

years that the great cleavages in French society became defined and permanent. It was then that politics became based on groups rather than on parties, leading inevitably to frequent crises and changing cabinets.

This valuable contribution to a better understanding of more recent French political history is clearly the result of extensive research. Not that the fruits of this research make laborious reading; quite the contrary. Certainly it calls for attentive reading. Important details are not neglected and often a significant personality is sketched deftly in a few words. The political ineptitude of the restored Bourbons is made clear; the difficulties of the Church and State relationships become understandable. The reader might even feel hopefully, at the end, that he is beginning to understand something of the quaint complexities of French politics.

KIERAN MULVEY, O.P.

THE METALOGICON OF JOHN OF SALISBURY. Translated by Daniel D. McGarry. (University of California Press and C.U.P.; 37s. 6d.)

This is the first complete translation of the *Metalogicon*. 1,876 footnotes to 276 pages, most of them expressing the translator's often justified doubts about his understanding of the text, together with a liberal peppering of explanatory, square-bracketed words in the translation, combine to make it exasperating reading. The *original*, as is pointed out in the short introduction, is famous for its elegance of style.

IVO THOMAS

CHRISTIANITY AND SYMBOLISM. By F. W. Dillistone. (Collins; 21s.)

The subject of this book is one which is receiving a great deal of attention in the present day, and this is a valuable contribution to its investigation. Dr Dillistone writes well, and one of the chief merits of the book is the way in which he extends the area of discussion.

After an introductory chapter which is rather heavy going, and where he is not too successful in integrating the views of the several authors he discusses into his own rather rigid and artificial scheme of image, sign and symbol, the author warms to his subject and deals in turn with the symbolism of nature, time, persons, language and actions. Here he treats in a mastery way of the contribution of various cultures and of the distinctiveness of the Christian use of symbol, displaying a wide acquaintance both with the biblical data and with the cultural patterns of prehistory and of several classical civilizations, as well as an ability to present all this attractively.

This part of the book is followed by a final section dealing with the

Christian symbolism of the basic sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist. Here, while readily acknowledging the great light thrown on these by the previous section, one must confess to a sense of disappointment. It is not that Dr Dillistone's analytical powers have flagged, nor that he is wanting in intelligent references to the theologians, both Catholic and Reformed. It is rather that the book ends with a chapter which comes as an anti-climax. This is entitled 'Are the Traditional Christian Symbols Outmoded?', and seems to labour under what almost amounts to a diffidence in the power of the sacraments as they are to speak for themselves. It is a pity that this undertone mars the positive value of much that Dr Dillistone has to say in this book. The success of the liturgical movement in the Church is perhaps a sign that modern man has moved on from the stage of simply having lost the sense of symbols to that of positively searching for what he has lost. In that mood he may yet prove to be a judgment on a half-hearted Christianity which seeks new and accommodating symbols instead of simply unlocking the treasury of that unique apotheosis of symbol which the Christian sacraments of the orthodox tradition are.

RONALD TORBET, O.P.

**SAINTS AND THEIR ATTRIBUTES.** By Helen Roeder. (Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd; 15s.)

The author, whilst hoping this book may be sufficiently accurate and comprehensive to be of use to scholars, adds that her real public is 'of all sorts of people'. Her work truly is scholarly, for in addition to providing numerous and interesting peeps through the many windows of hagiography she has marshalled her difficult and abundant material with ability and clearness; and considering the great number of Saints and Blesseds commemorated by the Church, a number running to tens of thousands of whom only a percentage could be noticed, she has given us wonderful measure in a comparatively small compass, for despite its xxviii + 391 pages her book is little more than pocket size. A commendable feature is its triple index of saints, patrons and localities. It would prove an interesting pastime to carry it with one into some prominent picture gallery and, refusing the aid of a catalogue, try to identify the saints in many pictures by means of their attributes.

These emblems are often legendary and very amusing; bulls, bears and basilisks, birches, brooms and cobwebs, gimlets, hammers and scythes, birds, snakes and reptiles all figure. Fish stories occur, including the whale upon whose back St Malo was reputed to have offered Mass thinking himself to have been on an island; and the goose leg given to a messenger by St Wolfgang which, not having been consumed on Thursday, turned into a fish on Friday morning. In the list of patron-