

BLACKFRIARS

before Constantine and probably from the first half of the third century. This is the witness of archaeology. It is of no little importance for the history of Christian architecture. It has also a bearing on a question discussed in the second part of the book.

In this part Père Abel narrates the history of Emmaus-Amwás from Biblical times to our own day. Is it the Emmaus of Luke xxiv? There can be no doubt that the fine third-century basilica was built there in the belief that it was, and Père Abel shows that this tradition continued uncontradicted until the Middle Ages, when for various reasons other places nearer Jerusalem began to be honoured as the site of the 'Fractio Panis.' He himself is convinced that 'Amwás is the place St. Luke meant. There are, of course, difficulties in the identification. There is, for instance, the difficulty arising from v. 13. The reading generally accepted here in critical editions of the text is sixty stadia or furlongs, but 'Amwás is more than twice that distance from Jerusalem. A fair number, however, of MSS. (including the famous *Sinaiticus*, one of the oldest, if not the oldest Greek codex) give 160 stadia, and Père Abel argues strongly that this is the right reading. Altogether he makes out a very good case for the claims of 'Amwás.

The volume is profusely illustrated with photographs and plans.

L.W.

THE CELTIC PEOPLES AND RENAISSANCE EUROPE. A Study of the Celtic and Spanish Influences on Elizabethan History. By David Mathew. With an Introduction by Christopher Dawson. (London: Sheed & Ward, 1933; pp. 525; 18/-.)

Impossible to fix in brief a book so delicate, allusive, deep; no black-and-white account, a thesis over-simplified: but human persons, complex, rich; variety of motive, action, scene; the sun, the rain, the sense of days between events. A resumé begins each chapter, clarifying lines of march, disembarassing attention for the narrative, a free, extended, graceful style, unhampered by the references which confirm and amplify but do not halt the text. The essays are arranged around a central theme, 'the Spanish Shore,' the forces from the South and West that shaped the Elizabethan years. Not those that gained; the lawyers, landowners and merchants: but the wrack; the discipline and fashion of the Tridentines, the dying mediaeval loyalties, the sword of Spain, the stormy setting of the Celt. More mystery and grace of life are here than ever issued from Geneva and the Germanies. Quotation once begun could scarcely stop; but all who wish to understand the gradual and

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complicated process of our national apostasy must read this notable and fascinating book.

F.T.

THE LAST STRUGGLE WITH THE MAFIA. By Cesare Mori, translated by Orlo Williams. (Putnam; pp. 240; 10/6.)

This book is a serious study of the social history of Sicily in the last decade. It is perfectly authoritative, reasonably informative and the translation reads well. It is only praise to the discretion of Senatore Mori, the distinguished and insistently virile Prefect of Palermo, to say that this able and accurate presentation raises more questions than it solves. The curbing and suppression of the notorious organisation of the Mafia is described with the lucidity of an able state paper, lightened by such confidential asides to the reader as would come well from a politician of standing, still in office. A firm impression is conveyed at every chapter that, although the Senatore is in retirement, his party leader is transcendentally in power. Compare with this book a delightful volume recently published by King Alfonso's last Chief of Police. 'The night is dark and smells of cheese': an aphorism such as this comes pleasantly from the lips of a very permanently retired official, but Senatore Mori can permit himself no such liberties. The sun of Fascism admits no darkness.

Two subjects are so persistently not brought into play that their presence comes in time to overshadow the well-poised narration. What became of the *latitanti* after they had passed into the keeping of the new regime? Could anything have been done to mitigate the evils of absentee landlordism? The Senatore patiently explains that the landowners had to employ overseers known as *campieri* to guard their great estates. It was inevitable, according to the author, that each *campiere* who acted efficiently should be a *mafioso*. Does not the circle seem a trifle vicious? On the other hand it must be said that the Sicilian characteristic of *omertà* is described in a masterly fashion, with tact yet without undue reserve. The inevitable difficulties of translation make some of the personal detail read strangely. Thus the stories which hinge on the fear that the author's reputation inspired, a fear indicated by the expressive phrase, *Iddu è*, suggest a convention of personal modesty in narrative which accords better with an Italian than an English setting. This setting with the constant use of the term 'Prefect' Mori is at times almost transatlantic. The photographs add keenly to the pleasure of the book, but among their captions *Piana dei Greci's* is a surprise, while the frequent references to *Roccapalumba* suggest a more cool and sophisticated study.