

sightedness through the mass of later Passions, hymns, and Byzantine encomia down to a panegyric written by a student at the Collegio Greco of Rome at the end of the sixteenth century. He demonstrates once for all the priority of the Greek texts, and, among them, of the 'Dadianos-type'; and gives us a large selection of texts of all types—eleven of them previously inedited. The earliest representative of the Dadianos-type is a fragmentary Vienna palimpsest of the fifth to sixth century. Late manuscripts at Athens, Venice, Berroia (Verria), and elsewhere preserve important relics of this text, which is also the source of the Latin and oriental versions: among these last, the Coptic, edited by Dr. Budge in 1888, is perhaps the most valuable. It was this highly fabulous 'Volksbuch' (we owe Krumbacher a debt of gratitude for this illuminating name) which was condemned, along with the equally strange acts of SS. Ceryous and Julitta, in the *Decretum Gelasianum*. That *Decretum*, as Professor von Dobschütz in a recent masterly investigation has told us, must be regarded as a private venture by an unknown hand, put together early in the sixth century.

It is probably not out of place to remind the reader that the story of St. George and the Dragon has no place in the martyr's acts. There is but the briefest mention of it in Krumbacher's pages; but it has been investigated by J. B. Aufhäuser in a separate monograph published in 1911. Another once popular notion with regard to St. George—namely, that his legend grew out of the events connected with George the semi-Arian bishop of Alexandria—receives the *coup de grâce* which it deserved on pp. 304–17 of Krumbacher's volume.

To enumerate all the points of interest in this remarkable study is clearly impossible. One final word shall be said as to its *genesis*. Like many others of Krumbacher's special investigations, we are told, it arose out of an obscure allusion in a hymn of the poet Romanos. Krumbacher's efforts to find the source from which Romanos had drawn led to the production of a monograph perhaps unrivalled, certainly pre-eminent, among hagiographical studies.

M. R. JAMES.

*Essays on Questions connected with the Old English poem of Beowulf.* By KNUT STJERNA, Ph.D. Translated from the Swedish, with critical introduction, indexes and maps, by JOHN R. CLARK HALL, M.A., Ph.D. (Viking Club, 1912.)

PRIMARILY written for Swedish readers, the essays presented to us in English dress in this volume are a valuable addition to the literature dealing with the 'Beowulf' poem. Their interest of course is principally literary; but there is a thick substratum of material which has an historical bearing. They break practically fresh ground in offering archaeological material as evidence for the dates of the original theme of the poem, of the carrying of the lays to England, as well as of the final weaving into the form in which it has come down to us. Dr. Stjerna is mainly concerned with the first two of the above-mentioned stages. His material is therefore necessarily drawn from Scandinavia, and his conclusions are important and far-reaching. The Beowulf lays represent admittedly an echo

of a period of vital import for Scandinavian lands, which extended right through the migration period down to the time when the Swedes succeeded in thrusting back the Geatic element to the southern end of the peninsula, thus throwing them into still closer relations than before with their Danish allies. A great deal of Dr. Stjerna's argument is based on an hypothesis which he seeks to prove, namely, that the downfall of the Geats, except in the islands of Gotland, Bornholm, and the south-west corner of the peninsula, may be assigned to the years immediately round A.D. 500. This argument is based partly on an examination of the antiquities of the period, which seem to show an intrusion of types and motives belonging to the region further north, and a cessation in the development of other classes, like the wonderful gold collars found principally in West Götland and Öland, and partly on the distribution of gold *solidi* in northern lands. Of these by far the greater number come from the islands of Öland, Bornholm, and Gotland, particularly from the two former. The total amounted to over three-quarters of the *solidi* known from the whole of Scandinavia and Denmark. Nearly six-sevenths are of emperors prior to Anastasius (491-518), and it is noticed that those of Anastasius's predecessor, Zeno, are much scarcer in Öland than in the other two islands, while of Anastasius none come from Öland, eight from Bornholm, and thirty-three from Gotland.

