

Notices of Books.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF PREHISTORIC ART, by Ernest A. Parkyn, M.A. (Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1915; 8vo., pp. xviii, 349, illustrated; price 10s. 6d. net).

This work, although extremely well produced and filled with a large number of striking illustrations, is not without errors and omissions, which, however, are not of very great consequence; but they might have been avoided had the proof-sheets been read by one or two antiquaries engaged in the same field of research. In the space of this short notice it is only possible to point out a few of these little blemishes in what is otherwise a well compiled and much needed work for the general student of Prehistoric Art.

The writer of this notice is chiefly interested in Chapters V to the end; but he is fully sensible of the skill and judgment displayed by the author in getting so much valuable information on Palæolithic art into the space of the first four chapters. In a work of this kind one seldom sees such a careful selection of typical illustrations, and one is impressed by the fact that this part of the work gives a much clearer view than could be obtained by reading the scattered French literature on the subject. In saying that the horse represented on the Cresswell Crags rib is the only engraving of the Palæolithic period yet discovered in Britain (p. 49) the author is perhaps hardly correct, unless he is not prepared to accept the incised drawing of a horse on a rib-bone found on the outskirts of Sherborne, Dorset (Sherborne School Museum), and described by Dr. Smith Woodward in the *Quart. Journ. Geol. Society*, vol. LXX (1914), pp. 100-103.

In the space at the author's disposal the Neolithic period is concisely described. On p. 138 the statement that no pottery whatever was found during the most important part of the examination of Wor Barrow, Handley, is not correct, for the writer of this notice removed the primary interments and with them the primitive piece of pottery figured and described in *Excavations in Cranborne Chase*, iv, p. 86, Plate 257, fig. 19.

On the whole the Bronze Age and its artistic productions are admirably dealt with, but it is somewhat surprising that although the gold lunulae are described at some length there is no reference

in these chapters to the gold torcs of the period of which over thirty specimens have been found in Great Britain and Ireland. Amongst them is the torc found at Yeovil in 1909, upon which a full paper was written which included details of the distribution of gold torcs of the Bronze Age (see *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, LV, ii, 66-84). With regard to bronze trumpets (pp. 167-172) it is a question if the specimen found in the river Witham, near Tattersall Ferry, Lincs., should not be included in the list, but it may be of rather later date than the typical Irish specimens (*Phil. Trans.*, LXXXVI, 1796, Plate xi; and *Mag. of Music*, Feb., 1893, fig. 1 of *Ancient Bronze Trumpets*). On p. 234, "Mastertown" is a misprint for "Martinstown." No mention is made of vessels of Kimmeridge shale of the Bronze Age.

Turning to the Early Iron Age we find that, owing probably to the exigencies of space, certain sections,—as for instance iron objects,—are very brief; but many of the most ornate bronze "finds" are illustrated. Somerset, of course, figures prominently, owing to the world-famed discoveries in the Lake Villages at Glastonbury and Meare. But to our surprise there is no allusion to the examples of Late-Celtic art discovered in Wookey Hole and described in Mr. Balch's work (1914) on the subject. The spoon-shaped objects found at Weston, near Bath, are figured; also the gold torc discovered at Clevedon with the terminal enlargements ornamented with a curvilinear design typical of the period. Descriptions are also given of the heavy torc of bronze found at Wraxall, and the fine collection of horse-trappings from the Polden Hills, several of which are enamelled. The absence in the Lake Villages of objects ornamented with enamels is somewhat puzzling; possibly the villages ceased to be inhabited before this style of ornament came into general use. The villagers had crucibles for bronze and perhaps glass making, but they were of fire-clay and not of stone as stated by Mr. Parkyn (p. 317). The dice from Glastonbury are marked 3 to 6, and not 1 to 6 (p. 317), and no seeds of the oak, alder and birch were found (p. 317). Models of bronze boars of this period, alluded to on p. 278, should include the specimen from Meare (*Brit. Assoc. Report*, 1913, p. 225).

On p. 315, "Dunston" should read "Duston"; in other places "Sir W. Wylde" should be "Sir W. Wilde." The four camps mentioned on p. 313 as being excavated by General Pitt-Rivers are not all in Dorset; the South Lodge Camp and Martin Down Camp are in S. Wilts.

H. ST. GEORGE GRAY.

THE ARTS IN EARLY ENGLAND. VOLS. III and IV. SAXON ART AND INDUSTRY IN THE PAGAN PERIOD. By G. Baldwin Brown, M.A. (John Murray, 1915; 8vo., Vol. III, pp. xl, 387; Vol. IV, pp. xxxv, 437; with 8 plates in colour, 158 half-tone plates, 29 illustrations in the text, and 8 maps; price 21s. net per vol.).

These two splendid volumes continue and expand a work commenced many years ago. Its first two volumes dealing with *The Life of Saxon England in its relation to the Arts* and with the Ecclesiastical Architecture of the Saxon period were published as long ago as 1903. One result of the long delay, due to various causes, has been to enable the writer to deal with his subject in a much fuller manner than originally intended and on broader lines, and to look at "the subject of Anglo-Saxon art from the standpoint of a wide survey of the artistic activities of the whole Germanic race." Incidentally it has enabled him to include the many important finds which have been made in the last twelve years and have added much to our knowledge of a subject which is constantly presenting new aspects through the discovery of fresh material.

