

Notices of Books.

"EARTHWORK OF ENGLAND," by A. Hadrian Allcroft, M.A. (Macmillan and Co., 1908; pp. xix, 711; 224 illustrations; 18*s. net.*)

Under the comprehensive term "earthwork" Mr. Allcroft has included any structure of earth or stone or both, so long as it shews no traces of mortar. The wide range covered by his handsome book may therefore be at once appreciated, and his work is likely to be the accepted standard on the subject relating to England for many years to come. It has been brought fully up to date with references to the latest possible reports of excavations available, and in this respect the footnotes bear evidence of very extended research, and are most valuable in their fulness, which renders it for the first time possible to identify the records of any special exploration of which fuller particulars are desired.

A suggestive statement in the introductory chapter will perhaps give an idea of the lines on which the book is written. Mr. Allcroft says (p. 20) "Of the many thousands of earthworks found in England those about which anything is known are very few, those of which there remains nothing more to be known scarcely exist. Each individual example is in itself a new problem in history, chronology, ethnology, and anthropology; within every one lie the hidden possibilities of a revolution in knowledge. . . . Within them lie hidden all the secrets of time before history begins, and by their means only can that history be put into writing. . . . Heretofore the alphabet has been regarded as the key of knowledge; to-day it is the spade."

The chapter following points out the various influences on the movements and habits of the makers of ancient earthworks which have come about through climatic and cultural changes, and is full of information. Chapter III and those following have been arranged according to the list of defensive earthworks drawn up by the Earthworks Committee of the Congress of Archæological Societies, and under each division Mr. Allcroft has given many examples, with outline plans not only of the well-known works, but also of almost every structure on which he has commented. Most of these plans are from the Ordnance Survey, but supplemented in many cases by sectional outlines. The author has however relied almost entirely on his own personal knowledge and examination of the works selected as examples illustrating each chapter and section.

Very wisely also he has, in the present imperfect state of our know-

ledge, refrained from entering very deeply into the vexed questions which surround both origin and use of the majority of our earthworks, but has fairly and fully stated the theories which have been made by the best authorities, and has pointed out those which have definitely been proved either correct or mistaken by actual exploration. He has given a very good idea of the possibilities of application of such known results to yet unexplored structures, and the book is full of most valuable hints and warnings to the theorist, whether beginner or advanced student of his subject. No small part of the value of the work lies in its record of proved mistakes, and in the many indications of the lines on which further work is needed.

Naturally the camps, etc., of the south and south-west of England furnish very many of the best examples, the results of the work of General Pitt-Rivers being made full use of; but Mr. Allcroft evidently knows our own county well, and a large proportion of the earthworks illustrated and mentioned are from Somerset, some twenty plans being given, and perhaps as many more examples referred to, from the great structures at Worlebury to the less known fosse and vallum at Ponter's Ball. In this connection a statement at the end of the chapter on "The Transition Period" has perhaps its full interest and value for Somerset archæologists. The author considers that the earthworks west of the Parrett seem to belong, together with those of Wales and Scotland, to the period which lies between the departure of the Romans and the final conquest of the country by the Saxons. Our knowledge of the conditions ruling at that time is most scanty, and it is more than probable that the old frontier line between Dyvnaint and Wessex may yield most valuable information under systematic exploration such as that which has so lately settled the date of Norton Camp, and—though for once Mr. Allcroft here seems to have missed Mr. H. St. G. Gray's record of the excavations—the question of the builders of Castle Neroche.

A full description of the small "amphitheatre" at Charterhouse-on-Mendip is given, but the author has wisely refrained from stating a definite theory as to its origin and use. Possibly he might have had more to say on this subject had Mr. Gray's work at Avebury and Maumbury been available at the time of writing, and that these two important works with their results could not have been included in the book is one of the very few regrets to be expressed in reviewing it.

Apart from the actual descriptions of earthworks the general chapters are most interesting and full of suggestion, dealing as they do with the several periods and peoples of the earthwork ages. Those on the Roman, Transition, and Saxon periods, with their impression of work waiting to be undertaken, are especially so. Three final chapters are descriptive, and the author's apology for including them was by no means required. He has told us how to look at such a district of pre-historic work as the South Downs, and then, as a complete contrast, has described our own great camp at Dolebury, which has a chapter to itself. His sketch of its probable origin and intention, its outlook

in the early days and at the present, and the picture he gives of its condition to-day is engrossing, and should be almost enough in itself to tempt the least interested to further study of what is to so many the most fascinating branch of archaeology. There could be no more satisfactory or safe guide than the present work.

