

necessarily condensed a study is eloquent testimony to the wealth of Welsh poetry and its capacity for developing the resources of an unequalled classical discipline. From the unknown author of the *Book of Aneirin* (a manuscript of poetry written perhaps as early as the sixth century) to the lyrical poetry of the nineteenth century there is an essential continuity which has no rival in European literature, and one may hope that Professor Parry-Williams's paper may enlighten those who continue to ask: *Is there any Welsh poetry?*

J. A. E.

THE BASIS AND ESSENTIALS OF WELSH. By J. P. Vinay and W. O. Thomas. (Nelson; 5s. 0d.)

Basic Welsh, to the harassed student of its logical, but none the less formidable, grammar might seem an impossibility. But the latest volume in the Cambridge Orthological Institute's series of Basic text-books on modern languages is a compact and valuable guide to the foothills of that mountainous territory—Welsh. It would be absurd to claim too much for a drastically simplified introduction to what is essential, but clear arrangement (aided by an intelligent choice of printing types) and an avoidance of academic irrelevance makes this new Welsh grammar a welcome addition to the sparse selection available. It is a pity that the sound *ll* should be described as 'a voiceless lateral fricative', and the advice to go to the west coast for a Welsh-speaking holiday is, alas, too optimistic.

THE TRUE LEVEL. By Frances Wynne. (Gill; 7s. 6d.)

In her sequel to *Eastward of All* Mrs Wynne considers the effects of the Catholic faith on its possessor: the new perspectives it gives to people, places, and indeed to every aspect of created reality. Once more the discursive charm of the writing lightens a theme which might otherwise appear too naively argued. Mrs Wynne is always at her best when she is describing the double world of Ireland and Wales, whose mutual understanding is certainly being fostered by her books. Her account of Garthewin, no less than that of Mass in Dublin's crowded churches, reveals her generous mind as an interpreter of loyalties she understands and shares. One reader at least would prefer more about Wales (and Ireland) and less literary criticism and fewer essays in the perilous matters of political theory.

Mrs Wynne has what one can only call an international view of life, and nothing is more attractive in *The True Level* than a constant return to the deep, though at the time unsuspected, meaning of events and meetings. In all her travels she is haunted by the heavenly fingerprints in all she sees, and her account of Wales in particular is thereby greatly enriched. It is good to find the last chapter of the book devoted to the memorable celebrations last year at the Abbey of Valle Crucis.

J. A.