This beautiful book, bound in plum-red, was first published in France by B. Arthaud (Paris and Grenoble) under the title of *LA SICILE*. The variety of its contents makes it somewhat difficult to categorise. It is designed for those who are planning a holiday in Sicily, but is something very much more than a vade-mecum. The exquisite illustrations, in black and white, with five colour plates, set off the appeal of the letterpress which is not (as so often in productions of this kind) a mere perfunctory appendage to 'eye-gate.'

'Some of those who have written about Sicily,' says the author at an early stage (p. 23), 'starting perhaps with Cicero in his “Verrine Orations”, have treated it as a country of complete wretchedness......the Ciceronian view is no less distorted than its opposite, which sees only the idyllic one. Like a person, a country has its defects and its qualities; but when you are fond of a person or country, these qualities on closer acquaintance will somehow outweigh the defects. I at least have found that particularly true of Sicily......the better you get to know this wonderful island, the greater your love for it will be.'

The traveller makes Palermo his base and goes westwards to Segesta, Erice and Trapani. Then he visits the south, Selinunte, Agrigento, Gela, Noto and Syracuse. From Syracuse the route goes inland to Piazza Armerina, Enna and Nicosia. Then back to the sea at Catania to get to know Etna at closer quarters, and on to Taormina to revel in the magnificent view from its theatre and enjoy its ancillary attractions.

The 'Hellenistic' values of this charming volume are considerable and seem to become more meaningful through their integration in a larger whole.

With regard to the 'shady, mossy ravine full of water' (p. 213), site of the Roman villa at Casale, mentioned in a previous review, Sébilleau tells us that the mosaics he saw there 'reminded him at once of those in North Africa.' He quotes with approval the opinion of T'Serstevens (against the majority view) that 'the owner of the villa was one of the Romanised Berbers who trafficked in wild beasts for the
circus games.' The 'squire of genius' in question was 'a sort of Hagenbeck who after making his fortune had retired into a remote part of the country with plenty of game, where he hoped to have some chance of being forgotten by the Treasury and of getting some good shooting' (!?).

On his final page Sébilleau writes: '...from now on, being used to Sicilian contrasts, you will find it natural that Sicily can have its light and its dark sides, can be both very rich and very poor, an idyllic country and one of the most under-developed in Europe. You now see it for what it is......a country where you have enjoyed a wonderful holiday.' Few who have been there will care to dispute this verdict. Indeed, it might be argued that, from certain points of view, a visit to Sicily returns better dividends than a visit to Greece itself.

On the whole, the quality of the photography in black and white (277 items) is superb. A double-page map outlined in blue augments the artistic harmony and general usefulness of the whole.

H. R. Minn