

is inescapable from the whole context of the last part of the play, but initiation into what? Firstly into the number of those set free by recognition, through suffering, of the necessity of evil. Secondly, into a life of ascetic discipline in expiation of necessary evil. Thirdly into the spiritual exaltation of a passion which, for this life, has renounced its object. Harry's symbolic act is to go out into the darkness. Agatha and Mary, priestess and initiate of the passion which has triumphed, perform a rite of exorcism,

' So the knot be unknotted
The crossed be uncrossed
The crooked be made straight
And the curse be ended,'

which ends, after the blowing out of the last candle, in darkness. So to trace back romantic passion, Denis de Rougemont has shown (in his recent book, *L'Amour et l'Occident*), is to reduce it to Manichean, not Christian, origins.

BERNARD KELLY, T.O.S.D.

THE LAWLESS ROADS. By Graham Greene. (Longmans; 10s. 6d.)

It is the unique distinction of *Lawless Roads* that it could be reviewed either as a travel book on Mexico or as a treatise *De Ecclesia*. As an account of Mexico in the spring of 1938 it will remain integrally alive. Mr. Greene has travelled from Laredo as far south as Palenque and conveys poignantly an atmosphere of fly-blown squalor. There are vignettes more difficult to forget than any in his book upon Liberia; the begging upon Hui-chapan station, the small zoo, the booth at San Antonia. But, like most contemporary phenomena, Mexican politicians might grow more intelligible if set against their nineteenth century background and the historical as well as the psychological causes of Latin-American anti-clericalism might seem to demand a more detailed recognition. It is possible to feel that Mr. Greene has an insufficient sympathy for the mentality of a Garrida Cannibal. His white is always convincingly piebald, his black at times too black.

But as a study of Catholicism it is complete. The Church in *Lawless Roads* is a living Church, the fulfilment of the purpose of the Incarnation, a linking of the human and of the Divine. In it the human stays completely human. But the smug pettiness of so much human action ceases to be only smug or merely petty through the contrast of an eternal standard. At

last analysis *The Lawless Roads* find their motif in the cataclysm of the impact of the supernatural and in the swaying tension between the life of grace and a human norm. It is a concrete presentation; the 'whiskey priest' in Chiapas, the Christero raid, the mass house at Las Casas, the confessional. But perhaps no other book in English has come so close to the essential spirit of Catholicism.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

CHOSEN RACES. By Margaret Sothern. Translated by Maisie Ward. (Sheed and Ward; 8s. 6d.)

In this novel Miss Sothern has reduced Nazism for us from abstract political theories and newspaper reports to a vital system dominating and shaping the lives of its victims.

Throughout the book it overshadows like a vague, but real and inescapable evil, the actions and reactions of every character. Not only do the Jews and practising Christians suffer persecution and oppression, but the Nazi youth itself is brutalised and debased.

The author brings into her story the ordinary people of Germany. Some, like the vile Schorsch, glory in the new animal freedom; others like Liselotte the girl student, assume a hard and metallic manner to protect themselves in a world that has become empty of real values. Others again, like the middle-class elderly folk, are shown to have become neurotic and obsessed, while the sadistically inclined find ample scope in the official ranks of Nazidom to practise a domineering cruelty.

But the real theme of the book lies in the love and sufferings of Frida, the Aryan girl, and Alfred the Jew. Frida, sister of Liselotte, comes from a middle-class home, and is typically bourgeois in character with a sense of poetry and a pity for helpless things. Alfred Rosenthal, a young Jewish astronomer who has been expelled from his post at a university on account of his race, has a beautiful and cultured mother and a tenderhearted father. The impact on each other of these two, so entirely different characters, under the prevailing persecution, is of intense interest. The man is above the average in intellect and his capacity for suffering and sacrifice is boundless. He is the type who can say to the priest, who diffidently begins to talk of miracles, 'I am accustomed to bow before the sublimity of mystery.' (In spite of this, however, his virtual conversion to Christianity is not very convincingly portrayed.) Frida is more limited, and in her dreadful fear when a half Jewish child is to be born of her, shows a selfishness and small-