

INTERCOMMUNION. The Report of the Theological Commission appointed by the Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order, together with a Selection from the Material presented to the Commission. Edited by D. Baillie and John Marsh. (S.C.M. Press; 21s.)

This work is more composite than the preceding one. The great incertitudes which hover over the subject, even within the œcumenical movement itself, have left their impression on the actual composition of this book. Collectively the contributions clearly indicate the presence of two great currents, 'Catholic' and 'Protestant'. And more than any other report that of the 'Church of England' has managed to express how it would synthesise the two things; at least judging by the report of Dr Hodgson (pp. 255, sqq.), whereas other Anglican contributors clearly take one or other direction. The whole work is scarcely comforting for œcumenism. There is agreement on the point that the problem of communion is a direct function of that of the Church. All the papers taken together amply prove this: there can be no stability or clarity on the one point unless there is on the other. Moreover, it must be stated that the majority of the papers are inspired by doctrines stemming from the Reformation and many of their conclusions have the same root.

On the positive side, one will appreciate the depth of conviction that the Eucharist is at the heart of the life of the Church, that it brings about a special presence of Christ, and that it draws a powerful efficaciousness from that. Catholics, for all their strength in precision and the unequivocal clarity of the Church's teaching on this matter, generally underestimate the importance which the sacraments have for Protestants. More than anything else will a reading of certain contributions to *Intercommunion* serve to instruct them in this respect and to appeal to their emotions. Without the slightest doubt there are few subjects about which we talk so different a language, but it is a subject so central to the life of the Church and all hope of reunion that we must thank God that our brethren, despite their lack of sound doctrine, profess in this matter a respect, a desire and a conscientiousness which give them an inclination in the direction of the '*mysterium fidei*'.

HENRI DE RIEDMATTEN, O.P.

ESSAI SUR DIEU, L'HOMME ET L'UNIVERS. Published under the supervision of, and with an introduction by, Jacques de Bivort de la Saudée. (Casterman; n.p.)

Here we have a rewriting of the *Essai d'une Somme catholique contre les Sans-Dieu*, formerly edited by Editions Spes. This is a magnificent handbook for the apologete who is anxious to tackle problems which are properly contemporary: materialism, science in apparent contradiction to the Faith, Marxism. Chapters on the

existence of God, the origins of man, capitalism and many other topics allow the reader to get the bearings of the problem and to take the right direction to its solution. The work of elaboration and presentation remain for the reader to do for himself, but here, apart from the bibliography, he is offered the series of themes which must be undertaken, their exact character, and the lines of Christian doctrine in harmony with the conquests of modern science along which progress is to be made. This is a book which can be recommended for professors of apologetics, as well as for those who direct study circles.

H.R.

WOMAN TODAY. By John Fitzsimons. (Sheed and Ward; 8s. 6d.)

Many people feel that there are two vital facts affecting the happiness of women in the modern world, facts which have not yet been generally recognised. One is that our society has undergone a fundamental change during the past hundred and fifty years, and the other is that woman is not man's inferior nor his equal but his complement.

In this book Fr Fitzsimons has 'attempted to set forth the causes of woman's distress in our industrial society, arising chiefly from her lack of status now that the home no longer has the central place which it formerly enjoyed'. This lack of status is the reason for the sense of insecurity or of frustration experienced by many women, married or single, in the world of today. Some women react emotionally and with prejudice, while others have given the matter some thought as was shown by the recent correspondence in *The Spectator* referred to by the author. This book will anger or provoke the former group, while the latter should find in it a great deal of solid material for further thought.

The essential idea discussed is that woman's nature is dominated by two inter-related factors: firstly 'other-centredness' or dependence on others for fulfilment and secondly the maternal instinct expressed either physically or spiritually. In order to show woman how to face her problem and to indicate some of the means she has at her disposal, several chapters are devoted to her 'distinctive qualities, physical, intellectual and moral capabilities'. These qualities are then considered in the settings of work and education and special attention is paid to the position of the single woman.

The author justifies the inclusion of a chapter with the unusual title 'Towards a Theology of Woman' by pointing out that 'not only do men and women differ in their bodies, but they are different in their very personalities. They differ precisely in the way in which they know and in the way in which they love. There is every reason then to suppose that woman has a special place in God's plan for the world, in its creation as in its redemption.' Obviously, in a few pages, this can be no more than an