

conditions in which this literature grew up and was transmitted. There is a bibliography at the end of each chapter but this consists entirely of editions of texts (one would have liked to see included Dr J. Linskill's edition of the *Vie de Saint Léger*, published in 1937); references to other works are only to be found in the notes. An exception must be made once more for drama for which general works are recommended as well as texts. A *bibliographie raisonnée* of both general and particular studies in medieval French literature would have been most useful to the student without adding unduly to the length of the volume. On several occasions a subject is summarily dismissed because it has already received ample treatment elsewhere, but where is not stated. Mrs Crosland is very sparing of dates; as the book is planned not chronologically but synthetically, with a chapter allocated to each form, it is not always clear to what part of the period a work under discussion belongs. A chronological table at the end would have resolved this difficulty.

However, setting aside these questions of detail, it must be admitted that Mrs Crosland has succeeded in presenting a lively, interesting and readable treatment of twelfth and thirteenth century literature, ranging from sermons and lyric poetry to the bestiaries which contained the pseudo-scientific knowledge of the time. Many works are ably summarized and analysed so that much of the subject-matter of this vast field is painlessly acquired, and the commentaries, sometimes humorous and nearly always perceptive, are constantly reinforced by example, enabling the reader to catch something of the authentic flavour of the *chanson de geste* or the *roman courtois* (though not of the *fabliau* which remains for the most part in decent obscurity). The result should certainly be to direct the student's attention to an examination of the texts, thus fulfilling the aim of every good history of literature.

L. A. ZAINA

PINDAR AND AESCHYLUS. *Martin Classical Lectures*, Vol. XIV. By J. H.

Finley, Jr. (Harvard University Press. London: Cumberlege; 36s.)

Partly through the admiration of the ancients, partly through the adherence of our own poets of the classical tradition, Pindar has continued to bear the highest reputation even among those who have read little or nothing of him. Professor Finley's lectures could begin to turn lip-service into informed appreciation. They make an interesting contrast with Norwood's Sather lectures, both stressing the symbolist movement of the poet's mind, but Finley as much under the acknowledged influence of Farnell as Norwood of Bury, the former therefore far more concerned with the relevance of Pindar's epoch and personal life than with the verbal and structural approach which can reveal so

many splendours but also easily degenerates into cross-word puzzling. An excess of dry historical and archaeological comment is the pitfall that waits for the Farnell-school, but Finley is secure from that thanks to his vivid social consciousness and a truly classical metaphysical movement of thought which vitalizes his historical and literary criticism. His account of poetic and particularly of Pindaric symbol is a magnificent commentary on the analogy of being. (Thomists may not like to find themselves linked with Kantians as keeping sense and mind in separate compartments—perhaps Kantians will not like it either—but devotees of poetic imagination so often have this impression that it might be well to look into the reasons for it.)

The attempted confrontation of Aeschylus and Pindar seems to us not quite successful. However full of lyric the tragic drama, however much concerned with the ultimates of human life and immortality the victory ode, the two literary forms are so diverse as to need a rather larger canvas for their satisfactory co-accommodation. Besides, we suspect that Pindar has the larger part of the author's heart, as he has of the book.

IVO THOMAS, O.P.

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NOVEMBER 1956

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Eric Gill (illustrated) by Dr Cecil Gill

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