

having 'shortened Dr Schamoni's introduction, . . . embodied notes he added at the volume's end in the body of the English edition and substituted in some instances saints of the Western Hemisphere for European saints.' But few would willingly forgo the haunting evocation of St Rose of Lima painted when she lay dead.

The attribution of the title 'Seraphic Doctor' to St Francis can scarcely be imputed to the learned author. Perhaps the compositor is to be thanked for the 'ascension (*sic*) of Henry VIII' (p. 118) and 'the Order of the Mostly (*sic*) Holy Redeemer' (p. 250). 'Preacher-Monk' (p. 102) and 'minor brothers' (p. 112) are novel variations on the hoary confusion (*passim*) between monk, friar and religious.

May a second edition freed from such blemishes and more amply documented be a first step towards the realisation of the author's hope that 'this collection may be completed by the inclusion of individual portraits that for some reason or other could not be obtained', and of others as yet 'undiscovered for the great community of the faithful and for the world of unbelievers'.

Place might have been found in the English edition for the portrait of Bl. Oliver Plunket, painted in prison and preserved near his shrine at Downside Abbey. Might not a similar volume of as many true portraits as may be extant help to quicken devotion to our English martyrs?

DESMOND CHUTE.

THE IDOL AND THE SHRINE, being the story of Maurice de Guérin, with extracts from the Journal of Eugénie de Guérin, presented by Naomi Royde Smith. (Hollis and Carter; 15s.0d.)

When Eugénie de Guérin's Journal appeared in a private edition in 1855 it aroused immense enthusiasm among critics, who did not hesitate to compare it with the *Confessions* of St Augustine and the *Pensées* of Pascal. Several years later the public edition was at once a popular success. Eight editions appeared in two years, and the book was translated into several languages. The *Journal* consisted of letters addressed by Eugénie to her brother Maurice, who died in 1839 when only twenty-nine years of age. He had already earned the approval of Georges Sand and Sainte-Beuve for his poetry, and his prose-poem *Le Centaure* remains as proof of his genius—undeveloped indeed, but yet authentic.

Thus it was that Maurice himself was eclipsed by his sister, whose book (never intended for publication: *C'est pour un*, she insists) was wholly devoted to him. It was a strange irony, and Miss Royde Smith has had the excellent idea of re-adjusting the balance of their reputations. She begins with a short biography of Maurice, the son of a substantial family of landowners in Languedoc who went to Paris, became the pupil of Lamennais, lost the Catholic faith which had been the centre of his family's life, married, and came home to die a few months after. There follows a translation of his sister's Journal, kept over eight years, and continued even after Maurice's death, so great was Eugénie's devo-

tion to her brother—or, one might say, so uncontrolled was her obsession.

It is easy to see why the *Journal* made so profound an impression on its generation. It is a faithful, and often a charming, reflection of French provincial life. Here is an ordered way of life, in which nothing happens but in which the small pieties of home and village and parish church are meticulously recorded. But it is all for Maurice, and the possessive egoism of Eugénie finds a divinely intended purpose in her advice, her hints, her hopes and fears. This is not to deny the substantial worth of much of her spiritual reflection, but a knowledge of Maurice's life and Eugénie's share in shaping it must often modify our appreciation. 'Do you remember how once, when I was telling you how unhappy your loss of faith made me, I compared myself with Monica weeping for Augustine?' Maurice did, in fact, return to the Faith he had lost under the impact of his life in Paris and of his association with Lamennais. But one cannot avoid thinking that for Eugénie it was a personal triumph. The spiritual life is not exempt from the loyalties and demands of human attachment: it ought to be, but the process of purification is long, and the possibility of self-deception is never far away.

Miss Royde Smith's presentation of this strange story is what one would expect of an artist of her experience and sureness of judgment. She points no moral: there is no need. And when one has made allowances for the pull of jealousy and a sad lack of proportion, there remains a great deal in the *Journal* to justify its resurrection.

ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.

THE CLOWN'S GRAIL. A Study of Love in its Literary Expression.

By Wallace Fowlie. (Dennis Dobson; 8s.6d.)

This is a hard book to review, and even to read, if reading implies discovering what precisely a writer is saying and why. Mr Fowlie does not, evidently, write for people who want each term explained and each judgment justified. If he has nevertheless written a most interesting and even enlightening book, I must add that I have certainly not been enlightened by all of it, because a good deal of it I just do not understand. Yet I am sure that this is a genuine and deeply meditated work, well worth reading and re-reading for the glimpses it affords of the inner life of our times.

I have read only two of Mr Fowlie's other books, but I doubt whether he has written anything so complex and venturesome as this. He is an ambitious writer. His calmly 'prophetic' style—not in the 'fore-telling' but in the 'far-seeing' sense of this term (cf. S.T. II-II, 171.1)—reflects an implicit claim to have understood pretty deeply his profound theme. Having read him with both admiration and bewilderment, I feel fairly sure that his is no ordinary mind, but sure also that he would prove a trying pupil for professors of the stricter philosophy, or even of English compo-