

it—fortunately for them, since the spiritual care of the rest of the island, once in their hands, was, somewhat arbitrarily, taken away from them and handed over to the Capuchins. But even these, in their turn, acquired considerable property in St George's district: missions cannot be run without money.

Again, on page 184, the authors reproduce a quotation from a Governor of Trinidad which, to the ordinary reader, will be quite unintelligible. Governor Woodford did not approve of the way in which a certain Methodist preacher had been dealing with the slaves, attempting to turn them into preachers, and he said so in a letter addressed, presumably, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Then he concluded his remarks with these words: 'Let me entreat you to do what you can about a Bishop for us'. But what bishop, and for whom? On this page and the following the authors lump all 'missionaries' indiscriminately together. Not so this Protestant Governor of Trinidad to whom the Catholics of that Colony are very largely indebted for their cathedral in Port-of-Spain. I should not be surprised to learn that it was for a Catholic Bishop that Woodford was appealing; and actually in 1819 the Right Rev. James Buckley was appointed. If the matter was indeed worth mentioning, might it not have been elucidated?

On page 187 I notice that James Stephen is lauded as 'most upright and conscientious of public servants'. In Grenada, at all events, if there were any memory at all of this Crown Lawyer, it would be execrated—as further reading in the history of that island would have revealed.

These are but blemishes, and perhaps arguable ones at that; so it gives me great pleasure to say in conclusion that this book, into which the fruits of so much solid work and scholarship have been packed, is worth a great deal more than eighteen shillings.

RAYMUND P. DEVAS, O.P.

ARBELLA STUART. By P. M. Handover. (Eyre and Spottiswoode; 30s.)

In spite of the vanished letter, this is still poor Arabella Stuart, 'Royal Lady of Hardwick and Cousin to King James', as the sub-title describes her. The new spelling is unquestionably right, but something of the romance of her name vanishes in the change.

Was there ever in all English history a more unfortunate woman than Arbella Stuart? Well do the words of Shakespeare's sad Richard II apply to her: 'tell thou the lamentable tale of me, and send the hearers weeping to their beds'. Arbella's 'lamentable tale' is told superbly and movingly by Miss Handover. Skilfully, devastatingly, Miss Handover dissects the characters who ruined Arbella's life. Her feminine shrewdness, supported by her immense knowledge, unmasks the rascals and rogues who played with the life of this potential successor of Elizabeth I.

'Poor Arbella' is a just epitaph for the unhappy niece of the Queen of Scots, for she, like her aunt, was the victim of ruthless schemers playing for the highest stakes: Bess of Hardwick, Arbella's grandmother, like an English Catherine de Medici plugging the life of Mary and, later, of her own grandchild; James of Scotland, who preferred a foreign crown to his mother's life; the hunchback Robert Cecil weaving his plots to achieve still greater domination. Such as these made Arbella wretched, but time takes its revenge when at last the truth is told, as it is so convincingly in Miss Handover's masterly biography of the unfortunate lady.

KIERAN MULVEY, O.P.

MADAME ELISABETH. By Maurice de la Fuye and Emile Albert Babeau. (Lethielleux; 950 ffs.)

The French Revolution seen through the eyes of one of its principal royal victims cannot fail to make a deep impression. Madame Elisabeth, the sister of Louis XVI, was not a passive witness of the national resentment which overwhelmed and finally destroyed the ancient monarchy. Her pen was active, describing in many letters the momentous events in which, unexpectedly, she was forced to play a prominent rôle.

Madame Elisabeth's letters are an important source for the historian of the French Revolution, as is made clear by MM. Maurice de la Fuye and Emile Albert Babeau in their magisterial presentation of her life. She is important, too, from the religious point of view. Deeply disturbed though she was by the diminution of the royal prerogative, the saintly young woman was even more distressed by the crippling attack on the Church. Though Madame Elisabeth's counter-efforts and sisterly advice were in vain, her angelic serenity sustained Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette in the agonizing conditions that followed the collapse of the royal power.

Louis XVI suffered for the faults of his immediate predecessors. The humiliation of his family, the odious treatment of the Dauphin, the execution of his wife and sister, were, as the authors say, 'un crime sans pardon'. Among the innocent victims of the Terror, Elisabeth-Marie de France is outstanding in her nobility and resignation. The cause for her beatification has been introduced in Rome. Few, surely, would dispute the assertion of the authors that 'her virtues, her unswerving loyalty to the Church, her truly Christian and heroic death, crowning a life consecrated to the defence of the faith and the practice of charity have won universal admiration for this noble princess'.

KIERAN MULVEY, O.P.