EARLY MEDIEVAL LITERATURE
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1. General


Marie-Thérèse Lorcin, Société et cadre de vie en France, Angleterre et Bourgogne (1050-1250), CDU-SEDES, vi + 332 pp., is a brilliantly
concise, but fact-filled presentation, as ready to quote from OF lit. as to cite documentary evidence in a survey of social growth, family units, attitudes and groups. Renaisances before the Renaissance: Cultural Revivals of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, ed. Warren Treadgold, Stanford U.P., 1984, x + 238 pp., contains, pp. 114–43, a chapter by S. C. Ferruolo on the 12th c. Das Ritterbild . . . includes an amount of OF chivalric material. J. O. Benoist, 'Le gibier dans l’alimentation seigneuriale (XIe–XVe siècles)', Actes . . . (Nice), 1, 75–87, shows how the social activity of the medieval hunt has very practical gastronomic results, as reflected by the profusion of meat at table in all genres of OF lit. Danièle Alexandre-Bidon and Monique Closson, L’Enfant à l’ombre des cathédrales, CNRS–Lyon U.P., 278 pp., is a fine study of the nature and status of medieval childhood, from documents, MS illustrations and lit. texts of all kinds. Lynette R. Muir, Literature and Society in Medieval France: The Mirror and the Image, 1100–1500, London, Macmillan, x + 270 pp., sets out to show the truth and the distortion in the medieval lit. world-picture: wideranging, but slightly limited in commentary (except in the chapter on medieval drama, which is very thorough). Georges Matoré, Le Vocabulaire et la société médiévale, PUF, 336 pp., sufficiently bridges the gap between language and lit. to warrant inclusion here: by their very words texts reflect the world outside. P. Ruelle, 'Le temps, la vie, la mort dans la conception médiévale', Bull. de L’Académie royale de langue et de lit. fr., 63:103–21, uses OF texts to show up the linear concept of time, the harshness of life and the horror of death. E. Caldarini, 'Le città ideali nel Medio Evo: realtà, retorica, immaginazione', SLF, 11:7–25, traces the theme of the Town in OF narrative of the later-12th/earlier-13th c.; the topic of descriptio loci depicts the growing feature of social community, and concrete reality may be seen through the layers of idealized interpretation. W. G. Van Emden considers 'The castle in some works of medieval French literature', Reyerson and Powe, Medieval Castle, pp. 1–26: the defensive role is above all stressed, since a key lit. confrontation motif is the siege. For A. Dean McKenzie, 'French medieval castles in Gothic manuscript painting', ib., pp. 199–214, representations of castles (in text and picture) before the 14th c. tend to be mostly symbolic or schematic, even when referring to specific buildings. M. Stanesco, 'Chevalerie médiévale et symbolisme guerrier: le Bachelier "d’Espee engendrez"', Littératures, no. 12:7–14, uses the 13th-c. poem Une Branche d’armes to show how chivalric behaviour takes on a magico-religious incantatory quality, the institution becoming indeed regressus ad uterum. At this rather facile point, one may move to consider items on medieval women, as flourishing this year as last . . . In RoN, 25:205–19, E. J. Burns and R. L. Krueger provide an ‘Introduction’ to a special issue on courtly