

Mr. Belloc gets away with much, however, because of his obvious joy in his task, a joy in which his reader cannot but participate.

J. McNAMARA.

MISCELLANEOUS

ESSAYS IN THE CONCILIAR EPOCH. By E. F. Jacob. (Manchester University Press; 10s. 6d.).

Dr. Jacob has long been recognized as the primary authority on early 15th century England and his essays on the conciliar period are marked by the relatively uncommon combination of a meticulously expert scholarship with an interest in abstract thought. Throughout he writes with a sympathetic understanding of medieval speculation. His chapters on the political thought of William of Ockham and on the theology of Nicholas of Cusa possess a crucial importance for the study of the shifting trends of medieval theory. His essay on the Middle Ages and the Renaissance is the best available summary of the work of modern continental scholars on the meaning of those two terms. While no future church historian, when dealing with this period, can afford to ignore the composite result of his analysis of the quiet constitutionalism of Jean Gerson and Pierre D'Ailly, of the forthright reactions of Dietrich of Niem and of the profoundly attractive character of Bishop Hallam. The essay on the authorship of the Imitation has an especial interest. The conclusion is indeed the expected one. Dr. Jacob summarises all the contradictory and inconclusive evidence and holds that the authorship remains unproven, but that the treatise was much the most, probably the work of "A Kempis"—Thomas Hemerken, sub-prior of the Brother-house at Agnetenberg, near Zwolle. But the fundamental importance of the essay lies in the very perceptive study of the spirituality of the Imitation and of that associated with Gerard Groote as expressions of the "*nova devotio*" of the 15th century. For "Essays in the Conciliar Epoch" will provide a perfect and rare example of the fashion in which purely objective history can be at once sympathetic and un-biassed.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

BLACKFRIARS

(with which is incorporated *The Catholic Review*).

Literary Communications should be addressed to The Editor, Blackfriars, Oxford (Tel. 3607). The Editor cannot be responsible for the loss of MSS. submitted. No MSS. will be returned unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Communications regarding Advertisements should be addressed to the Manager, Blackfriars, Oxford (Tel. 3607).

Subscriptions and orders for copies should be sent to Messrs. Basil Blackwell, 49 Broad Street, Oxford (Tel. 3487). Annual Subscription 12/6 post free (in U.S.A. \$3).

Printed for the Proprietors at the Ditchling Press, Sussex.