If it is allowable to express one personal regret, it would be that Mr. Allcroft's attention has not been attracted to the very curious little stone-walled hill-fort at Cannington Park. He has noticed it in a note on p. 391, but only, and rightly, to suggest that it could not be of Danish construction. But that it was made or even held by them has never been claimed for it, and it is known from several "finds" of pottery made there to have been much used in Late-Celtic times, even if it was not constructed in that period. It was in existence in the time of Alfred therefore, and is probably the camp into which the Danes drove the Saxons who afterwards made their successful sortie on the force whose remains lie before the walls.

C. W. WHISTLER.

"WELLS AND GLASTONBURY," by Canon T. Scott Holmes. Illustrated by E. H. New. (Ancient Cities Series. Methuen and Co., 1908; pp. xvi, 308; 60 illustrations; 4s. 6d. net.)

This book belongs to the new type of local literature that has sprung up of late years. People like to be talked to about a place generally; to have its character, its history, its associations suggested to them by one who has the requisite knowledge and imagination. This taste was nourished by a great master of historical topography; whose home lay almost too near Wells for his spirit to suffer willingly the changes that seem inevitable to all buildings raised by hands. Canon Holmes has absorbed the teaching of Freeman as he has also kept in mind the words of Green, that "to bring back the past life of England there is nothing better than to set a man frankly in the streets of a simple English town, and to bid him work out the history of the men who had lived and died there." In a series of chapters we have brought before us the buildings and their makers, the town and its inhabitants, the ecclesiastical institutions and the rulers thereof. It is right that the history of the Chapter should come first, for the origin of Wells is to be sought in the arrival of the missionaries who in the days of Aldhelm and Ina settled beside the spring of St. Andrew.

But Wells is a thing of yesterday compared with Glastonbury; and Canon Holmes brings together history, tradition, myth, in tracing back the story, until we are landed in the *Origines Celtica* on the site of the Lake Village. The pen gives way to the spade and by its means the civilisation of two millenia back can be recovered. Unfortunately it has not been found possible to give an account of the remarkable discoveries made by Mr. Bligh Bond in the summer of 1908 beyond the east end of the Abbey ruins. The right position of the chapel of St. Edgar has been identified; and now that the Abbey has passed into

the care of trustees a systematic exploration of the site may yield another chapter in its history. Canon Holmes has found little material for the history of the town, for as he sadly records in the preface, the records of its life have effectually disappeared. But he has done his best, and deserves thanks. The illustrations provided are helpful for both places.

E. H. BATES.

“SCREENS AND GALLERIES IN ENGLISH CHURCHES,” by Francis Bond, M.A. (Henry Frowde, 1908; pp. xii, 192; 152 illustrations; 6s. net).

The author tells us in the preface “That, as in his larger work on the *Gothic Architecture of England*, it has been his aim in this present work to present the subject from an evolutionary point of view. The story therefore commences with the Rood and Rood-beam of the Early Christian churches; it follows their gradual development on the one hand into the chancel-screen of the parochial and collegiate churches; on the other hand into the quire-screen and rood-screen of the churches of the monks and the regular canons. Finally it traces to the transposition of the rood-lofts, the galleried churches of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is a story of growth and development conditioned by doctrinal and ritualistic changes spread over sixteen centuries.”

The work is beautifully illustrated—note the fine photograph of St. George on the Ranworth screen, facing p. 70. It has two very exhaustive indexes, one of places and one of things. The author gives on p. 70 the following list of important Somerset screens: Brimpton (stone), Banwell, Bicknoller, Brushford, Queen Camel, Carhampton, Congresbury, Croscombe, Crowcombe, Dunster, Fitzhead, High Ham, Low Ham, Milborne Port, Minehead, Norton Fitzwarren, Pilton, Rad-dington, Timberscombe, Trent, Trull and Withycombe.

F. W. WEAVER.

“FONTS AND FONT COVERS,” by Francis Bond, M.A. (Henry Frowde, 1908; pp. xv, 347; 426 illustrations. 12s. net.)

