

THE LETTERS OF JOHN OF SALISBURY, Vol. I. Edited by W. J. Millor and H. E. Butler. (Nelson; 50s.)

Many hands have co-operated in the preparation of this volume for publication. The text of the letters on which the translation is based was fixed by Fr W. J. Millor, s.j. The translation was made in the first instance by the late Professor H. E. Butler, revised by Professor R. A. B. Mynors and revised again and seen through the press by Mr C. N. L. Brooke. Mr Brooke is also responsible for the notes and introduction as well as for the arrangement and dating of the letters and the appendices. As might be expected, this team of scholars has produced a most thoroughly competent piece of work which will be welcomed by students of twelfth-century literature as well as by enquirers into the administration of the Church in England during the episcopate of Theobald of Canterbury.

This volume contains the one hundred and fifty-three letters which make up the first collection of the letters of John of Salisbury. Though they were all written while John was attached to the Curia of Archbishop Theobald, only a proportion of them are official letters. These throw a valuable light on the law and administrative procedure of the Roman and episcopal curia as well as showing the policy and achievement of Archbishop Theobald. But besides official letters, sometimes indeed included in them, there are the personal letters in which the learning and character of John of Salisbury emerge in so far as character does emerge from letters of this kind. There can be no doubt as to the wide learning of the writer. His quiet humour appears from time to time. There are examples of his gift for painting a friend or an enemy in short quick strokes with an almost friendly malice. But for all that one feels that there is a great deal in these letters that one misses. We are not of the circle of the elect to whom the allusions and suggestions were obvious when the letters were written; they are no longer obvious to us and perhaps can never be recaptured with certainty. This makes translation a heartbreaking business. Perhaps no higher praise of this volume could be written than that not more than half-a-dozen times is one tempted to quarrel with the translation; and the introduction is written in a style worthy of John of Salisbury.

URBAN FLANAGAN, O.P.

REPORTORIUM NOVUM. Vol. I, No. 1. (C. J. Fallon, Dublin.)

This is a welcome first number of a new periodical publication devoted to the history and antiquities of the diocese of Dublin. It is primarily intended to make more generally known the sources of Dublin diocesan and parochial history. Its editors promise that it will

be a source-book 'reproducing or summarizing, or editing, unpublished records or those not easily accessible, compiling and cataloguing lists of surviving records, noting records or MSS as they come to light'. It is also intended to 'place at the disposal of students the means to publish the results of their reading and investigations'. Pursuing its more general purpose, *Reportorium Novum* promises immediate attention to the records, now in the Dublin Diocesan Archives, of the Irish Colleges in Rome, Salamanca and Paris, and to the Episcopal Registers of Archbishops Carpenter, Troy, Murray and Cullen. It is plain from its programme that this new publication will make a considerable contribution not only to the history of Dublin and Ireland but to the ecclesiastical and even the parliamentary history of England.

The present number covers a wide field. The eleventh and twelfth centuries are represented by a study of the first four bishops of Dublin by Fr Aubrey Gwynn, S.J., which throws some light on the policies of Archbishops Lanfranc, Anselm and Theobald of Canterbury. An article by Fr John Ryan, S.J., on the ancestry of St Laurence O'Toole throws a vivid light on the political difficulties of the Irish reformers of the twelfth century by discussing the none too scrupulous ecclesiastical policies of the saintly Archbishop's royal relatives. Fr W. M. O'Riordan contributes a list of the Clergy secular and regular in the diocese in 1697, and Fr John Brady contributes a return of the Catholic schools in the year 1787-8. Calendars of the letters of Archbishop Mateo de Oviedo (1600-1610) and Archbishop Carpenter (1770-1780) and biographical materials for lives of Archbishops Carpenter and Cullen complete the number.

Already in this first number a considerable amount of valuable material has been made available to students of history. While it cannot be said that an equal standard is maintained by all contributors, *Reportorium Novum* is to be heartily welcomed and wished every encouragement and success.

URBAN FLANAGAN, O.P.

IN THE WAKE OF DA GAMA. By Genesta Hamilton. (Skeffington; 15s.)

The history of the Eastern African coast is still unwritten, in spite of the many documents and inscriptions and ruined cities that could be the sources for it. It is this that gives a special importance to Lady Claud Hamilton's study of the Portuguese in East Africa in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for it is the first account to be available in English. It was never intended to be a work of scholarship. It is a vivid story told vividly with some imaginative reconstruction. But none of the imaginative reconstructions are historically untenable and the standard of factual accuracy is very high. It contains two