

Correspondence

fore, "horror of the introduction of Catholic priests and emissaries into their towns seems to me the most rational feeling in the world."

But then Newman, still in his Anglican tradition, wrote : "At the time of the Council of Trent, it is to be feared the whole Roman Communion was bound by perpetual bond to Antichrist."

Some people's brain-storms pass clear away ; and a complete cure is arrived at by some victims of nervous disorders.

W. F. P. STOCKLEY.

DANTE'S MYSTIC LOVE

SIR,

The reviewer of *Dante's Mystic Love*, while extremely appreciative of the book, is distinctly hard on his *confrères*, the other critics. There is, of course, no end to theories about Dante, and meanings read out of or into his text. Is not that all the more reason for taking them cautiously ? Must we accept huge assumptions because they are well meant ? Is it "pedantic," for instance, to object when the lines of a sonnet, excluded from the Oxford Dante and held by Fraticelli to be spurious, are given as authentic because "*we may suppose* Rossetti had fairly good reasons for attributing them to Dante" ? Is it "meticulous" to demand some better support for the contention that extraordinary mystical favours were conferred on Dante *at his baptism* than Purg. XXX, 109 ff. ? In this passage Beatrice rebukes the repentant Dante with the misuse of the great natural powers and spiritual graces rained down on him in his *vita nuova*.

The reviewer takes up a very serious position when he implies that the critical faculty is incompatible with spiritual appreciation : Dante's breadth and power and deep spirituality are all the more evident from the most scholarly study, as the centenary celebrations have proved. And surely "the mind in act pursues the finality whom we call God" when it cultivates accuracy and balance of judgment ?

Yours faithfully,

MARY RYAN.