

## *Blackfriars*

scheme of creation and redemption, together with the physical, intellectual and moral development of humanity. But an imagery which, in its poetry and in delicate accuracy of observation, would have delighted Alice Meynell, seems an unsuitable grindstone for the Darwinian axe.

It is surprising, moreover, that the author should have allowed the book, obviously written before she was a Catholic, to be republished as it stands. The Church does not condemn the theory of evolution. She merely requires the belief that, at a given moment in creation, God 'breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul,' a soul received directly from God and not evolved from matter or mere animal consciousness. Miss Kaye-Smith, being a loyal Catholic, no doubt holds this belief, but it is difficult to find any evidence of it in her account of man's evolution (pp. 7-9). Her conception of Purgatory, too (p. 63), and her theory that the devil is dependent on time for his existence (pp. 55-59) would probably present difficulties if the book were submitted for an ecclesiastical imprimatur. It may be possible to give an orthodox interpretation to these theories, but the average mind will not easily find it, and for Catholics this spoils a book in which there is otherwise much delightful and suggestive thought and great beauty of expression.

M.B.

**JOYOUS PILGRIMAGE.** By R. Francis Foster. (Elkin Mathews ; 7/6.)

You must not expect to find in *A Joyous Pilgrimage* a guide book to Essex, Hertfordshire and Bucks, and if you try to follow Francis Foster on his journeying you may meet with adventures as varied, droll and romantic as his own. Even when he mentions the true name of a town or village, he prevaricates about the hostelry he favours—one inn he mentions has not been an inn for thirteen years. The stories he tells are amazing—and the more amazing the more attractive. He gives you no fulsome description of scenery, but rather reveals an understanding of the countryside through his appreciation of the inhabitants. It is a provocative book, a 'joyous pilgrimage' in itself, and a strong incentive to adventure in others: it is Catholic literature; much of it has already appeared in *The Evening News*; and it is enriched by Mrs. Foster's excellent pen-and-ink drawings.

R.R.