Relying on these facts, Dr. Stjerna dates the conquest of Öland by the Swedes about the year 500. It is in this island that Dr. Stjerna would place the scene of many of Beowulf's exploits as well as the seat of Geatish government. The difficulties underlying this assumption are well met by the translator in his footnotes on pages 89 and 93, in which he draws particular attention to the one certain historical fact in Beowulf, namely, that it was from Geatland—and therefore, according to Dr. Stjerna, from Öland—that Hygelac, the Chochilaicus of Gregory of Tours, led his fateful expedition against the Frisians, an event which took place about A.D. 515. Dr. Stjerna's position appears to be even more untenable when, as the result of a comparison of the burial-practices in vogue in different parts of Scandinavia during this period, he places the scene of Beowulf's burial also in Öland.<sup>1</sup> In fact Dr. Stjerna, in his desire to reach a true interpretation of the details of the Beowulf poem, is a little apt to sail his boat of archaeological evidence too near to the wind, and to put its capacities to too severe a test. Thus, in order to prove the date of the Odinshög at Gamla Uppsala,<sup>2</sup> he makes use of the system evolved in Salin's *Altgermanische Tierornamentik*, and compares a fragment of gold plate ornamented with zoomorphic design found in that tumulus with other examples of goldsmith's work from Tureholm, Södermannland. The comparison may be fair as regards what still exists of the Tureholm find, but it must be remembered that of this, the largest of all Scandinavian gold-finds, only one-tenth, weighing 12.3 grammes, was saved from the melting-pot, so that there is no means of saying at what approximate date the whole find was deposited. As Salin's Style I ends, not, as the author would have it (p. 226), about the middle of the sixth century, but about A.D. 600,<sup>3</sup> while it begins about 450, the degenerate examples

<sup>1</sup> *Beowulf's Funeral Obsequies*, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 224 f.

<sup>3</sup> See Salin, p. 355.

from the Tureholm find must be more recent than 500. By placing them all a little later it would bring Odinsborg also to a slightly later date, and thus increase enormously its value for comparison with the account of Beowulf's obsequies. One feels that Dr. Stjerna is so preoccupied with his theories about Öland that he wishes to bring all his evidence as near as may be to the same point.

Apart, however, from these theories and the dates which they involve, there can be no doubt that the comparison of the objects described in 'Beowulf' with Scandinavian antiquities, as in 'Helmets and Swords', 'The Dragon's Hoard,' &c., are very valuable, for they enable us to visualize remarkably clearly the equipment and adornments of Beowulf's contemporaries and at the same time to understand that the descriptions are not entirely the outcome of the scop's fancy, but are true to actual life. Dr. Stjerna certainly succeeds in proving his point about the origin of the Beowulf's lays, but it is perhaps rather hard on England to conceive of the circle of Aethelbert's court, say, as incapable of imagining such bright adornments and wealth of gold as are pictured in the poem. Qualitative as well as quantitative exaggeration (p. 138) belongs to the legitimate weapons of a poet. One may also wonder why it was necessary to see in the expression in Beowulf, l. 2718, that 'the primeval earth-dwelling contained within it rocky arches, firm upon columns'—if it indeed is to be taken absolutely literally—more than an anachronism, or at most a *façon de parler*. The Roman vaulting in England (p. 38) seems somewhat far-fetched. The description would fit admirably one of the passage-graves of the late Neolithic period in Denmark and South Sweden, where they are well represented. These colossal grave-chambers, known in Denmark by the title of *Jostæse* or giant's grave, constructed of huge upright slabs, covered first with other slabs and then by a mound, must undoubtedly have been framed in a whole series of legends of supernatural agencies and inhabitants, and their massive construction fulfils every need of the description, particularly that of 'eorðsele' ('earth-hall'). It is also distinctly called 'the work of giants' ('enta gervorc,' l. 2718), though, like 'stân-bogan', this expression, too, cannot be pressed very far. Dr. Stjerna's arguments about the inconsistencies in the description of the treasure-chamber in the 'Dragon's Hoard in Beowulf' are supported apparently by contestable renderings. As the footnotes show, this is also the case in other passages, and in some instances, as in the best example of double-burial in his otherwise suggestive essay on this practice, Dr. Stjerna's archaeology appears to be slightly at fault. The idea of a gold-guarding dragon must have been widely current among Teutonic peoples, possibly brought by them from their habitat round the northern coast of the Black Sea, and recalls Herodotus's account of the gold-guarding gryphons of the Arimaspi (iv. 27). The statement in *Beowulf's Funeral Obsequies* (p. 204) that the dragon's hoard had been placed in a 'newly-constructed' barrow (Beowulf, l. 2244) is certainly an objection to the explanation suggested above, but as no barrow in any way satisfying every point of the descriptions in the poem was constructed in the fifth or sixth century, this expression alone need not count for much.

