

argument (that beggars abound where abbeys once stood) particularly impressive. As well argue that weeds in a deserted garden prove that gardening encourages weeds.

It is a pity that a book so full of good things should betray this unscholarly prejudice. There is so much of interest: some of it is merely curious, but some of real historical value, like the table on p. 296, showing the incidence of illegitimacy, that should give one furiously to think. And how many people know that within two years of the excommunication of Elizabeth, the church bells of England were rung to celebrate the victory of Lepanto?

GODFREY ANSTRUTHER, O.P.

THE SPIRIT OF CATALONIA. By J. Trueta. (Cumberlege, Oxford University Press; 8s. 6d.)

The revival of a national consciousness among the Catalans a century ago coincided with the final attempt to unify and centralise Spain on the model of France. Since then the 'Catalan question' has been almost comparable in Spain to the Irish question in Britain before the Treaty. Failure to solve the problem—the settlement of 1932 was not a national but a party solution, and was therefore short-lived—has aggravated intransigence on both sides to such an extent that the choice may soon lie between two extremes: either the maintenance of national unity by the total repression of regionalist aspirations or the disintegration of Spain into separate states. Catalonia is sufficiently different from the rest of Spain to justify the desire for some measure of self-government, and it is therefore fitting that a sympathetic account of these aspirations should be presented to English readers. Though this book, by a distinguished Catalan surgeon, comes to fill a definite need it cannot, unfortunately, be recommended either as a fair statement of the problem or as a reliable historical guide. It is not easy for a nationalist feeling that considers itself thwarted by an alien domination to view itself dispassionately: there is the danger that a legitimate bias may become so disproportionate as to magnify insignificant points and, in all sincerity, to distort its very basis.

Dr Trueta's survey of Catalonia's history and of her contribution to civilisation is based on the initial assumption that nationality and a distinctive culture are conterminous with a language. One need instance only Switzerland and Great Britain (or, within Britain, Scotland) to point out that this is highly questionable. From this assumption certain political and historical distortions follow.

The present Catalan linguistic area comprises Catalonia proper, the region of Valencia and the Balearic Islands. It is implied throughout the book that all three regions constitute 'Catalonia'. But separatist feeling is confined to the first-named only: Valencia and the Balearics refused to share in the 1932 Statute of Autonomy. This fact, which Dr Trueta ignores, very considerably weakens his 'anti-Spanish' case. While the political frontiers of Catalonia are thus enlarged, its

cultural frontiers are restricted. Any enlightened doctrine at any time taught by anyone born within 'Catalonia' are examples of a distinctively Catalan culture leading humanity in the path of progress. Eiximenis (Ximenes) wrote a *Regiment de Princesps* in the 14th century, in which he taught that liberty was the basis of political society and that a tyrant should be deposed. These views are hailed as examples of Catalonia's leadership in the development of modern democracy, and Dr Trueta proceeds to make Eiximenis the forerunner of the Declaration of Independence of 1776 (p. 73). Eiximenis was, of course, a medieval theologian, and as such drew on a body of doctrine that knew no national frontiers: St Thomas had propounded the same views a century earlier in his *De Regimine Principum*. Similarly Vives's *De Veritate Fidei Christianæ* is his 'greatest contribution to the traditional theological philosophy of the Catalans' (p. 121), and he is an exponent of 'Catalonia's distinctive culture' (p. 136). Vives (who happened to be born in Valencia but lived outside Spain) is, however, an exponent of Renaissance Humanism, which, like the Scholasticism against which it reacted, had no national characteristics. Cardinal Cisneros is praised by Dr Trueta for having been one of the very few Castilians who showed an appreciation of the Catalan mind, and this because he subsidised an edition of Lull's works and had a translation made of St Vincent Ferrer's treatise on the spiritual life (pp. 116, 184-5). Presumably anyone who has published the works of St Thomas Aquinas has thereby shown his admiration for the mentality and culture of the Neapolitans. Cisneros's interest in the Catalans continued in his University of Alcalá, for the chair of Latin was offered to Vives (p. 185). Doubtless St John Fisher, when he invited Erasmus to teach in Cambridge, was more interested in his being a Dutchman than in his proficiency in Greek.