This is an excellent book, well printed and well illustrated. It is divided into four parts. Part I deals with the original import and methods of administration of the Rite of Baptism, with a chapter on “The Baptistery and its Piscina.” Part II treats of the Classification and Position of Fonts. Part III begins with Pre-Conquest Fonts and describes those of the succeeding centuries. Part IV treats of Font Covers. The last chapter in Part II is headed “Inscribed Fonts:” Somerset possesses a very beautiful one at Lullington, near Frome. This font is late Norman, and has round the bowl in large letters:

“*Hoc fontis sacro pereunt delicta lavero,*”

i.e. “Sins perish in this holy font bowl.” It is figured at page 114.

The first chapter in Part III deals with Pre-Conquest Fonts : Somerset apparently does not contribute a single example, but very quaint ones are figured from Berrington (Salop), p. 136, Ilam (Staffs), p. 137, Kirkby (Lancs.), pp. 141, 164, and Oxhill (Warw.), p. 141. There are no less than six photographs of the unique one at Curdworth (Warw.), pp. 132, 133, 134. Other illustrations of Somerset Fonts are Banwell, p. 92, Congresbury, p. 310, Cothelstone, p. 32, He Abbots, p. 32, Lilstock, p. 152, Locking, p. 188, Queen Camel, p. 254, Rodney Stoke, p. 310, Rowberrow (stone), p. 103, Taunton St. James, p. 256, Ubley, p. 40, Wells Cathedral, p. 312, Wraxall, p. 65, and Yatton, p. 65. Of these by far the most interesting is the fine late Norman font at Locking. It consists of an archaic bowl on modern supports ; the knights at the corners wear the flat-topped helmet that was in fashion in the last half of the XII Century ; their hands are "locked" together : by way of a pun, it has been suggested, on the name of the parish, but the author says that there is another instance of clasped hands at Kilpeck, in Herefordshire. He goes on to mention Loxton, or Loki's town, which he locates in Devonshire—of course it is in our own county. This is the only slip we have noticed, except that the reference to Wrington is apparently wrong (p. 249).

We must not omit to mention the extremely useful *Index Locorum* ; it is in five columns, and gives Place, County, where mentioned in the text, Illustration (if there is one) and Source of the Illustration. There is also an *Index Rerum*, and a Bibliography. With regard to XV Century fonts, the author points out (p. 249) that in the best examples there is a band of ornament intermediate and serving as a transition between enriched pedestal and enriched bowl, and adds that a band of angels is a favourite motif in Somerset.

Sometimes near the door of the church there is a mysterious niche or recess—one occurs at Portbury (Somerset) ; the author suggests that it may have been used as a stand on which the cruets for the holy oil could be placed during the ceremony of baptism. This is a valuable hint.

In conclusion we congratulate Mr. Francis Bond on his excellent book, and venture to assert that by bringing out a scholarly work like this he has laid the whole archæological world under a great obligation.

F. W. WEAVER.

"ENGLISH FOLK-SONG : SOME CONCLUSIONS," by Cecil J. Sharp. (Barnicott and Pearce, Taunton, 1907 ; pp. xvi, 143 ; 7s. 6d. net.)

Mr. Cecil Sharp, who for some years past has so zealously and successfully collected the Folk-Songs of Somerset, has published a volume with the above title. It is a work of great interest to the student of local life, and of much value to lovers of English music. Mr. Sharp has come to the conclusion that folk-music is generically distinct from ordinary music, inasmuch as it is not the composition of the individual, but "a communal and racial product, the expression, in



TAUNTON ST. JAMES.



LOCKING.

*From "Fonts and Font Covers," by Francis Bond.
(Oxford University Press, 1908).*

musical idiom, of aims and ideals that are primarily national in character." He says: "It is eight years since I began to note down and collect English traditional music. During the last half of that period I have spent every available moment of my leisure in country lanes, fields, and villages, in quest of folk-singers and folk-dancers. Chance, in the first instance, guided my footsteps into Somerset, to which county my labours for the past four years have been almost exclusively confined. . . . My collection contains, in round numbers, fifteen hundred tunes. Between twelve and thirteen hundred of these have been captured in Somerset. . . . These tunes consist mainly of song and ballad-airs, the remainder being made up of sailors' chanties, children's singing games, dance-tunes, carols, and nursery-rhymes. These have been noted down from upwards of 350 singers and instrumentalists." Mr. Sharp adds: "Now that English folk-songs are being collected and published and brought within the reach of everyone, every effort should be made to popularize them once again amongst all classes of society." Mr. Sharp has done much to make this possible, for he has already published four volumes of "Folk-Songs from Somerset," and another will soon be issued.

C. TITE.