

ages are sadly reminiscent of an earlier age. I was depressed by the extent to which the priest-author suggests family prayers, family rosary, etc., rather than daily mass (he even proposes that the family should renew their baptismal vows before the family altar on Holy Saturday!), by the emphasis he places on the moral side of religious training (though his chapter on sex-instruction is absolutely excellent) as though dogma is something that belongs to the school doctrine class only, and by his tendency to simplify complex moral problems—it is not true that a Catholic cannot sue for divorce, nor that most people practise birth control because they cannot manage their incomes intelligently. Surprisingly, he seems not to recognize that it is dangerous for parents to ram devotion down their children's throats, nor to be aware that priests and nuns can, by stupidity or unkindness, do more harm than all the secular influences in the world put together.

But it would be ungrateful merely to criticize. For the many Catholics who prefer to read only Catholic books on this sort of subject, this may well be an introduction to some of the best modern theory about the upbringing of children, as well as a help in recognizing the part psychology and common sense play in what were for so long regarded as purely religious and moral spheres.

REGINA O'HEA

WOMAN AND MAN WITH GOD, by Louis Bouyer; translated by A. V. Littledale; Darton, Longman and Todd, 25s.

Père Bouyer's strength lies in his knowledge of the Fathers and his assimilation of their modes of thought. He starts as they started from a mystery revealed by God in the Church and in the scriptures as interpreted by the Church, the mystery in this case of the role of our Lady's womanhood with its complementary aspects of virginity and motherhood, Virgin Mother and Mother of God. But it must be confessed that the three chapters at the beginning in which he sets out the great scriptural themes, through which our Lady's significance in human history and divine meta-history is explicitated, are the least satisfactory in the book. They have a perfunctory air, large blocks of quotation with little commentary, poetry printed as prose, Douai version—at least in this English translation—with little attempt to incorporate more recent scholarship. This is not likely to attract Protestant readers further into the book or to give them confidence in the theology of Mary which it contains. This theology is for the most part excellent. Drawing on the Fathers, both Greek and Latin, St Thomas and to some extent the liturgies, he never loses sight of the fact that the mystery of our Lady is part of the vaster mystery of God's plan to recapitulate all things in his Son through the Spirit. Her womanhood throws light on the relationship in the Church's teaching between marriage and virginity and their different excellences, a relationship most Catholics find difficult to explain to a post-Freudian world; her grace, seen in the light of divine providence and predestin-

ation, helps to explain the distinction between grace under the old and grace under the new dispensation. This is the method of the Fathers rather than the scholastics, to explore the interactions of the different elements of the divine economy and revelation, a method in which analogy rather than deduction is the chief instrument. Occasionally Père Bouyer takes it too far, so that one feels that he is straining towards statements that are fanciful or even dubious in the light of the New Testament. Thus for example in discussing the compassion of our Lady, after emphasizing with strong sense that the question is less whether her motherhood was a contributory cause of the redemption than how the redemption is fulfilled in us by the extension of her motherhood, he is led in the course of the next two pages to say that our Lady's intercessory power is founded on the fact that she saw into the full meaning of the passion at the time it took place and applied the work of her son in it to us all. This is far-fetched; nothing in the incident at the foot of the cross indicates that at that moment our Lady herself realized that in accepting John as her son she was accepting all the members of Christ into her motherhood. The indications, one would have thought, went the other way. In arranging for the future care of his mother and his disciple our Lord was giving a sign whose intention he himself certainly meant in the fullest theological sense but which the disciple only penetrated later. Did our Lady there and then understand its full meaning? Since Père Bouyer comes down in favour of the view not that our Lady could doubt but that she could suffer a tension in her mind between her faith and the apparent failure of her son's work, it seems odd that at this point he should decide so strongly for such a perfection of understanding. If, as tradition seems to affirm, our Lord himself suffered an agony of dereliction, then analogically one might expect our Lady's tension of faith also to be at its height, itself an element in her suffering and compassion. There are a few passages such as this where the method seems to lead to theological conceits, but these are outweighed by many insights and fruitful conjunctions. The translation seems a little hurried, lapsing sometimes into theological jargon, and the proof-readers have left too many misprints.

BENET WEATHERHEAD, O.P.

THE WORD, CHURCH AND SACRAMENTS IN PROTESTANTISM AND CATHOLICISM, by Louis Bouyer, Cong. Orat.; Geoffrey Chapman, 10s. 6d.

If you start with a 'Catholic' principle of subordinating the authority of the scriptures to that of the Church, in confrontation with a Protestant principle of subordinating the Church to the scriptures, you can never arrive anywhere merely by recommending Bible reading to Catholics or clarifying this or that New Testament emphasis on the Church for Protestants. The underlying assumption once made that there are two rival authorities, with the consequent necessity of subordinating one to the other, nothing can come out right.