This nationalism ceases to be simple-minded and becomes pernicious when applied to history. Dr Trueta's thesis, presented in black and white and with no half-tones, is that 'Catalonia', standing throughout the centuries for enlightened rationalism, tolerance and democracy in politics, has been progressively crushed by a narrow-minded and intransigently authoritarian Castile. The process began in the early 13th century. By then Catalan civilisation was at its height: 'Catalonia' comprised not only its Iberian area but the whole of the south of France, and its people had formed a cultured, artistic and gay society in the midst of a backward Europe. As a result of the crusade against the Albigenses this refined culture was destroyed and the whole of the Languedoc was lost to Catalonia. The impetus for the crusade and its persecution came from St Dominic, who was a Castilian and therefore a representative of the fanatical 'authoritarian unitarism' that has for seven centuries been striving to extirpate Catalonia's independent life. This last contention would be merely an absurd example of naïve special pleading if all the facts were historically true. But all the emphasis is on the corruption of the Church and none on the corruption of this Provençal

civilisation. There is no hint that the tenets of the Albigenses were in any way sinister, that they were destructive not only of Christianity in any form but of civil society itself. And there is, of course, no historical justification for the old charge that St Dominic took part in the crusade (except by purely spiritual activity) or that he fanned the persecution by acting as Inquisitor. If Dr Trueta was suspicious of the impartiality of Catholic historians, he could have found the truth about St Dominic in a Protestant historian such as Grützmacher; yet for St Dominic's life he goes to no authority later than Drane in 1856. As if this were not enough to lay bare his incompetence as an historian, Dr Trueta thus sums up his case: 'From the national point of view of the Provençal people, the intervention of St Dominic and his Order was decisive; he gave to Rome, Paris and Toledo, the centres of the Italian, French and Spanish States . . . the means of coercion against the intermediate Catalano-Provençal nation' (pp. 16-17). Medieval Rome, the centre of an Italian State—and nothing else! (Incidentally, Dr Trueta does not attempt to square his animosity against the Dominicans with the liberal outlook he concedes to St Raymond of Pennafort and St Vincent Ferrer: presumably their enlightenment owed everything to their 'race' and nothing to the Order to which they belonged.)

Similar errors, either through mis-statement or partial presentation of the facts, abound in the book. Reasons of space preclude the mention of any more. It must suffice to state that the causes of Catalonia's 'decline' are not—or at least only very partially—those that Dr Trueta gives; that Catalonia's contribution to the development of European political institutions is not so momentous as he implies; and that the impression of Spain and Spanish civilisation that he would give the uninstructed reader is grossly one-sided. But though the book is a striking illustration of the grave dangers inherent in a narrowly nationalist point of view, it would be unfair to imply that it contains nothing of value. Interspersed in the historical survey there are short interesting accounts of individual Catalans, Valencians and Majorcans—St Olaguer, St Raymond of Pennafort, Bl. Raymond Lull, Arnau de Vilanov, Eiximenis, St Vincent Ferrer, Sabonde, Vives, Servetus and several lesser figures. Even though here he is not always quite trustworthy it is to be regretted that Dr Trueta did not confine himself to this aspect of his subject.

A. A. PARKER

SCOTLAND BEFORE THE SCOTS. By V. Gordon Childe. (Methuen; 12s. 6d.)

As an authority on the prehistory of Scotland Professor Gordon Childe needs no introduction. This book, the substance of the Rhind Lectures delivered to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1946, is rich in archæological data. The six chapters representing the lectures are supplemented by eleven appendices, which include a list of beaker-burials discovered since 1934, and notes on the typology