

THE TICHBORNE CLAIMANT. By Douglas Woodruff. (Hollis and Carter; 30s.)

The sub-title of this book is 'A Victorian Mystery' and the whole study is deeply saturated in the spirit of English life in the middle portion of the old Queen's reign. The Claimant reached Tilbury on Christmas Day 1866 and remained a centre of attention until he was sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude on 28 February 1874. The detailed account of the two trials gives the clearest impression of the Victorian law courts that has so far appeared in print. Mr Woodruff presents a masterly analysis of the evidence and is scrupulously fair-minded. He has given us the only really detailed and balanced presentation of a fascinating subject.

In his last chapter he gives the various possibilities as to the Claimant's true identity and leaves this question open. Each reader will form his own opinion. To my own mind it appears certain that the Claimant was not in fact Roger Charles Doughty Tichborne. I am left with the impression that he was of Tichborne blood and was perhaps a natural son of Roger Tichborne's uncle Sir Edward. He was clearly not brought up a Catholic and it seems possible that he may have been adopted by the Orton family. If he came of the Tichborne stock his honest recognition by so many of the servants and neighbours would be explained.

Two characters come out very sympathetically in this study—Andrew Bogle, the family's West Indian servant, and Edward Vaughan Kenealy. Some circumstances were favourable to the Claimant's chances, and principally the advertisements for her lost son that the Dowager Lady Tichborne was broadcasting. He was also aided by the fact that there was at the time no male Tichborne except the baronet, who was an infant. Tichborne Park was let and the tenant, Colonel Lushington, came out in the Claimant's favour. At the same time the close-knit Old Catholic grouping was involved in the question of the succession. Stourtons, Dormers and Arundells were all connected with this question either as trustees or as reversionary heirs. Mr Woodruff makes the support worked up for the plaintiff not only very clear, but also most understandable.

The author has a remarkable gift for conveying the atmosphere of the period, not only that of the counsel and the solicitors but also the deep feeling against the propertied classes on the part of the bulk of the population. All those elements in the Claimant's case which attracted popular sympathy are set out with exactness. This is the first book to describe the Claimant's life in prison and to attempt to work

out the details of the sad years after his release. The reader is left with the impression of his courage and determination and of a truly loyal attachment to his supporters.

In one respect there was a certain resemblance to Roger Tichborne, for both men shared an immense capacity for idleness. The contrast, so well set out by Mr Woodruff, of the energy of the Claimant's actions in Australia as opposed to the lethargy at the time of the second trial is very striking. There is a sharp contrast between his quite successful efforts to cover the period of service in the Carabineers and his complete neglect of Roger Tichborne's period at Stonyhurst. The small help that he gave to his counsel, Dr Kenealy, is very well brought out.

This book has a great value as an account of the life of the English gentry in the middle period of Victoria's reign. It also reveals very perfectly the great prejudice against the wealthy Catholics among wide sections of the English population. It gives an exciting story in admirable detail. It is invaluable as a description of the life of English Catholics nearly a hundred years ago.

DAVID MATHEW

LIFE IN MEDIEVAL FRANCE. By Joan Evans. (Phaidon Press; 32s. 6d.)

The price of this book is probably not intended to remind us that it is just over thirty-two years since the first edition appeared, but that reflection must lead any reviewer to admire the author's wide learning and good judgment that have survived so well in a changed world. During the generation that has passed since 1925 a great deal of thought and research has been devoted to the central period of the middle ages, particularly in the fields of philosophy, political thought, and ecclesiastical institutions in general. When Dr Evans was a student at St Hugh's the thirteenth century and French civilization were the centre of the picture. Since then interest has shifted backwards to the twelfth and eleventh centuries and forwards to the fourteenth, and the undifferentiated *Latinitas* of John of Salisbury and the disillusioned Europe of William of Ockham have received more attention; the France of St Louis has been in eclipse. For that very reason Miss Evans's book has a freshness for us, and when we read its pages and turn to its plates we realize anew something of our debt to medieval France. This book is discursive rather than technically historical, and even the author herself would probably have written something different today, if all had to be done again, but it is not easy to find her seriously inadequate in