Dr. Clark Hall has done a great service in undertaking to collect

into one volume these essays, scattered among various Swedish journals and publications, many now unobtainable, and translate them for English readers, a task for which he is admirably qualified by his intimate knowledge of our earliest Anglo-Saxon poem. The critical introduction and footnotes, as well as the inclusion of his index of *realia* and the maps, form welcome and valuable additions. Dr. Clark Hall's translation, while adhering remarkably closely to the original, is at the same time easy and eminently readable. Exception may perhaps be taken to his rendering of the adjectives 'östgötiska' (p. 225, l. 7) and 'västgötiska' (p. 226, l. 5) by East Gothic and West Gothic respectively. It is somewhat confusing amidst the constant interchange of Gauts and Geats and the not infrequent mention of the Goths proper of Central Europe. His West Götland used adjectivally (p. 233, l. 8) is preferable, but, as 'västgötiska' is the adjective of 'Västergötland' in Swedish, it might have been rendered in English by West Götish with equal legitimacy. It would have been still more consistent to have substituted Gaut- for Göt- in both cases, as 'Götar' is translated by Gauts in the essay on 'the Swedes and Geats during the migration period' (see also footnote to p. xxiv).

E. THURLOW LEEDS.

*The Exchequer in the Twelfth Century*; the Ford Lectures delivered in the University of Oxford in Michaelmas term 1911. By REGINALD L. POOLE, M.A., LL.D. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912.)

THE peculiar charm pervading the *Dialogus de Scaccario* cannot be due to its literary garb, its only element that is borrowed (possibly from St. Gregory). Its author and Glanvill stand chronologically just in the middle between the compiler of the *Leges Henrici* and Bracton, who both of them, though widely different otherwise, suffer under the spell of a foreign legal system; furthermore Richard and Glanvill live in an age when theology, philosophy, science, and partly even history are but too fond of slavishly imitating ancient models. Nevertheless, in spite of traditions and surroundings these two officials of Henry II (Glanvill seems to owe some phrases to Richard) venture to write down nothing, excepting some Roman purple patches, but the actual facts of their own daily business, seen with the open eye of long experience and expressed in precise technical form. Any history of literature that conceives its task to show how among the manifold sides of mental activity statecraft and jurisprudence attained a literary form will have to recognize Richard fits Neal and Glanvill as the pioneers of free realistic observation. Another attraction of the *Dialogus* and the *Tractatus de Legibus Henrici II* consists in their subject: they trace with youthful power, in easy lines not yet too esoteric, the very beginning of a system which will soon achieve a great deal more than the mere comfort of a royal court, nay, nothing less than the orderly administration of finance and justice by a centralized monarchy far in advance of the rest of Europe.

Mr. Poole corrects the text of the *Dialogus* (pp. 112, 116, 126, 148) and lucidly explains and paraphrases many passages of it. He notes