

episodes that have always been ignored in all histories of the African Missions and of the Counter-Reformation. The first is a summary of the work of the Augustinians and Dominicans at the end of the sixteenth century, when for perhaps the only time in Christian history a considerable number of converts were made from Islam, especially in the Augustinian zone that stretched along the Kenya coast. The second is the story of the Martyrs at Mombasa in 1631, when the girl Natalia da Sa chose to be thrown alive to the sharks in the harbour rather than to renounce her faith and when the old Arab prince from Malindi, 'Dom Affonso', died rather than return to Islam.

Naturally there is an occasional slip; thus the death of the elder Seif bin Sultan of Muscat is placed in 1771. Inevitably there are omissions; thus there is no reference to the significant emergence of a Swahili culture. But these are trivialities compared to the book's merits, for it was written with infectious enjoyment, was based on much local knowledge and shows an equally sympathetic understanding for the Arabs and for the Portuguese.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ITALIAN PEOPLE. By Janet Penrose Trevelyan.

Revised edition with an Epilogue by D. Mack Smith. (Allen and Unwin; 32s.)

Dr G. M. Trevelyan, introducing this reprint of his wife's book, says that 'it does not appear to have been replaced by any other similar work'. If the justification is slightly apologetic, one can hardly wonder: this book smacks too much of its period (1920) to deserve resuscitation now. Not that there is nothing to be said for an anti-clerical view of Italian history—*au contraire*; but in the mid-twentieth century one expects it to be stated with rather more detachment from the passions and polemics of the nineteenth. This book is out of date in a negative way: it shows no clear signs of having been revised in the light of the historical work of the past twenty years, especially with regard to the *Risorgimento*. Mr Mack Smith's epilogue on Italy under Fascism has no more and no less value than fairly intelligent journalism. Of the rest the most one can say is that it tells part of the story, the political part, with a somewhat censorious ability. But how much it leaves out! And yet Dr Trevelyan's implied challenge remains: where, in English, is its substitute? But an unsatisfactory book does not become satisfactory through the mere lack of a rival or superior work in the same field and the same language.

K.F.