

out the aid of revelations or ecstasies, relying only on the support of the Cross to climb with slow, painful steps, the path to Calvary. For most of us the way is the same, only we can't be bothered to come out of the rut and make the effort.

K.J.B.

IN SILENCE WITH GOD. By Benedict Baur, O.S.B. Translated by Elisabeth Corathiel-Nonan. (The Mercier Press; 12s. 6d.)

It may seem strange that a book which is meant to help the Christian to be perfect in himself and in all he does should be marred by so many imperfections. The paper cover is not very attractive, the print is small and closely packed, the number of misprints is remarkable. The translation, often enough, may read well when re-translated into German but not as it stands in English. 'In our natural state commandments do not sit easily upon us. . . .' (p. 146) is not the worst example. 'Unwisdom' (p. 139), 'unlovingness' (p. 152) and 'at-one-ment with God' are hardly successful neologisms. What to make of 'Brotherly love is the measuring rod of the standard we set . . .' (p. 131)? The difficulty of escaping the all-too-common failing of imperfect thought and expression is well illustrated by this description of our Lord on Calvary: 'How soiled . . . he stands before the pure eyes of the Father! Could he have taken upon himself greater ignominy than the sins of the whole humanity?—the sins of pride, of sensuality, of injustice and uncharitableness, of lewdness . . .' (p. 83). One is forced to use here '*pie exponere*' as a last resource. It is a pity that so much that is good and worthwhile in this book should be put together with less admirable material. In the preface the author professes to have followed the rule '*Nonum prematur in annum*'. It is to be regretted that others who helped to bring out this book failed to follow it.

C.V.

SAINTS AND THEIR ATTRIBUTES. By Helen Roeder. (Longmans Green; 15s.)

This is a book of reference by which the symbols of the saints, presented in alphabetic order, can be used to identify them in Christian art. There are also indexes of what symbols pertain to what saints, and of what they are patrons. To those who love to browse over the by-ways of things religious and artistic, there will be more satisfaction in this book than to the serious student whom the authoress envisages as using it, since the arrangement manages to be cumbrous, and accuracy is suspect when one finds St Francis de Sales describes as a Franciscan, St Thomas More included but not St John Fisher, SS. Firmin and Thomas of Cantelupe are given no attributes, though

appearing for the cities of which they are patrons. St John of Nepomuk appears under *Bridge* and is said to put his finger to his lips, but is not found under the latter heading as a symbol.

SILVESTER HUMPHRIES, O.P.

LISTEN, SISTER. By John E. Moffatt, S.J. (Mercier Press; 10s. 6d.)

Fifty little monologues full of insight here preserve, for nuns and all whom it may concern, spontaneous practical advice on how to be holy in a convent. It will be greatly enjoyed by those who appreciate that quiet world of feminine heroism which exists apart from the rest of us, in the souls of nuns, and is only seen by the world as in a glass darkly: the Sisters' outward life mirrors it, inevitably but faintly. Father Moffatt is at home in it. He must be outstandingly successful in giving conferences to nuns, especially about the 'little virtues'. Each of these fifty two-minute meditations throws a light on one or other of the little maxims of holiness which must govern and sustain daily life in the cloister. This is a book to give to any nun as a feast-day present. Its rare traces of half-childish femininity should be no deterrent even to the most mature and intelligent.

GERARD M. CORR, O.S.M.

MYSTERY AND MYSTICISM. A Symposium. (Blackfriars; 9s. 6d.)

This book which consists of six chapters of very different lengths was first published in French as a special issue of *La Vie Spirituelle*. One must first pay tribute to the unnamed translator or translators; the work is always smooth and readable without losing the flavour and idiom of the original French (except of course for Father Hislop's short chapter which has every appearance of being dressed in native costume). The purpose of the book is to clear up the confusion that exists about the popular notions of mysticism and mystery. Each has an authentic and a misapplied meaning: mysticism, for instance, is commonly taken to refer exclusively to peculiar religious phenomena such as ecstasies, and its more important meaning is overlooked, namely the discipline of mind and body which the Christian must employ in communicating with God. In his first sub-title to the first chapter Père Plé expresses it neatly, 'Of how access to the inaccessible is given to us'. It is hardly necessary to point out how important this matter is today. It has for some time been obvious that the slightly 'queer' notions attached to the word 'mysticism' have shut off from many of us a whole world of prayer and contemplation which we should never have lost. That sort of thing, we have supposed, is all out of the ordinary and has nothing to do with most Catholics. Nothing could be further from the truth. Yet because of this many Catholics have been left ignorant of many fundamental truths of their religion. For mysticism, in its true sense,