

sixty 'martyrs'—notably the sixteen canons of Walsingham who gave their lives under Henry VIII—whose history awaits investigation; and the canonesses—who do not come within the scope of Mr Dickinson's book—have survived, maintaining their continuity unbroken). Yet these very weaknesses, as some may think them to be, seem to reflect the broad comprehensive spirit of St Augustine's Rule, and they certainly have made for a wide and most beneficial diversity of activities within the order, which can thus offer something to attract most temperaments. The essence of the canonical ideal is the combining of the clerical state with the practice of the perfect common life, and any kind of ministerial work may be undertaken which is not destructive to this foundation. But they are charged in a special way with the carrying out of the sacred Liturgy.

DOM MICHAEL SEWELL, C.R.L.

POÉSIE ET VIE MYSTIQUE CHEZ SAINT JEAN DE LA CROIX. By Max Milner; preface by Jean Baruzi. (Aux éditions du Seuil, Paris; n.p.)

The point of the book is to elucidate the problem of St John of the Cross's sources. For thirty years critics have been unearthing scraps of poems, pastoral, popular, courtly, all of which can be found *vuelto a lo divino*, that is, 'turned to divine use' by the saint. The writer brings much of the evidence before us. At the same time he insists on the fundamental poetical originality of St John. It is a book, therefore for those specially interested in the literary side of the poems. M. Milner has done his work with readable scholarship.

I find it difficult to see why writers should boggle at St John writing poems. They remind us that he said, 'God is none of these things'. But, to put it very shortly, St John was not praying all the time any more than his apostolic namesake did.

The book ends with the texts of the Castillian poems on the left-hand page and a good literal French rendering on the right. Preceding each poem is a little introduction.

C. C-E.

THE ADORNMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL MARRIAGE AND OTHER WORKS.

By J. van Ruysbroek. Translated by C. A. Wynschenk Dom. Edited by Evelyn Underhill. (John M. Watkins; 12s. 6d.)

This translation first appeared in 1916. *The Adornment* was written by Ruysbroek soon after his abandonment of the world at the age of fifty. *The Sparkling Stone* and *The Book of Truth*, both included in this volume, were written later to explain certain points in his earlier works. All three works are classics, redolent of the calm, bright spirit of this well-known Flemish mystic.