

Temple, it is necessarily a work of the imagination, but it was not unintentional that the evangelists left this period alone. We do not know anything about the development of Christ's understanding of his nature and role at this stage and a fictional reconstruction has the danger, particularly for children, that a hypothetical picture is built up in the mind which is later retained as fact. The natural side is emphasized in this book and yet recent work on the scriptures has shown (such as the very interesting *Bible on the Childhood of Jesus* by Hermans) that Luke and Matthew, the two evangelists who dealt with this period, were concerned to emphasize Christ's divinity in

their choice and treatment of the annunciation and nativity episodes, etc.

Presumably in an effort to avoid preconceived ideas, Mrs Haughton has hidden the characters in her book by using Hebrew equivalents, which are either baffling or irritating, such as *Pesach* for 'passover', *Ysrohel* for 'Israel' and *Jeshua* for 'Jesus'.

The book does contain some very interesting material and is particularly strong in bringing out the relevance of Old Testament passages, but her earlier books dealing directly with the Old Testament were much more effective in communicating this to children.

IANTHE PRATT

THE SISTINE CHAPEL BEFORE MICHELANGELO: Religious Imagery and Papal Primacy, by L. D. Ettlinger. *Clarendon Press. Oxford University Press, 75s.*

The Sistine Chapel in the Vatican is known primarily through Michelangelo's Last Judgement. But between 1481 and 1483 Sixtus IV commissioned frescoes for it from Perugino, Botticelli, Ghirlandajo, Rosselli and Signorelle and it is still one of the major monuments of Quattrocento art. The iconography of these frescoes was examined exhaustively by Dr Ernst Steinmann in 1901: Dr Ettlinger writes 'Steinmann's interpretation of the Sistine frescoes is at least partly the result of an historical outlook which saw in the Renaissance essentially a wordly movement. From such a point of view it was indeed possible to propose in all seriousness that the frescoes in the most important Chapel of the Vatican palace were little more than allegories praising the achievements of its founder and immortalizing his name'. I would agree with Steinmann. Sixtus IV would seem to have been one of the most personally megalomaniac of Popes. When he

rebuilt the hospital of Santo Spirito he covered the walls with representations of his life and exploits and all his building activities were carefully accompanied by inscriptions; he delighted to display the newly invented arms of Della Rovere. To Dr Ettlinger on the other hand 'the iconography was determined by the political thinking of the Curia' and 'demonstrates the theory of the primatus papae and the potestas ecclesiae'.

This is a work of ingenious, detailed and scholarly research. It is always stimulating even if it is not always convincing. It seems undeniable that Moses figures so prominently in the Sistine Chapel because he was conceived as the Old Testament type of the Pope but perhaps he was placed there primarily as the Old Testament type of Pope Sixtus IV. There are 44 plates.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

GALILEO: The man, his work, his misfortunes, by James Brodrick, S.J. *Geoffrey Chapman, 21s.*

Although we still lack an adequate biography of Galileo, his *Opere* are available in a fine modern edition and good secondary accounts exist of some aspects of his life and work. Fr Brodrick has drawn on these to present a brief popular sketch of a colourful figure with whom he sympathises but (unlike some writers) does not worship. His book has virtues but cannot be recommended for two reasons. First, Fr Brodrick lacks the necessary background in history of science. This shows itself in minor ways (Harvey did not discover the circulation

of the blood in 1628 (p. 16) but published in that year the discovery he had been teaching for a decade or so) and in major ways (Aristotle (p. 17) used 'first-class mathematics' and was 'a great pioneering astronomer, with nothing but his mathematics and his brilliant mind to help him'). Second, a better account at this level already exists in English, though possibly this is not known to Fr Brodrick: *Galileo and the scientific revolution* by L. C. Fermi and C. Bernardini.

MICHAEL HOSKIN