

I do not see the importance, or even the interest, of discovering anticipators of modern logic whose work was lost from the tradition. Those who are interested may wonder, as I did, whether the author is only unused to writing English or also unable to translate the Latin. The following example is among the worst, but it occurs where three pages are spoiled by others equally bad. A false proposition is 'that which, no matter how, does not signify: It is so'. (The Latin was, *illa quae non qualitercumque significat, ita est.*)

QUENTIN JOHNSTON, O.P.

THE ALCHEMISTS. By F. Sherwood Taylor. (Heinemann; 12s. 6d.)

There has been a revival of serious interest in alchemical writings since Jung discovered evidence of archetypal patterns in them. But all interpretation must be based on a sound knowledge of the literal sense of texts, and here reliable information has not been easy to get, since most modern books on Alchemy are largely esoteric nonsense. This outline of what the alchemists themselves wrote, thought, and did is therefore very welcome. It is a small book, intended for that public which Dr Taylor has already put so much in his debt, but by concentrating on the most important texts, from which he gives many extracts, he manages to convey a clear impression of the alchemists' main ideas, while a critical bibliography simplifies the problem of further study. The twenty-five years he has spent on research in the history of Alchemy, though ensuring the reliability of his facts, have fortunately done nothing to obscure the vigour and clarity of his writing. His alchemists are plausible, and what is even more remarkable, respectable: for Dr Taylor is able to contrast them favourably with more modern scientists whose success in transmuting the elements 'has had precisely the result that the alchemists feared and guarded against, the placing of gigantic power in the hands of those who have not been fitted by spiritual training to receive it'.

L.B.

THE HERITAGE OF EARLY BRITAIN. Edited by M. P. Charlesworth and M. D. Knowles. (Bell; 12s.)

In the Lent term of 1949 a series of lectures was given at Cambridge by members of the Classical, Archaeological and History faculties presenting a picture of Early Britain from the beginnings to the coming of the Normans. In his preface to *The Heritage of Early Britain*, Professor Knowles, who as well as being part editor with the late—and much lamented—Martin Charlesworth, contributes the final essay, tells us that this book had its origin in these lectures; and adds to the conspiracy of silence which, even in the University itself, shrouds the fact that, although these particular lecturers were drawn from three