

studies. Book XXI on the Fate of the Lost is treated with particular perception, and the Platonic roots of so much of the *De Civitate* are analysed with careful clarity. Of course, there are emphases with which other scholars will disagree; it seems anachronistic to read African nationalism into any of the writings of St Augustine. Naturally there are omissions; books XVI-XVIII are barely glanced at.

The treatment of the place of the family in the 'civitas terrena' would have gained in depth by a comparison with the teaching of Lactantius. Dr Versfeld rightly stresses the vital significance of St Augustine's conception of time for any understanding of the *De Civitate*; this is a point which should have been expanded into a chapter. But it seems unjust to criticize a book of 138 pages for omissions. It is more important that Dr Versfeld is always clear, always concise, and at times profound.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

HE DIED OLD: MITHRADATES EUPATOR, KING OF PONTUS. By Alfred Duggan. (Faber; 18s.)

Mithradates would form an admirable subject for an historical novel; he is not really suited for a formal biography. The facts known of him are relatively so few, so sporadically placed in his long life and often so doubtfully authenticated that he can only really be interpreted through imaginative reconstruction. It is to be regretted, therefore, that Mr Duggan, the most distinguished historical novelist of our time, has chosen to attempt a biographical study.

G.M.

AND YET SO NEW. By Sir Arnold Lunn. (Sheed and Ward; 15s.)

This is the third of the trilogy that began with *Now I See*. It is so much the most enjoyable of them and also the best. Perhaps it is only fancy that it seems more light-hearted, more mellow and more kindly than its predecessors: certainly it is more amusing. No one who has read it will forget the memorable argument that the Catholic who refuses to speak of Anglican priests should change the Lays of Ancient Rome into 'The Parson who slew the slayer, and shall himself be slain'. Sir Arnold was always free of Catholic Bogosity, now the last touch of Catholic pomposity has vanished; this is admirably shown by his recollections of Monsignor Knox and of Mr Belloc. In its very different genre *And Yet So New* will rank with that great book *The Flight from Reason*.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.