

NOTICES

BROTHER POTAMIAN was a member of the teaching order of De La Salle, and his life, written by a fellow religious, W. J. Battersby (Burns Oates; 15s.), shows him as an expert 'Educator and Scientist'. Both the author and the subject of this biography reveal the fact that these teaching brothers are not only leaders of learning and education within the Church, but take their place in these fields as compeers of the great educators of the day outside the Church. Michael O'Reilly was born in Ireland, took his doctorate of Science at London Univerity, taught in London and Manhattan, and died in 1917 at the age of seventy. A man of such a reputation and energy would naturally be involved in the history of his time, so that this book is also valuable and interesting for various sidelights on the history of the Church in England at the end of the last century and the beginning of the present century.

OUR LADY OF SALETTE ought to be better known in England. One of the first and best protagonists of the apparitions was an Englishman, Archbishop Ullathorne (his book *The Holy Mountain of La Salette*, now in a ninth edition, is still the best and fullest available account). In 1931 Burns Oates and Washbourne published a good short account (fifty-two pages) by W. J. Fortier. Now, to keep the devotion at least alive, we have *Our Lady of La Salette* (Donald M. J. Langdon, Mercier Press, 3s. 6d.). It combines a plea for the extension of the Archconfraternity of Our Lady of La Salette with an account of the apparitions. It conveys, quite effectively, the essential message of La Salette: 'Unless you shall do penance you shall all likewise perish'. At La Salette, as elsewhere, our Lady pleads for penance to stay the avenging hand of God.

THE SWALLOWS OF THE GARRETT by Malachy Carroll (Mercier; 12s. 6d.), is the title of a lively account of the foundation and work of the Little Sisters of the Assumption taken from the poor Parisian's own nickname for these swiftly merciful nuns. They were founded by Fr Etienne Pernet, one of the first members of the Assumptionist Fathers, under Fr Emmanuel d'Alzon, and by Mother Marie of Jesus, his indefatigable partner in the work. At a time when Catholic social theories were still only theories in the last century these sisters came to link all classes in the service of the poor. And all over Europe they still remain a challenge to any temptation to linger in admiration of those theories. To say that they nurse the sick poor in their own homes hardly begins to convey the tremendous scope of their work, but it does describe the focal point of it all. Mr Carroll centres his story round the figure of Fr Pernet, a man of strength and precision growing out of humility. To this account Bishop Beck of Brentwood, himself an Assumptionist, has added a preface.
C.P.

IN *THE ORIGIN & DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH ARCHITECTURE* (S.C.M. Press, 21s.), J. G. Davies rightly claims to be the first to collect the many specialist studies of this early Christian art into one complete and well-illustrated volume. For students of the spirit of the Church such a book provides a great many avenues down which he should be encouraged to venture. This book shows how literally as well as symbolically the Church was built upon foundations that influenced permanently its subsequent building. It was built out of private *homes* (Mr Davies supports the theory that the *Basilica* derives from the houses where the early Christians first met for their Eucharists), or from the civil courts of law or at least according to the plan of such public buildings, from the *tombs* of martyrs, and occasionally upon the foundation of *pagan temples*. From these significant beginnings the building of the church developed according to the needs of the Eucharistic liturgy and of the congregation of participants. A careful study of this comprehensive book will therefore reveal many facets of the sacramental and worshipful life of the Christian which today he often overlooks.

EXTRACTS

SECULAR INSTITUTES take the lion's share of the April-May issue of *Doctrine and Life* (Cork). The introductory paragraphs seem to make a wrong contrast between the religious state and the secular institute, including the strange remark that 'The Church, by reason of her mission, has always sought to sanctify man; at the beginning it limited itself to transforming his interior life'. This is surely not only unhistorical but suggests a misunderstanding of the religious life that is only too frequent in our day. But the number goes on to describe the foundation and work of three institutes, the 'Opus Dei', the Grail and the Little Sisters of Jesus who follow in the footsteps of Charles de Foucauld. The latter are described in the words of their foundress's 'testament'—an inspiring document intended to send these women literally into the desert among the Arabs.

Just as Jesus, when on earth, was all things to all men, so must you be—Arabs in the midst of Arabs—but above all, before all, human in the midst of your fellow men. Do not think that you must erect a barrier between yourselves and the lay world in order to exclude whatever might threaten your dignity as religious or your life of intimacy with God. Do not remain on the outskirts of human affairs. Take your part in the world as Jesus did. Enter into, and sanctify your milieu by the conformity of your life to it, by friendship, by love, by leading a life totally given over, as was that of Jesus, to the service of others, a life so mingled with other lives, so much at one with them, that you will be like the leaven which disappears into the dough and causes it to rise.