

the executions of Catholics during the Elizabethan period were carried out for political motives; it is a simplification to state that all were. For this is to ignore the Protestant hatred of Popery as Antichrist which was surely shared by Walsingham if not by Cecil. This will be in some ways a disappointing book for those who, like the reviewer, most admire Mr Watkin's perceptive talent and remember the delicate sense of nuances, and of spiritual values which marked his essay on Richard Crashaw in *The English Way*.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

THE BOOK OF MIRACLES. By Zsolt Aradi. (Longmans; 18s. 6d.)

Mr Aradi is undoubtedly a master of literary compression, a skilful provider of interesting religious facts in digest form. His virtuosity in this line has already been shown in his books on the shrines of our Lady and on what happens in Rome *sede vacante*. And now, in popular style and language, he discusses 'the truly miraculous, the obsessed and the possessed'. The result is an absorbing book, at times as gripping as a ghost story.

Since the book is on such a vast scale—'a comprehensive survey of the whole panorama of the miraculous'—there are bound to be certain points one might dispute. The author is aware of this but the interested reader will be indulgent. It is a competent survey for the ordinary reader, not a treatise for the professional theologian, and as such it deserves commendation.

K.M.

MAN AND AUTOMATION. By L. Landon Goodman. (Penguin Books; 3s. 6d.)

This is perhaps the most thorough of the popular accounts of automation that have been published recently. It is in some ways too thorough: we are harassed with unnecessary information, as, for example, that the punched tape used with computers is 0.004 of an inch thick. Amidst so much detail occasional flaws can hardly be avoided. Thus we are told that digital computers are completely self-checking, although this is true only of the largest machines such as Univac. And could any computer simulate aerial combat 'so that the operators of the computer are presented with a complete picture of what would happen if the chase were actually taking place' (p. 64)?

But these blemishes do not detract from the book's two great merits: we are allowed to examine the social aspects of automation only after first studying the technical matters involved; and we are then rewarded with a remarkably sane and balanced discussion of human problems which this country has yet to face.

MICHAEL HOSKIN