

help that the notes should be in English when the text is entirely in Welsh. In the case of a language such as Welsh, unhappily little studied outside Wales except by philologists, it might have been better to have chosen fewer poems and to have provided a simple English prose version. Verse translations can rarely give a true impression of the special quality of Welsh poetry, depending as it often does on a pattern of assonance and internal rhymes hard to convey in another language. But some help might have been made available to those whose Welsh is unequal to so rigorous a test.

The selection has been made with a proper respect for the claims of the classic past as well as of the far from dormant present. The great formal odes of Dafydd ap Gwilym and Tudur Aled link up with the impressive *Marwnad* to Sir John Edward Lloyd by Saunders Lewis, the many anonymous sixteenth century lyrics with the ingenious *englynion* which still remain a national pastime today. If evidence were needed of the Welsh poetic achievement, this Oxford Book would be definitive proof. Admirably edited, and printed with the restrained dignity with which the Oxford University has made us familiar, this is a specially valuable book just now when the Welsh language is assailed by so many influences that could destroy a heritage of such immense value not merely to Wales but to the whole western tradition.

I.E.

ON MORAL COURAGE, by Compton Mackenzie; Collins; 25s.

The latest in the very long list of Sir Compton Mackenzie's books is an appropriate summary of his achievement, for here is a subject to match many of his own enthusiasms: one, two, that allows him to wander in memory, to call on his own vast experience of men and events and to strike some hard blows against every variety of Establishment.

He interprets his title widely, so that his heroes include very unlikely companions—Edward VIII, Conan Doyle, D. H. Lawrence, the German officers who plotted against Hitler and Oscar Wilde. (Sir Compton's attitudes sometimes seem ambivalent, but no one need complain, for his freedom allows him to tell some splendid stories—especially about Lawrence). As for his villains, they of course include Hitler, Whitehall and Archbishop Lang, as readers familiar with his earlier books would expect. So discursive is his method, so irresistible are the associations that keep crowding in on him as he writes, that his initial theme seems often to be forgotten. But its essential implications—that conscience matters supremely, and that history is full of reassuring examples of inherent courage and decency when the time of testing comes—are always present.

This is a delightful, humane and always readable reflection of one man's wisdom, for in his time Sir Compton has revealed plenty of moral courage on his own account. He has always had a healthy suspicion of power and its abuses, and he has an enduring respect for those who have dared to keep freedom alive.

I.E.