

particular concern of Mr Campbell. Of the three figures, that of Erasmus emerges the most clearly, mainly because Mr Campbell has allowed himself to comment on the original sources rather than quote them. This picture of the first great modern European *savant* is most valuable. In his treatment of More he has not been so happy, for he has, out of piety for the great saint, overloaded his text with excerpts from More's writings and, even if More is an acknowledged master in the development of English prose style, he does not make easy reading.

The link between these two works is the Reformation Parliament, the instrument which Henry VIII employed to bring about the apostasy of his country from Rome, thereby enormously increasing the power of that body, and especially that of the House of Commons. Professor Neale is a master of the use of materials and his narrative runs easily, though it is based throughout upon research into original documents conducted either by himself or by his pupils, to whom he gives grateful acknowledgment. This detailed survey of the composition of the Elizabethan House of Commons, the technique of elections, the character of M.P.s, the procedure and temper of the House, is a most important contribution to our knowledge of English History and a pioneer work, for there is still an enormous mass of research to be done on the work and composition of our Parliaments. Two points emerge clearly, the prestige and importance of the county members, almost exclusively belonging to great territorial families; and the extreme diversity of the borough members, who were comparatively rarely citizens of the towns they represented, but were drawn, by curious means, from the ranks of lawyers and court officials and, above all, from the junior members of the country gentry who could not obtain county constituencies. This swamping of the House by the Protestant gentry was a cardinal factor in the course of English history and the source of the Commons' victory in the constitutional struggles of the next century. Unlike Mr Campbell's work, that of Professor Neale is not primarily apologetic, but he shows a complacency towards certain aspects of his story which a Catholic cannot share. His chapters on 'Borough Patrons', for example, will bear a different aspect if the term 'anti-Catholic' is substituted for his favourite 'Puritan' throughout. But it would be ungenerous to make a purely partisan criticism of what is a most valuable, readable and original contribution to English history.

P.F.

HENRY THE EIGHTH. By Theodore Maynard. (The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee; \$3.75.)

A question in a recent examination invited candidates to discuss the theory that history was better written by the Victorians than by their successors. The reading of many biographies suggests that the thesis might prove interesting if applied exclusively to this field.

Although Mr Theodore Maynard has produced a volume of over four hundred pages, one's impression on reading it is of an absence of balance in the author's handling of his material, and one is consequently dissatisfied with the lack of emphasis placed on points of importance.

Mr Maynard could have done more to help his readers in this respect by setting out, perhaps in a foreword, the aim of his book. The absence of this throws one back on the film-like qualities of the work as described on the inside of the dust-jacket. This does not, perhaps, do justice to the author who has, indeed, described in considerable detail all that concerns Henry's break with Rome. In doing so, he had added to but not supplanted the previous studies of Henry VIII.

C. J. ACHESON.

THE AGE OF THE TUDORS AND STUARTS. Vol. II: The Ashley Histories (Intermediate Series). By T. Charles-Edwards, M.A. (Hollis & Carter.)

Anyone who has had the job of teaching history to young boys knows how difficult it is to give them some grasp of the general outline and process of a period and at the same time to do it with enough vivid detail (such as will attract the concrete mind of boyhood) to hold their attention and lay the foundations of an interest in the study of history which will last a lifetime.

The great merit of this book by Mr Charles-Edwards of Ampleforth is that he never loses sight of this necessary quality in a good history text book and he succeeds in maintaining a high standard in regard to it from beginning to end.

The story is built up largely around vivid personalities, there is more social than political history, encouragement is given to base this on local history and England is set in its Continental perspective with more success than I have ever found in any text-book.

Moreover this is a Catholic text-book in the best sense; it is never partisan and does not belittle the responsibility of the evils and abuses in contemporary Catholic life for the disaster of the Reformation. It inculcates, without directly teaching, respect for the achievement of Protestantism in general and of the Church of England in particular, but it never allows the reader to feel that Catholicism is just one among the many forms in which the Christian religion may be held. If the other volumes of the series reach the standard of this one a notable advance will have been made in the teaching material at our disposal in Catholic schools.

HENRY ST JOHN, O.P.

TITUS OATES. By Jane Lane. (Andrew Dakers; 21s.)

If the ghost of Titus Oates has remained to haunt the sites of the London of his day, earthbound through the shock of the apparent indifference to his death of the subjects of Queen Anne, then his uneasy spirit has been well and truly laid by the publication of Miss Lane's biography.