

community of St Germain-des-Prés. This centralized organization was not for the glory of the Congregation, but for the good of souls, both of the reader's and the writers'. Even the most erudite monks were not excused from the common tasks of sweeping and laundry work, which were an integral part of their monastic life. Like the primitive Carthusians, the Maurists did not exclude a silent apostolate from their lives—'being unable to do so by our mouths, we preach the word of God with our hands' (*Consuetudines* of Guigo, ch. 28).

But it seems regrettable to us that the spirituality of the Counter-Reformation was allowed to invade their cloisters and apparently carry all before it. There can be no reasonable doubt of the holiness of Dom Martin, but it seems of a very different kind from that of the great monastic saints of the 'Benedictine centuries'.

HUGH FARMER, O.S.B.

SAINTS AND OURSELVES. Edited by Philip Caraman, S.J. (Hollis and Carter; 10s. 6d.)

This book is a very good example of the present rather popular practice of getting distinguished men and women to write about distinguished men and women: the latter 'distinguished' rather than 'famous' because, while St Thérèse of Lisieux, as Mr J. B. Morton styles her, is pretty well known, the Venerable Mary of the Incarnation is not. There are obvious disadvantages in this method; some may feel that the author needs to be scraped acquaintance with as well as the saint, and that by the time we are getting to know something about the saint and the writer's particular attitude the story comes to a close and we have to start all over again. All the same, it is undoubtedly a common human reaction to wonder, now what has Robert Speaight got to say about St Augustine? or Antonia White about St Thomas Aquinas? We like to know other people's views. And of course these views are interesting, as we would expect when we consider the twelve Catholics, noted personalities in their own widely differing fields, who have contributed these studies. A happy result of this variety of authors is that we are presented also with a various company of saints. Praise or preference of one study above another depends largely on the individual reader: I myself was interested especially in what E. B. Strauss had to say about that most un-English saint, Maria Goretti, and grateful to Harman Grisewood in making for me a real person out of 'Greg. Turon'. And that perhaps is the outstanding virtue of this book: not so much that it sets out to make the saints real people, as that the writers never imagine they were anything else. It is a style of hagiography we are becoming more accustomed to, but it is not yet so common as to be a commonplace. It is certainly a pleasure.

RACHEL ATTWATER