

of that warlike spirit of which Professor Notestein writes so warmly, for the reflection is not always flattering. The English reader, too, will be amused and, perhaps, disturbed by penetrating comments on the English character, with which that of the Scot is here contrasted. It takes many years of study to become well-versed in the history of the Northern Kingdom, but anyone who reads this book carefully will acquire, with much less labour, a sound knowledge of Scottish history and, if such is required, a better understanding of that intriguing enigma, the Scot himself.

The book is divided into three parts, of which the first deals with the early Scots. The second is concerned with the tides and storms of religious change. The Kirk of Mary, Queen of Scots, does not emerge unscathed from Professor Notestein's impartial analysis, but the unlovely religion of Knox and the Reformers suffers even more devastating criticism. The third part deals with the modern Scot and is particularly valuable for the comments on the eighteenth-century Scottish intellectuals.

It is not unknown for an American to boast. Professor Notestein who is an American and a Professor at New Haven, Connecticut, is too modest for he insists that this book is merely the work of an amateur. It may be so, but certainly the book is informative, provocative and, unusual in a work on Scottish history, entertaining. K.M.

**RECALLING THE SCOTTISH COVENANTS.** By Hugh Watt. (Nelson; 6s.)

Professor Watt's little book is to be commended in that it makes clear the distinction between the National Covenant and the Solemn League and Covenant. While the popular and representative character of the former is well brought out, the intolerant and party character of the latter is minimised. Dr Watt does not seem to realise that the arguments he uses against Laud can be used with equal power against his opponents—at least in their final position. In spite of its interest, the book is parochial in its approach, and indeed possesses something of the negative character of the Covenants themselves. I. H.

**FOUR CENTURIES OF WITCH BELIEFS; with Special Reference to the Great Rebellion.** By R. Trevor Davies. (Methuen; 15s.)

The title of this study is so wide as to be a little misleading. Mr Trevor Davies writes with the careful and exact scholarship that would be expected of him. His subject is the evidence for the strength of witch beliefs in early 17th century England, the relation between witch beliefs and party alignments and in consequence their political implications. It is his tentative conclusion that 'the Rebellion was, viewed from one standpoint, a struggle between the destroyers and defenders of reputed witches'. To many such a conclusion will sound too simplified, even granted the strong credulity of the Puritan leaders and the tired scepticism of the court. But he has drawn attention to a factor in the Civil War which has been previously ignored,

and it seems impossible to deny its political significance even though it is possible to hold that Mr Trevor Davies has over estimated it. Perhaps the most valuable element in his research has been the careful analysis of the evidence for the regional distribution of witch beliefs. A study of the evidence at the trials would provide a further distinction between the witch-lore of 16th century continental origin and the magic-motifs in indigenous folk lore which is so often interwoven in it—notably in the evidence of the choice of familiars. A study of the survival of late medieval charms might help to explain the fact that in England and Scandinavia the practice of witch craft was so often held to be associated with an adherence to the Old Religion. Both lines of research might lead to the conclusion that there was a fundamental contrast between the witch craft that seems to have survived so long in Wales and the western counties and the witch beliefs held so strongly in East Anglia. Again it might be useful to analyse the term 'Royalist' more closely and to distinguish between the court party with its note of conscious sophisticated modernity and the country Royalists whose beliefs must have been identical with those of their fellow squires of the other faction. But it is a tribute to the quality of Mr Trevor Davies's research that it suggests so many lines to be developed from it.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN ANTIQUITY: No. 8, *Baptism in the Demonstrations of Aphraates, the Persian Sage*. By Edward J. Duncan. (\$2.50); No. 9, *The Concept of Martyrdom according to St Cyprian of Carthage*. By Edelhard L. Hummel, C.M.M. (\$2.00; both Catholic University of America.)

Concomitantly with a series of translations of the works of the Fathers (Ancient Christian Writers: ed. Plumpe and Suasten), the Catholic University of America is bringing out a series of Studies in Christian Antiquity, detailed studies of one particular doctrine in one Patristic writer.

No. 8 of the series is devoted to the doctrine of baptism in the *Demonstrations* of Aphraates. Aphraates is 'the earliest witness of any significance for the theology and liturgy of that portion of the Oriental Church known as East Syrian', and 'the peculiar interest of the *Demonstrations* lies in the fact that they are representative of the mind and practice of a Church virtually uninfluenced by Greek and Roman culture, even in the fourth century. . . .'

Fr E. J. Duncan has dealt with his subject very thoroughly, and the book is remarkable for its clarity, and its copious documentation. An introduction deals with the beginnings of Christianity in Persia, and puts Aphraates in his setting, while successive chapters deal with the names for baptism, two Old Testament types, the revelation, institution and promulgation of baptism, the recipients, administration and effects.

Indices and bibliographies are comprehensive. The quotations from