The volumes before us deal in fifteen chapters with the artistic aspects of the early Anglo-Saxon coinage, with the cemeteries and the tomb furniture from which our knowledge of the subject is almost entirely derived, with the pottery, inlaid jewellery and other objects, and with the general bearing of the archæological evidence on the question of the migrations and settlements of the Anglo-Saxons. Five chapters are devoted to the latter question, while the account of the tomb-furniture occupies no less than six. A further and final instalment of the work is promised, which will deal with carved stones, illuminated manuscripts and later objects of a more secular nature. The Alfred Jewel is left over for this concluding portion of the work, and in consequence of this Somerset is barely mentioned in these volumes. The archæological evidence, which can show no Saxon cemetery with the tomb furniture of heathen burials in Somerset, agrees with the records, from which we can infer that the Saxon advance did not lap over the borders of Somerset till the heathen period had ended. Taunton Museum therefore furnishes one only of the many objects figured in these volumes,—a Romano-British penannular brooch from Ham Hill chosen to illustrate by comparison the survival of certain Roman and Celtic types into the Anglo-Saxon period (Plate L, fig. 1).

A study of these volumes fully justifies the author's claim that Anglo-Saxon art possessed an originality and powers of design and execution with which it is not commonly credited. He might further have pointed out that a vast amount of the best artistic work of the time has undoubtedly perished owing to the material

in which it was wrought. The Anglo-Saxon was a carpenter and wood-carver before he was a mason or sculptor, and a find of Anglo-Saxon wood-work similar to the wonderful collection from the Oseberg ship-mound now in the Museum at Christiania would assuredly disclose an equally unsuspected degree of culture and refinement among races whom monkish chroniclers depict as mere barbarians.

We have no space left in which to deal with the subject of the bearing of the archæological evidence on historical problems which occupies so much of the fourth volume, but this is a complex question which could not be adequately dealt with in a review. Suffice it to say that on this point Professor Baldwin Brown agrees generally with the views of Mr. E. Thurlow Leeds in his recently published handbook on *The Archæology of the Anglo-Saxon Settlements* and students of the subject must in future reckon with their work.

ALBANY F. MAJOR.

THE CHANCEL OF ENGLISH CHURCHES, by Francis Bond, M.A. (Oxford University Press, 1916; 8vo., pp. vii, 274; 229 illustrations; price 7s. 6d. net).

The title is followed by four lines descriptive of the various objects fixed and portable to be found in the chancel. The name of the author is sufficient warrant that the contents will satisfy the most exacting reader, while the critic will find little to complain of.

The table of contents indicates ten chapters for as many separate items; to which are added an appendix on the Holy water stoup, and a bibliography of works consulted. These are mostly modern English books. It is trying to find Bishop Hobhouse's name misrendered as Hobson.

The contents of an English chancel at the present day consist of occasional fragments of early work, and a mass of the most appalling rubbish ever produced by and for an inartistic people. A wild and Hunnish fury has wrought havoc here from Henry VIII to Victoria.

A few stone altars remain in their proper position; probably more may be found doing duty as paving-stones in the aisles, or monumental slabs, or even degraded to treads and landing levels on external staircases.

The seventeenth century revival about 1620 supplied much good woodwork, but only altars and altar rails are discussed in this volume, other fittings having been treated of in earlier volumes of the series. All the varied contents of the chancel are represented

in Somersetshire churches. In this county of fine wood-carving, the Communion Table and its enclosing rails naturally received much attention, and several good examples are given. An illustrated description of the Somerton Table with curious figure groups on the large bulbs or "melons" of the legs will be found in *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, December, 1916.

The remains of the reredos dug up in Wellington Church have been placed in the Taunton Museum. Blackford, near North Cadbury, possesses two alabaster figures of a vanished reredos. Collinson states that "what renders Martock Church a subject of general admiration, is an elegant superb altar-piece in stucco-plaster," of which his history provides a plate. The east window here, as well as at Yeovil and many other churches, has now been freed from this obstruction, an action which, to judge from a statement on p. 100, Mr. Bond would seem to deprecate.

Perhaps piscinas have survived in larger numbers than any other fitting. The absence of imagery and the ease with which they could be filled in and hidden behind whitewashed plaster has tended to their preservation. The author supplies a note on the origin of the double piscina, which was in fashion (it was certainly not universal) from the middle of the thirteenth century for some time. A good example will be found at Shepton Mallet.

It is noticeable that there is no reference to the low-side window in the chancel wall. No satisfactory explanation of their purpose has yet been given; but as they are always found in the chancel or near the site of an altar, it may be surmised that they were used during the service.

In closing this notice of a beautiful and interesting book reference must be made to one striking point. The contents are a commentary on the saying: "Diversa in similibus." Whatever was required would be produced differing in some degree from any other example. No two designs are ever exactly alike. The modern tendency is for the opposite: "Similia in diversis." The practice of "standardizing" is now spreading to architecture. It is much simpler and much cheaper. A uniform set of designs can be kept in a central office in London; and one store can provide all the necessary moulds, templates, and scaffolding for carrying out the designs in any part of the United Kingdom. And yet people wonder why modern designs are so deadening, and modern fittings so monotonous. How different from the results obtained when every Cathedral and Abbey had its own designers and workmen, whose individuality could be expressed in the work required in the district round about.