antiquity, but does not reject it so decidedly as he does in his article on John the Scot in the 'Dictionary of National Biography,' written after the publication of the researches of Father Denifle and Mr. Rashdall. In the

same way Miss Gardner speaks on p. 14 of the story bringing John into connexion with the foundation of the university of Oxford in terms which would not suggest that the attribution of that work to King Alfred was as baseless a legend as it is now admitted to be. Miss Gardner's strictures on the 'bad Latin' of Martinus Polonus (on p. 127) would probably have been less severe had she quoted his account of the condemnation of Amalric of Bene from any other source than the extract in Huber's 'Joannes Scotus Erigena,' in which the title (*Damnamus*) of the decretal with the mention of which the preceding sentence ends is incorrectly printed as the first word of the sentence *Qui Amalric*. And it was scarcely necessary to call attention to the spelling *ydeas* in a thirteenth-century writer.

CLEMENT C. J. WEBB.

*Ueber die Anfänge der Signorie in Oberitalien: ein Beitrag zur italienischen Verfassungsgeschichte.* Von Dr. ERNST SALZER. (Berlin: Verlag von E. Ebering. 1900.)

THE rise of the North Italian signories presents to the student some of the most curious and interesting of political phenomena. The stubborn passion for independence and freedom which inspired the communes to resist to the uttermost and to repel the determined attacks of the Hohenstaufen, with all the empire behind them, and all rural feudal Italy at their side, was not yet sufficiently strong to prevent these very communes, but a few years later, from giving themselves up, an easy prey, to a number of petty native tyrants, who ruled them with a severe unmitigated absolutism of which the distant emperors would never have dreamed. The explanation of this extraordinary change, together with an analysis of the processes by which it was accomplished, is the object of Dr. Salzer's careful and scholarly book. It is based on an exhaustive study of all available sources of information, particularly on the statutes of the Lombard towns. All the fragmentary scraps of evidence derived from chronicles have been carefully weighed and sorted; and what has been hitherto a chaotic, almost indecipherable mass of unconnected facts and traditions has been arranged, analysed, and classified into an ordered and intelligible chapter of history.

Dr. Salzer's essay conclusively proves that, in the majority of cases, the signory was a development of one of the principal offices of the commune, that of the podestà, the captain or podestà of the people or the podestà of the Mercadanza. The old theory that the signor was originally a military captain, who had gradually annexed civil functions, is as a rule quite incorrect. Military authority was usually one of the last functions of government to be given over to the signor. Only once was an important dominion acquired by a military captain, the marquis Guglielmo of Montferrat; nor was his signory permanent, but collapsed at once on his captivity and death. The signor was indeed seldom chosen to protect the town against external attacks, but rather against its own citizens, who were after all its worst enemies. The smallest commune in North and Central Italy had its parties and its fierce party fights, nominally political between Guelphs and Ghibellines, but more truly personal between the factious aristocratic families who struggled for predominance amongst themselves. The appointment of a foreign