

all things which the good *curé* would deplore. It is only fifteen years since Fr Lamy died and it would seem that once again we have manifest evidence of the intimate workings of the supernatural in the ordinary life of the Church.

DAMIAN MAGRATH, O.P.

THE FLIGHT AND THE SONG. By S. M. C. and L. M. ANDERSON.
(Chatto and Windus; 6s.)

This skilfully contrived tale of the Dissolution of the Monasteries in Devon recreates more effectively than many historical tomes the sufferings and endurance of the unhappy victims of Henry VIII's religious innovations. And in Robin Hackworthy, the reputed changeling, who is more reminiscent of Francis of Assisi than of Robin Goodfellow, S. M. C. has created an enchanting character, worthy successor of Brother Petroc. His simplicity, his deep appreciation of the loveliness in nature and his worship of God in poetic outburst counterbalance the grimness of the sufferings of the ejected Religious. Although Robin, whom even his kinsfolk suspected of being a faery-child, dominates the story, there are several outstanding characters. The general picture of village and monastic life in Devon on the eve of, and during, the Dissolution of the Monasteries is effective and, as in S. M. C.'s previous novels, many vignettes, such as the wedding procession of the Lady Margaret Howard, a meeting of a Stannary Parliament at Crockern Tor, and the pillaging of Buckfast, are particularly telling.

There is, as one would expect from the author of *Brother Petroc's Return*, a vivid account of medieval religious life, in the Cistercian Abbey of Buckfast, where Robin's nephew, John Hackworthy, became a monk, and in the Cannonsleigh Priory of Augustinian Canonesses, where Lizz Brownrigg of Robin's village became Sister Elizabeth. Around these two, each a rugged and forceful character, is centred the account of the loss of their religious homes. Even to those well-learned in this period of history, this account of the destruction of the monasteries will give a fuller realisation of the sufferings it involved for those who remained faithful to their vows.

The poetic title of the novel is not misleading for there is, as already indicated, a gracious relief in the poetic outpourings of the faery-like Robin who found in the strange Hermit of Mis Tor a friend who loved God and could rejoice in his songs of the loveliness of God's creatures. One hopes that this novel will have as wide a public as 'Brother Petroc' and that many will listen to Robin singing 'The song of the Maker of Heaven and earth'.

K. M.

LETTERS FROM RUSH GREEN. By John C. Heenan. (Burns Oates; 8s. 6d.)

It has often been remarked that in these hectic days we have lost the art of letter-writing, as, for instance, it was practised in the eighteenth century. And how tiresome a lengthy letter can be when one is occupied with many things. Father Joseph Sinclair, the

letter-writer in this 'intellectual drama with three central characters', indulges in very lengthy letters. Unlike the gossipy letters of Horace Walpole or the informative letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, they are not always easy to read. Of course, their content is very different, for it covers the vast range of apologetics.

The letters are addressed to a niece who finds it necessary to explain the Catholic Faith to her pagan boy friend. Her appeal to her priest-uncle provokes lengthy expositions of the familiar apologetic, along with, no doubt for verisimilitude, a certain amount of avuncular advice and parochial gossip. There is much valuable information in the letters but one wonders if this fictionalised letter-writing is quite the best medium for presenting it.

The reader who shares the inquiring niece's patience will learn much that should lead to a fuller appreciation of the Faith and which should be helpful in discussions with non-Catholics. K. M.

THE CANONESSES OF ST AUGUSTINE OF THE LATERAN-WINDESHEIM CONGREGATION. (Our Lady's Priory, Haywards Heath; 1s.)

This is a short, well-written and illustrated account of the origin and spirit of the Canonesses, who now live and offer their praise to God in the well-appointed Priory at Haywards Heath. It is meant to supply for the fuller account included in a larger work, *A Link between the Flemish Mystics and the English Martyrs*, unfortunately now unobtainable. The Priory is indeed a very important link between the life of the old Regular Canons and Canonesses, who go back to before St Augustine, and Gerard Groote, St Thomas More, Louvain and Bruges. The spirit of the 'Brethren of the Common Life' continues in this Priory to bring grace upon our land. C. P.