

Book Reviews

It is this thesis which imparts to the book an air of breathless enthusiasm, reminding us of Father Benson's supreme triumphs in the *Coward* and the *Conventionalists*. It is, as we have said, 'a return to antiquity' in that it has the old characters of the Greek drama, robed, however, in modern 'creations' and silk stockings, and in heather mixture and plus fours.

The characters of the women, Ruth and Diana, are well drawn; but the men are more shadowy, except Simon, the 'escaped' novice, whose moods and restlessness are admirably portrayed. Only the descriptions of country life and life in Paris are rather conventionalised and not very accurate in parts. Oh, yes, and does Chanctonbury 'tower'?

Accustomed to the older completeness of style, we find the new fashion of literature unfinished and therefore lacking in clarity: but we are bound to say that where it loses in clarity it gains in subtlety of impression. The half-emerging forms of Rodin lack the clean outlines of the sculpture of the Greeks, but yet they do convey an impression of life which the others must always lack. This *Shackles of the Free* is also impressionist; and so it lacks clearness of outline, yet is subtly convincing in its piled-up phrases, involved, rich, and obscure, and its description of the inconsequent meanderings of human consciousness. It gives impressions of real mental analysis which perhaps else could not be conveyed. Certainly the author has power to provoke and interest. We found that the book held us to its finish, vivid, clever, and true.

B.J.

WESSEX FROM THE AIR. By O. G. S. Crawford, F.S.A., and Alexander Keiller, F.S.A., F.G.S. (The Clarendon Press, 1928; £2 10s.)

Open the volume of fifty large photographs of prehistoric sites, *Wessex from the Air*, and—presto—you are flying in an aeroplane over the rolling Downs to discover some long lost Neolithic camp or settlement. Perched high aloft, and the earth far away beneath, you feel

'Like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken.'

Let the time be a fine evening in July, the place somewhere in the heavens a mile south of Salisbury Cathedral. Suddenly in a wheat field there appears, traced out by a belt of darker green corn, the unmistakeable evidence of a forgotten fosse.

Blackfriars

Woodbury, once a hill fort of more than usual strength, was discovered in this way.

The methods, by which archæology from the air has made these discoveries, and added fresh information about sites already known, are many and varied. Useful guides are different kinds of vegetation, as the striking example of silver or scarlet circles of daisies or poppies revealing barrows or hill-top camps. Patches of soil have their secrets, because when chalk is once dug it can never again regain its former compact state. Or certain low banks and mounds which appear meaningless to a ground observer, when seen from an aeroplane, form themselves into shapes of definite outline. How true to say for many a humble field in Wessex that distance has lent enchantment to the view.

But the volume is no mere collection of vertical photographs of prehistoric sites. Each plate, every one a fine specimen of the art, is accompanied by an archæological account of the place photographed. In a word, it contains such a wealth of material that to anyone who wishes to study the ancient earthworks of Southern Britain it will serve as an excellent guide and text-book.

K.C.

FLORILEGIUM PATRISTICUM FASCIC. XVIII. S. Anselmi, Liber
Cur Deus Homo, recensuit Franciscus Salesius Schmitt,
Monachus Grissoviensis. (Bonn: Peter Handstein, pp. x
and 65.)

There are presumably other handy editions of the *Cur Deus Homo*, but they are unknown to the reviewer except translations. How remarkable that so well known a book should exist in only two reliable MSS., one at Munich, the other in the Bodleian; remarkable too that neither of these should, apparently, have been made use of by previous editors. Yet one of these MSS. was penned very shortly after the Saint's death and the other is almost contemporary. It is perhaps even more remarkable that the treatise should ever have seen the light at all in view of the stormy character of the period and the strenuous public life the great Archbishop had to lead. That a Planagenet Archbishop should rightly be hailed as the herald of the scholastic theology is one phenomenon; that the England of those 'dark days' should be the place of its birth is another. It makes one feel how hopeless most history writing is!

We are grateful to Father Schmitt for his labour of love.

H.P.