

and terrible duel that they now fought on this issue. Abelard is here at his finest and greatest. As far as can be known from the evidence of the letters, Heloïse allowed herself to be silenced but would retract nothing of her bitter complaint. 'Deo specialiter, sua singulariter,' is her only ironic concession. (For which M. Gilson adopts the rendering: 'A Dieu par l'espèce, a lui comme individu.') Abelard had mastered the worst that was in him; it might appear that Heloïse had fallen a victim to the best that was in her. This is not the author's final conclusion. His criticism goes deeper than that.

Finally, M. Gilson adduces certain features of this history as evidence with which to refute the conventional historian's estimate of the relative cultural achievement of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; and two essays of an older date are added as appendices in which his counter-thesis is more widely developed. It is matter of very considerable importance. The conclusions seem irresistible, the expositional method is brilliantly informative. There is a very revealing cross-questioning of Luther and Erasmus. Of an Erasmus it is admitted that he was possessed of a certain valuable historical sense in which the mediævals were largely lacking. An Aquinas was perhaps too preoccupied in assimilating the thought of Aristotle to be interested in the man for his own sake or in his writings as personal or literary records. But what Erasmus gained was far more than offset by his losing what Aquinas had possessed—for that was to lose a hold on the first principles of any sound humanism. Thus for Erasmus the classics were valuable chiefly for their style and their story; Plato and Aristotle were for him only great characters or figures. Accordingly it was as rationalists, 'naturalists,' who had dared to incorporate pagan thought into their Christian synthesis that—in alliance here with Luther—he marked out the mediæval scholastics for condemnation. He held that a Christian mind must be fed exclusively on the Gospel, the Pure (*i.e.* the historical) Gospel. The most fatally easy way to misjudge this whole present question is to take the quarrel between Erasmus and the philistine scholastics of his own day as being representative of the line of cleavage between the mediæval and the Renaissance cultures.

RICHARD KEHOE, O.P.

THE JACOBAN AGE. By David Mathew. (Longmans; 15s.)

The author has demonstrated in this as in all his previous works a wonderful gift for picturing character, and supplying the correct atmosphere of the period under survey. I use the

word gift when I should probably be more correct in employing the word accuracy. Dr. Mathew's success is mostly due to an immense industry and a proper sense of values. This is particularly evident in the work under review, as instance the pains taken to give a full estimate of James I, in treating of whom so many writers have played 'follow my leader.' To know that the king who frankly disliked the sight of a sword was nevertheless a keen huntsman is undoubtedly a newly added insight into his character; and Dr. Mathew rightly states that the king 'was sagacious, deep and impenetrable, but he was also eminently safe. His theological interests were of a character to lull the suspicions of all those who were politically significant.'

What is not so generally recognized is the strength of the 'politically significant' at this period; and this the author impresses upon us. 'This matter of the immense strength of the social hierarchy is very seldom fully realized. The cry against the "new men" which had a certain actuality in the days of the Pilgrimage of Grace had come by the good years of the seventeenth century to be merely a tribute to the desirability of high position. The English ruling classes have nearly always been lateral in their emphasis; that is to say that it is the high connections rather than the ancestry that has counted. In the reign of James I the Tudor peerage was fully established; they had great transmitted wealth and the lustre of Elizabethan sovereignty. It was only in the nineteenth century that men began to concern themselves about the Plantagenets' (p. 61). This fact is also admirably set forth in the close study of Sir Robert Cecil, and in this section of the book the all-powerful minister moves between court and home a rather different figure than one usually imagines. But that is always the case when an historical personage is studied adequately. It is of value to learn that Cecil 'had too great a sense of property to be fanatical, and he stood for the continuity of a governing class. It was possibly a result of this that he was at times prepared to aid Catholic recusants, if by so doing he could perform a service to his colleagues.'

A very interesting description of Archbishop Abbot is given with his likeness depicted in a full-page illustration from the National Portrait Gallery. If the picture were lost, much of Abbot's appearance would remain in Dr. Mathew's word-guide to it, 'the great billowing sleeves; the small determined hands, the right resting upon a Bible; the chair with the deep embroidery on the red velvet; the cared-for whitening beard; the

prelate's atmosphere of long-accustomed dignity, very taut and amenable. The face is drained and white with the effect of a transparent marble faintly flushed, and there is a little sensual mouth which humanizes his too-composed figure. Thus Dr. Abbot sat at Lambeth' (p. 95). A little higher up on the same page we read: 'Personally he was a little gloomy; full of kindness; unascetic; a divine of manifest integrity with that consciousness of right which was found so often in his school of thought. It is said that he was not ambitious, but he could not divest himself of his instinctive knowledge of each rung on the ladder of success.' I wish Dr. Mathew, whilst mentioning the unfortunate accident in which a keeper was killed by the archbishop's misdirected shot when out hunting in Bramshill Park, had given a little account of the grave concern this caused in the English Church from a point of view of Canon Law. Lingard makes very interesting reading of this episode and its aftermath.

A reviewer would willingly linger in the many pleasant places in this delightful work. Suffice it to say that we are very much in the author's debt for a contribution to English History of so great value and unwonted charm. WALTER GUMBLEY, O.P.

FROM UNION SQUARE TO ROME. By Dorothy Day. (Preservation of the Faith; \$1.50.)

There is something specially revealing about a book that is not merely dedicated but is, from beginning to end, addressed to a person: just as a volume of letters will speak to the soul more than a whole shelf of biography. This story of the conversion of the editor of the American *Catholic Worker* is all the more moving because it is addressed to the writer's own brother, a Communist sharing the same beliefs that she herself had accepted so generously. Through him she speaks to those many others who are ready to give their lives for an ideal, but who have not yet found its fulfilment in Him who said to the crowds, 'Come to Me all you that labour,' and whose earliest followers had 'all things in common.'

This book is not so much an autobiography as a succession of 'glimpses of God,' found through joy and thanksgiving. 'I found Him through His poor, and in a moment of joy I turned to Him. I have said, sometimes flippantly, that the mass of bourgeois smug Christians who denied Christ in His poor made me turn to Communism, and that it was the Communists and working with them that made me turn to God . . . I know now that the Catholic Church is the church of the poor.'