

sional questioning of a terminology which, one admits, must be a difficulty within the loose structure of contemporary English) must be of the lack of references to St Thomas and other classic theologians. In a second edition we hope Mr. Sheed will add references and a bibliography, not indeed to overburden his book with the apparatus of scholarship but in order to open to the traveller he has brought so far the wide lands of theology—and sanity! I.E.

WORD-HOARD. By Margaret Williams (Sheed & Ward; 15s.)

Philology, to the uninitiate, is almost as dreary a science as Economics. The mysteries of Grimm's Law and *Umlaut* provide a good deal of academic industry, and the 'illustrative texts' remain too often closed to the general reader. The dilemma—should the texts be modernised and thereby weakened, or should the prospective reader be compelled to learn Old English?—is admittedly hard to resolve. But Miss Williams, herself a professional philologist, has achieved an excellent compromise. Her book is an anthology of Old English literature from the sixth to the eleventh centuries, sufficiently modernised to be easily intelligible but yet retaining much of the verbal force and metrical character of the originals. The extracts are linked together by an intelligent commentary and a summary of what is omitted.

Beginning with *Widsith*, whose 'word-ward' gives an effective title, Miss Williams takes the reader by easy stages via *Beowulf*, *The Dream of the Rood* and *Judith*, to *Ælfric*. An example (from *The Seafarer*) will suggest the quality of this book:

'Storms beat the stone-cliffs where the sea-swallow cries,
icy-feathered; full oft the eagle calls,
dewy-feathered. No protecting kinsman
can bring comfort to the soul in loneliness.
Full little he thinks. who has life's joy
and dwells in cities and has few disasters,
proud and wine-flushed, how I, weary often,
must bide my time on the brimming stream'.

Word-ward is an excellent guide to a poetry that will be an exciting discovery to those who have thought of *Beowulf* and such only in terms of dreary texts, inaccessible, weighed down with annotations. The illustrations to the book are amusing; unintentionally so in the case of the seventeenth century Archbishop Ussher, who is portrayed with a pallium! ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.