

by coloured film-strips, as also by many photos to supplement maps as in Fr Grollenberg's *Atlas of the Bible*. Such helps are a *sine qua non* of those who would study the Palestinian stage and background seriously. In the present instance a few well-designed contour maps and a few coloured diagrams or illustrations, or again a few pages in the style of the *Westminster Historical Atlas*, would have far better served the purposes both of the book itself and of the *Bible de Jérusalem*.

ROLAND POTTER, O.P.

MY SUNDAY READING. By Kevin O'Sullivan, O.F.M. (Bruce; \$5.)

This book is sub-titled 'A Popular Explanation and Application of the Sunday Epistles and Gospels', and in the Preface Father O'Sullivan reminds us that the obligation to keep the Sabbath holy is an injunction not only to attend religious services, but to set the day apart as a time which can be spent peacefully restoring our awareness of God which is sure to have been blunted by the rush of life on other days. Despite opinions to the contrary this needs saying, and saying carefully, as Father O'Sullivan does. There is no suggestion that we should go to the lengths of reading nothing but the Bible, refusing to pick up even a duster, and wearing black. It is not what we turn from but what we turn to on Sundays that counts, and here we are offered something we can turn to without making the day penitential. Father O'Sullivan takes the Epistle and Gospel of the day and gives a homiletic exposition of it sentence by sentence. He gives us the context and historical background, unravels complications in the text and explains obscurities. That is the Explanation. It is followed by an Application rather in the fashion of the See-Judge-Act method of Y.C.W. Each Sunday of the year is allotted five or six pages, hardly enough reading matter to paralyse all other activity for the day, but enough to colour it and even to orientate the rest of the week. It is an admirable piece of work, pithy and strong. 'If you ever feel that your trust in God seems to need an uplift, read the story of Abraham in Genesis'—'It may be the sixth or the ninth or even the eleventh hour of my life, yet I can still earn heaven if I listen to the call today'. He can hit us between the eyes or slap us on the back equally vigorously. This is a first-rate book for meditation for layfolk and priests, and if any of the clergy think of using it for sermon-fodder they will probably find it of more use than other men's sermon notes. Besides this one hardly notices how learned it is.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

ATLAS OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN WORLD. By F. Van der Meer and Christine Mohrmann. (Nelson; 70s.)

This is the successor volume to Father Grollenberg's admirable *Atlas of the Bible* and in consequence has been eagerly expected. Both editors

are scholars of recognized distinction. At times their text seems so compressed as to be misleading—for example, in their section on the use of images and on the origins of the Basilica. But this is merely through lack of space and the book will be bought primarily for the sake of its 614 illustrations and 42 maps.

The purchasers will be disappointed. Perhaps Dr F. Van der Meer's intimate knowledge of so much art history was in itself a handicap; there was so much that he knew and decided to include. The period covered by the volume is from the first to the seventh century. With so much Christian art and architecture to be illustrated it was perhaps unnecessary to include so much that was non-Christian. The inclusion of a portrait series of pre-Christian emperors is of course defensible. It is harder to justify such plates as those entitled 'married couple from Pompeii', 'aristocratic lady from Palmyra', 'the girl Toonah'. Odder still there are reproductions of twelfth century mosaics from Sicily and of a rather poor seventeenth century ikon. To make room for so much the small plates are frequently tightly packed together; often they are too small to be of any value, since the standard of photography is normally not a high one.

The maps fail partly from the same reason; so much has been included that the place-names are often microscopic. There are also more serious flaws; the selection of sites seems sometimes quite arbitrary, there are some rather odd variants of names, there are occasional serious errors. Thus in Britain the painted Christian chapel at Lullingstone has been omitted, though the purely pagan ship burial at Sutton Hoo has been marked with the sign that indicates a Christian necropolis. The Caerleon site is termed rather pre-scientifically *Civitas Legionum*. The Province of Valentia is placed north of the Humber instead of west of the Severn. London is shown in *Britannia Secunda*, since *Britannia Prima* and *Brittania Secunda* have been exactly transposed.

GERVASE MATTHEW, O.P.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD: A SURVEY FROM THE FRENCH REVOLUTION TO THE PRESENT. By E. E. Y. Hales. (Eyre and Spottiswoode with Burns and Oates; 30s.)

The Church has hitherto received little attention as a factor in modern history, that is as a factor in the grand march of history and not in the histories of individual countries. It is strange that it should be so; for the Church, by her constitution based territorially on Rome, with her large government departments and diplomatic staffs, seems to demand consideration as a 'power' before all else. Macaulay, happily quoted in this book, understood this well; and historians, politicians and theologians must share an interest in the subject. Mr Hales has written them a preliminary lecture, a survey (as the title suggests),