

of the Supplication of the fifteenth-century Moscow school. Both introductions are by scholars of great distinction. Alexei Hackel writes of the place of the icon in Orthodox spirituality in prose of real beauty, while Johannes Kollwitz has provided the best essay on Christian mosaics that has yet appeared in English.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

BYZANTINE STUDIES AND OTHER ESSAYS. By Norman H. Baynes, University of London. (The Athlone Press; 35s.)

In so many ways Professor Baynes has been the Acton of our time in the character of his erudition, his influence and his indomitable liberalism. But, as with Acton, no future generation could understand the depth and width of his erudition and his influence from his published works alone. Since he first taught in London thirty-seven years ago no one has done more both for the prestige and for the standards of London University, and it is a fitting act of *pietas* that the Athlone Press should now publish in a single volume fourteen of his articles, nine of his reviews and seven of his lectures.

Naturally the contents of such a volume cannot be of equal value; some of the reviews are necessarily ephemeral and one of the strongest of Professor Baynes's admirers would wish that two of his lectures had been omitted. No one has shown more sympathetic understanding for Byzantine hagiography, but it is doubtful if he has ever felt at home among the theological subtleties of Greek patristic thought, and this is very apparent in his lecture on 'Alexandria and Constantinople', as in several other passages in this volume. Again, he has never been an archaeologist and this perhaps explains why in the first half of his lecture on 'Idolatry and the Early Church' he seems to ignore so much of the archaeological evidence of the use of representational art both in early Christianity and in late Judaism.

Yet any criticism of this volume seems ungenerous and ungrateful when one re-reads four of the lectures it contains—'The Hellenistic Civilization and East Rome', 'The Thought World of East Rome', 'Some Aspects of Byzantine Civilization', 'The Byzantine State'. Each of them is so clearly the work of a master and any one of them could explain the pre-eminence which Professor Baynes has so long held both in Byzantine studies and in those of all the Imperial Hellenistic age.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

THE WISE MAN FROM THE WEST. By Vincent Cronin. (Rupert Hart-Davis; 18s.)

In his first book, *The Golden Honeycomb*, Mr Cronin described his own seeking, among the material remains of Sicily, for traces of the

fabulous artefact ascribed to the legendary artist Daedalus. In this second book, now under review, he has described a real artist, with a new spiritual technique, seeking to incarnate his message in a civilization vaster and even more complex than that of Sicily.

He has chosen as his subject the great Jesuit missionary, Matteo Ricci, who in 1583 fulfilled the dying wishes of St Francis Xavier by penetrating the Celestial Empire of China, which had long been sealed off from the Gospel as from all foreign influence. In this enterprise Ricci forms part of the whole picture of Counter-Reformation missionary work, that still-continuing crusade of a true Christian character. Where Ricci is outstanding is in the attitude of mind, the technique he brought to the preaching of the Gospel, a technique which has only lately been recognized as the true norm of missionary endeavour.

This new attitude consisted in recognizing the substantial goodness of the culture to which the Gospel was to be preached and in advancing that Gospel as the realization of something incomplete, not as its negation or destruction. Perhaps, in China, Ricci made a virtue of necessity, recognizing that a frontal attack on its way of life, stable, millennial and prescriptive, was to make failure certain. Precariously established within the country, he could only advance his sacred cause by a flanking movement, by becoming himself a Chinese sage, remarkable for his knowledge of the Confucian classics, and vastly superior to his learned colleagues in mathematics, astronomy and geography. By these means he obtained a hearing for his Gospel message, which would otherwise have been regarded as part of the barbarism which the Chinese expected from any foreigner. It was impossible to accuse the most learned man in China of being a barbarian; his clocks and astrolabes, his maps and writings, his brilliant and friendly discourse with mandarins and statesmen, forbade it. This constructive humility towards an ancient culture reaped a rich reward in the development of the Church in China for the ensuing century.

The subsequent controversy of 'The Chinese Rites' is all too well-known and melancholy a story. None the less, this very capable reconstruction of the career of a great apostle is one for which we should be grateful. It is not altogether clear how far Mr Cronin has allowed his imagination to build upon the letters and reports of Ricci which form the basis of his narrative; occasionally the author's exuberant verbal imagery gets out of hand; but he has given us an admirable picture of an elaborate and often lovely culture and of a true Christian whose sole aim was to restore that culture in Christ.

PAUL FOSTER, O.P.

ABBÉ PIERRE AND THE RAGPICKERS. By Boris Simon. (Harvill Press; 15s.)

The death in Paris of a three-months old baby in the severe winter of