

and as the definition of the Immaculate Conception brought forth Ullathorne's little classic on the subject, so, it is to be hoped, an English theologian will write something clear and cogent on our Lady's Assumption.

J.D.C.

WATERS OF SILENCE. By Thomas Merton. (Hollis and Carter; 15s.)
 BURNT OUT INCENSE. By M. Raymond, o.c.s.o. (Clonmore and Reynolds; 15s.)

Waters of Silence is an attractive, rather than a profound, book. It moves on two levels, narrative and reflective, both essential to its aim, since it presents not only a short history of the Cistercian order, more particularly of the Reformed Cistercians in the United States, but an interpretation of that history in the light of the first Cîteaux and the spirituality of St Bernard and William of St Thierry. These Fr Merton re-creates in the first and second chapters, and sums up in the last. Between are a number of chapters of swift narrative, obvious but vivid, sometimes amusing, sometimes effectively moving; there are several faults in them, the same rather facile judgments on political and spiritual matters and persons that marred *Elected Silence*, an occasional lapse into mere chattiness; but they are perhaps only the excess of the honesty and simplicity which do so much to make the book attractive. The reflective passages are better, since they draw much of their matter from St Bernard; they are written for the most part in a dry deliberate style much more effective in conveying the meaning of contemplative life than any attempt at rhetoric would have been.

How unsuccessful rhetoric is, can be seen in Fr Raymond's Foreword. His book is, to use his own borrowed phrase, 'romanced history'; the history is that of Gethsemani from its foundation to the present day, and can also be found in chapters seven to twelve of *Waters of Silence*; the romance has a range of sentiment and depth of character-drawing hardly greater than that of a strip cartoon.

B.W.

ROME. By Edward Hutton. (Hollis & Carter; 16s.)
 ITALY REVISITED. By Charles Graves. (Hutchinson; 16s.)

Horace, who regretted the glittering things that the earth had hidden away and foretold their restoration to the sunlight, strikes the keynote of *Rome*. Mr Hutton's handling is Horatian—dignified, judicious, alive; and this is a forty-year-old book admirably refurbished and brought up-to-date. For the writer, as for the Roman, beauty is part of our moral nature. But Rome's prime art was government, and most of her show-pieces are of the nature of plunder. They are described

temple by temple, church by church, gallery by gallery—up to the latest newly-housed Pinacoteca with a portrait of George IV by Lawrence!

Purely Roman touches abound, however. Pope Gregory prays for the soul of Trajan; the Bambino of Aracoeli visits the sick in a ducal coach; and the polarity of Mussolini's Rome and the catacombs is tacitly emphasised in two adjacent chapters.

'There is much to be said for being an ex-enemy nation.' Mr Charles Graves, motoring from Paris to Amalfi (with a diversion to Trieste) and back by the Riviera, passes from one luxury hotel to another and puts in a creditable amount of intelligent sight-seeing between his meals. His values are not everybody's. There are pages on the flashy worlds of ancient Pompeii, modern Capri and D'Annunzio, 'to the Italians . . . a cross between a god and a saint'! Nothing, not even a passing tear, is left for Ravenna and the Campo Santo at Pisa.

Neither Mr Graves nor Mr Hutton (both lavish with illustrations) provides a single map.

H.P.E.

DIALOGUS DE SCACCARIO. (Text and Translation Edited by Charles Johnson. (Nelson's Medieval Classics; 15s.)

The choice of someone to translate and edit the *Dialogus de Scaccario* can surely have presented little difficulty to the editors of this excellent series of Medieval Classics. For the proceedings and personnel of the twelfth-century exchequer are as familiar to Mr Charles Johnson as are Hollywood adventures to most of his contemporaries; even their sensitiveness to misconduct on the part of the great ones has its counterpart in Mr Johnson's feeling for the undercurrents of twelfth-century life, witness his footnote (p. 39) on the misdeeds of Philip Aymar and his associates. One's regret that so few exercise their sensitiveness in the way that he does is deepened as one reads through his clear, unpretentious translation, and follows up the careful footnotes on scripture, theology, medieval logic, and the detailed entries in the Pipe Rolls. For those whose first readings in the *Dialogus* were made under the pressure of imminent 'schools' this leisurely insistence upon minute points of scholarship will afford a special delight—more so because this volume also contains forty pages of introduction, the text and translation of the *Constitutio Domus Regis*, and a very full index, as well as illustrations of tallies and the use of the abacus. It is a sign that good things persist when a work of such scholarship is specially directed towards the needs of the general public.

D.N.