II. FRENCH STUDIES

LANGUAGE

By DAFYDD EVANS, Lecturer in French and Romance Philology in Queen Mary College, London

(This chapter covers the years 1963 and 1964. The place of publication is Paris, unless otherwise indicated)

I. GENERAL

P. Guiraud’s *L’Ancien Français* and *Le Moyen Français* (*Que sais-je?* 1056 and 1086), PUF, 1963, 128 and 127 pp., are crammed with information and are to be recommended as handy introductions, despite numerous small blemishes. The problem of dealing with Old French in so confined a space has imposed on G. a selective approach, but he surveys the vocabulary, phonology, accidence and changes in grammatical function. There are many tables and summaries. Tradition has forced him to combine synchronic and diachronic methods, but his personal methodology breaks through, especially in the final section. G.’s attitude to Middle French is quite different. Considering it as the stage of gestation of the modern language, he first relates it to the social factors that created it. Only then does he proceed to a more descriptive treatment, noting the lexicological, phonetic and grammatical developments that characterize this language of transition. G. Raynaud de Lage’s *Manuel pratique d’ancien français* (*Connaissance des langues, n*), Picard, ix + 295 pp., is arranged on the model of a textual commentary: the author takes the first 421 verses of the *Charroi de Nîmes* and the first 238 of the *Conte du Graal*, translates them, and comments on linguistic features, beginning word by word. In this way he covers adequately the etymology, phonetic development from Latin, morphology and syntax. This treatment should be of great use to students. J. Gerig­hausen’s interesting thesis, *Die historische Deutung der National­sprache im französischen Schrifttum des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Romanisti­sche Versuche und Vorarbeiten, xiii), Bonn, Romanisches Seminar der Universität, 1963, 285 pp., describes Renaissance ideas on the sources of the French language. Much was based on the acceptance of Hebrew as the first human tongue, on the
story of the Tower of Babel, and on the legend of the Trojan origins of the French nation; Greek and Celtic, separately and in combination, were serious contenders for the rank of the French mother-tongue. Only gradually was the Latin origin of French and the concept of a Romance stage established by the more level-headed scholars, such as Fauchet. A. Streuber begins his study of the 16th-c. French grammars written for Frenchmen, ZFSL, lxxiv, 4, with a general survey of the battle for the vernacular, and follows this with a study of Dubois. M. Rat presents in his Grammairiens et amateurs de beau langage, Michel, 1963, 288 pp., a series of brief studies of important figures in the history of the French language from Malherbe and Marie de Gournay to Dauzat and Valéry.


MISCELLANIES

A number of miscellanies have appeared, including Études romanes dédiées à A. Blinkenberg (OL, supp. 3), Copenhagen, Munksgaard, 1963, 271 pp.; Mélanges de linguistique romane et de philologie médiévale offerts à M. M. Delbouille, Gembloux, Duculot, 2 vols., 713 and 769 pp.; Weltoffe Rømanistik: Festschrift A. Kuhn (Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Kulturwissenschaft, ix/x), Innsbruck, 1963, 392 pp.; and Medium Aevum romanicum: Festschrift für H. Rheinfelder, Munich, Hueber, 1963, xx + 411 pp. Some major articles from these are included in the appropriate sections. M. A. Pei reprints a number of his studies on French, e.g. on O.Fr. demonstratives and on the suffix -ier, in Studies in Romance Philology and Literature (UNCSRL,