

and a realisation that those decisions would probably prove to be a choice of evils. Abraham Lincoln had a profound knowledge of men and an equally profound compassion for them. We feel in this book the loneliness of the great President as he sat, surrounded by very ordinary politicians, and had to take decisions which would bring death to many thousands, with suffering to millions, in order to maintain, what he believed his duty to maintain, the unity of a nation.

P.F.

THE RECONSTRUCTED CARMELITE MISSAL. By Margaret Rickert. (Faber and Faber; 70s.)

It had long been known that British Museum Add. MSS 29704-29705 consisted of two scrap-books of medieval manuscript illuminations, that these had been made in London sometime between 1827 and 1833 by members of the Hanrott family and that the de luxe MSS of the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century had been mutilated to form them. The miniatures, though clearly by different hands, were uniformly accomplished, some seem clearly of English provenance, others seem to have closer affiliations with the Netherlands. In all over 1,600 fragments had been mounted in the scrap-books. It seemed likely that the mounting had been the work of children. In 1937 the British Museum acquired a second scrap-book made by a Miss Helen Hanrott in 1828.

Miss Rickert has attempted to reconstruct the source of these three scrap-books. She holds that all three were compiled from a single manuscript and that this was half a missal and consisted of the summer portion of the *Temporale*, the Prefaces and Canon, the *Sanctorale* and *Commune Sanctorum*. She believes it possible to establish that this Missal was of the Carmelite use and was probably written at London Whitefriars before 1391 and illuminated before 1398.

It is convenient that Dr Rickert should state her conclusions at the beginning of her volume and it is only natural that students who have themselves been baffled by the complexities of manuscript research should at first be sceptical of them. It would seem inherently improbable that the illumination should come from a single MS; the styles are often in vivid contrast, there are discrepancies in the representation of armour, secular dress and religious habit; the two earliest references we possess state that the scrap-books were compiled from 'ancient manuscripts', 'ancient service books'. Again, it would seem particularly hazardous to reconstruct an English Carmelite missal of the reign of Richard II since we know so little of the English Carmelite use. It is still harder to do so in the case of a missal used by a London Community, for that would almost certainly have been affected by the London use and we know very little of what the London use was like a generation before the introduction of Sarum.

Yet though these improbabilities and difficulties remain, Dr Rickert

would seem to have provided the only hypothesis that will suit all the fragmentary data. The present reviewer at least was convinced before the end of the volume by her careful and meticulously detailed argumentation.

There are only two elements in her analysis with which I would still be ready to disagree: the emphasis upon national characteristics in style and five of her doctrinal interpretations. It was easier fifteen years ago to use such phrases as 'Bohemian influence' with some degree of assurance. Much recent research has tended to emphasise the essentially cosmopolitan character of the international court art of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century and her own volume provides further evidence of this. Again, a group of Dr Rickert's interpretations presuppose that at the height of the Lollard controversies the London Whitefriars, then a vociferous stronghold of strict orthodoxy, not only employed an expensive illuminator of heterodox leanings but allowed unorthodox illustrations to survive in what must have been one of the most sumptuous of their liturgical books. The evidence does not warrant so improbable a conclusion.

Dr Rickert writes (p. 50) of the two Carmelites in the Corpus Christi miniature 'whose lolling attitudes and impious expressions seem to exemplify something of Wyclif's own vituperation against the friars'. This is surely to misinterpret the late medieval zest for the grotesque. Again on the following page the author notes that there is 'likewise something unorthodox' in the Ascension miniature, but this only consists of the detail that Christ is shown seated on the right hand of the Father. Nor was there anything to offend Medieval Catholic sentiment in the representation of the Coronation of the Virgin by the Trinity instead of by Christ.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

CHRIST IN DACHAU (Oxford; Newman Bookshop, 3s.) is the second volume of the 'Stag Series' of paper-bound books due to the enterprise of the Newman Bookshop at Oxford. It is moving anthology of Christian fortitude under persecution, and is a reminder to short memories of the immense martyrdom of the Nazi concentration-camps. This heroic record of the sufferings of men and women of our own generation, united in an invincible faith and charity, should be widely known. It is a document whose value will never grow less, with its central theme that 'mercilessness can only be overcome by mercy, hatred by love'.