

were pointed out that St Francis *offered* to go, even though he was lovingly led on to make the offer by the Bishop.

The above observations are mere pin-pricks on a work which has been most smoothly and often delicately fashioned. And how delightful to see Gambart's lovely print with its motto which epitomizes this great saint's advice to others: *Medium tenere beati*.

D. A. RAFFERTY

DE GAULLE'S REPUBLIC. By Philip M. Williams and Martin Harrison. (Longmans; 25s.)

THE FIFTH FRENCH REPUBLIC. By Dorothy Pickles. (Methuen; 15s.)

These two books may seem very similar, judged by their subjects and titles, but to read them gives a very different impression. For there is a big difference between *De Gaulle's Republic* (more up-to-date, more penetrating, more complete) and *The Fifth French Republic*, both as to their value and as to their theme. The first tries to embrace the French problem in all its historical complexity, both political and social, while the second, a little summary in its analyses, concentrates almost exclusively on institutions, which are described objectively if a little flatly. However, there is an advantage in reading them both, for *The Fifth Republic* is, as it were, a juridical counter-balance to the other, and for that reason gives many details which the specialist will be glad to have. In any case both books raise the essential questions (the first directly, the second indirectly) which everyone is asking: Is the Fifth Republic truly republican? Will the Fifth Republic survive General de Gaulle? And these are questions, it must be recognized, where texts matter less than a knowledge of the French personality as confronted by the dominant factor of the personality of the present President.

But if there are these differences, nevertheless some criticisms can be applied to both books alike. In reading these authors, the Frenchman will, for instance, be inclined to resent a rather academic insistence on 'French instability' (a familiar theme), which arises from the fact that Englishmen (like Frenchmen) have a direct experience of political parties, but at the level of governmental responsibilities policies are so divergent that any real estimate is difficult to arrive at. Another thing in common between Miss Pickles and the authors of *De Gaulle's Republic* is that they never succeed in 'feeling' the Algerian problem. Here, too, their knowledge remains theoretical and external. How could it have been otherwise? The truth is that the Algerian affair is for the French themselves in some sense an equivocal matter, at once too near and too far (and a large part of the danger derives indeed from this very fact). It disturbs everyone without apparently threatening anyone and only affects the general French public indirectly (though in a catastrophic way). In this connection M. Mendès France said to me: 'The Algerian war is a buzzing in the ear of every Frenchman'. One has to hear that buzzing (and no doubt only Frenchmen can) in order to understand the problem in its totality. It is only then that one will avoid—and these authors don't always avoid—falling into an excessive severity in regard to the Fourth (and even the Fifth) Republic, for indeed what

régime could have resisted that? One would also avoid falling into another trap, which once more the authors of these books fail to avoid, namely an indulgent resignation in regard to the French, 'who are like that'.

The truth is that the French have had greater difficulties than any the Big Four have had to face since the end of the war, and they have not done too badly in avoiding shipwreck on three dangerous rocks (Indochina, Morocco and Tunisia). Two of these territories were close by, with large populations of European origin—200,000 in the one case and 300,000 in the other—though admittedly a small minority, and in spite of everything the worst was avoided. These are aspects of the almost continuously dramatic situation which France has known since the last war and which should provide the authors of these books with some grounds for a judicious optimism. It would have been strengthened by a more exact knowledge of certain French political forces. One might mention in this context the role of the Catholics of the Left (in its widest sense: the M.R.P., C.F.T.C., J.O.C., J.A.C.—a political party, trade unions, movements for young workers, both industrialist and agricultural, etc.) who have made a stand against marxism and fascism alike, and their function is too little recognized or analysed in both these books.

In spite of these reservations, one must recognize these as serious books, which complement each other and give a good general idea of the present state of French politics.

JACQUES NANTET

ROMANESQUE EUROPE. Edited by Harald Busch and Bernd Lohse. With an Introduction by R. H. C. Davis and Commentaries on the Illustrations by Helmut Domke. (Batsford; 45s.)

BAROQUE IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL. By James Leas-Milne. (Batsford; 35s.)

At first sight it might seem that all these two books had in common was the fact that they were about architecture and that they shared the same publisher. There is certainly a visual gulf fixed between the cool gravity of Saint Trophime at Arles and the excitements of the Granada Cartuja Sacristy. But the fascination of architecture lies not only in the thing seen but in its genesis, in that extraordinary dynamism of art which, not at all like Melchisedech, has origins and a traceable family tree.

As it happens, these books share at least one building, the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, and its history—and indeed the very building you see—is the supreme statement of the continuity that transcends all style, the sense of the sacred that resolves the most spectacular differences in a single though many-sided achievement. The 'Romanesque' label (with 'Norman' as a confusingly English equivalent) is first of all applied to the buildings in northern Italy, southern France and Spain, which consciously imitated the achievement of the builders of imperial Rome and whose remains were a constant reminder, if not reproach. The more original achievement of the Romanesque of the north can be seen as a true development, and as a stupendous exercise in engineering. But from a common inheritance and inspiration there arose inevitably the diversities of regional architecture, so