

and Cecily and their mother make fine contrasts—indeed, there is a lively variety of person throughout the book—and the mystical life of Lady Mary de Gifford tells something well worth hearing to those that have ears to hear. *When the Saints Slept* deserves a warm reception.

R.R.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL. By Paul Renaudon. Translated by Cecil Kerr. (Sands & Co. ; 2/6 net.)

It is a striking and universal fact in hagiology that the saints who have done any great work in the Church have done it chiefly by being saints. They used, more or less, the same means as other people for their ends, but with marvellously different results. To St. Vincent's organising genius, but far more to the power of his holiness, all classes of French Society owed their physical or moral betterment, from court and clergy to beggars and criminals. M. Renaudon says that through him 'a new spirit awoke throughout the land, forerunner of the political union of the nation,' and quotes a letter from the Governor of a French town, calling Vincent 'the Father of our country.'

Theologians teach that the mystical life, which is the full flowering of the Christian life, is characterised by a certain passivity. Those who have attained to it act less on their own initiative than under the direct guidance of the Holy Ghost, Who moves them through those Seven Gifts under which Scripture and Theology have classified His manifold workings in souls. In contemplatives, the Gifts more immediately concerned with contemplation predominate; while those leading lives of outward activity are especially under the influence of the Gifts bearing more particularly on the practical, such as the Gift of Counsel. St. Vincent's own words are an illustration of this. He told the Priests of the Mission that the Congregation he had founded seemed to him like a dream: 'All these rules and the rest . . . have come about I know not how. For I never thought of it, and it has all happened bit by bit without its being possible to say who has been the cause.' And again: 'How can it be said that I founded the Daughters of Charity? I had no such thought, nor Mlle. le Gras . . .'

The occasional rare jars in the translation come with more of a shock because it is, generally speaking, so good. A few of the illustrations add to the interest of the book, but most of them seem to belong to the eighteenth century—that age of ugliness in the history of art, and we would gladly have been spared them.

M.B.