

*Wales*, by E. G. Bowen, published by the same Press only a short while previously, this book should furnish further clues as to the provenance and cultus of the Celtic saints in Wales and fill in the picture already presented by Professor Bowen. Oversights in a detailed survey of this sort are no doubt inevitable. For instance, the author omits to classify the well of St Ishow at Parrishow in Breconshire as a rag well, yet I myself saw the bush above it liberally bedecked with these relics only a few years ago. It is a pity that the survey does not overstep the present political boundary of Wales into the border counties, but this is something we may hope the author will remedy at a later date.

There is perhaps some needless mystification in the statement that in considering holy wells 'we are face to face with living forms of the oldest, lowest, most primitive religion in the world . . . which, crouching close to the earth, lets other creeds blow over it and outlives them one and all', but it is only fair to the author to say that these are not his own words, though quoted by him, and that, on the whole, he seems to have avoided the esoteric in his treatment of the subject. Such mystification is unnecessary, for we are already aware that the element of water, by its very nature, attracts to itself a sacramental and cleansing significance in all ages and in all religions. It is easy to understand how, for many, the water of wells and fountains has appeared to have a life of its own, and he who has had the good fortune to read Belloc's *Four Men* will learn there (if he has not learnt already) the compulsion which has caused men to worship streams and their sources.

R. WYNNE

FRANCIS TREGIAN. By P. A. Boyan and G. R. Lamb. (Sheed and Ward; 12s. 6d.)

Francis Tregian was the gentleman in whose house Cuthbert Mayne was arrested by Richard Grenville, and who suffered for his harbouring of the priest by loss of lands and thirty years of imprisonment. After his release he retired to Lisbon, and has left behind him there some partially-sensed aura of holiness. Interesting things happened after his death. There was some considerable cult, which has apparently revived quite recently. His son Francis, committed to the Fleet some fourteen years after his father left it, spent his time in making the great, indeed the priceless, collection of music known to us as the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, though in fact there are two more 'volumes' to his work, one in the British Museum and the other in New York. We are, then, right in the middle of history; not only the simple story of one devoted priest's martyrdom, but the whole bizarre life of the age, with its juxtaposition of court sycophancy and country estate; of hideous death and long years in prison during which

one lived a more or less normal life with wife and family; of violence and music and poetry. The book itself is a pleasant one, with some good illustrations, and straightforwardly written; though there is a certain fumbling quality about the style which suggests that the effect desired has not always been achieved. Certainly, in one place, the authors have marred one of the impressive moments in English history. When Richard Grenville broke in on Cuthbert Mayne and seized him by the doublet, crying: 'What art thou?' there *was* an answer. Cuthbert Mayne said: 'I am a man.' Also, the child of Cornwall—if he has any sense of humour—is getting a little weary of the sort of romance expressed in the first two introductory pages.

RACHEL ATTWATER

THE PILGRIMAGE. By Francis Stuart. (Gollancz; 12s. 6d.)

THE SAME SCOURGE. By John Goldthorpe. (Longmans; 12s. 6d.)

*The Pilgrimage* is a highly complex novel about faith and disbelief; it is also an extremely confusing one. The faith of a provincial Breton Bishop is attacked by terrible doubts which, in turn, are historically implemented by the discovery of papyrus that discredits the validity of the Empty Sepulchre. Chaton, a young girl, who sees in the bishop the perfection of her unknown father—both temporal and spiritual—is the illegitimate daughter of his housekeeper, a raffish unhappy mother who realizes that her child is dying of a hereditary germ of syphilis in the blood which has led to a tumour on the brain. These are the two chief protagonists of Mr Stuart's theme. The bishop leads a pilgrimage of children to Lourdes and, while he is away visiting the Holy Father, Chaton is raped by a cripple boy; when his lordship next sees her and is faced with such lust and perfidy, his faith falters. Now he feels that he must dedicate his entire life to her. Finally it is she—bruised and unbalanced—who says 'let us return to Torlaix', his Breton diocese.

There is a great cosmopolitan quality about the writing which is also in the great tradition. Mr Stuart would seem to owe as much to Dostoevski as to Colette. Yet, architecturally the book remains weak. Boldness and artistry have built spire and triforium, but provided no means of ascent. So, wandering in the nave, there remain only the side chapels; and there, in compensation as it seems, Mr Stuart helps the mind to conjure pictures by Tiepolo: '[The bishop] used to be able to come here with his fears and kneel at the foot of the cross. He would see the crucified hand that had been busy in common tasks, an ordinary, brown hand, but sure too, sure in its healing touch, like the hand of a great artist, holding the head of the nail in its bloody palm.'

*The Same Scourge* falls into the same category of books like *The Robe*,