

Thomas in regard to the respective shares of intellect, will and appetite in the determination of human conduct.

As an introduction to the essential features of McDougall's psychology this short exposition can be commended.

AIDAN ELRINGTON, O.P.

CATHOLIC ACTION

QUESTIONS DE CONSCIENCE : ESSAIS ET ALLOCUTIONS. Par Jacques Maritain. (Questions Disputées, Vol. XXI.) (Desclée, de Brouwer; 20 fr.)

Five main questions: the Church and the civilizations, anti-semitism, action and contemplation, catholic action and political action, the liberty of the Christian. These, not independent but closely linked together, form the bulk of the book. Six short *allocutions* on cognate themes follow.

The first chapter deals with the attitude of the Christian to the changes in civilization which we are witnessing to-day, and the role of the Church in regard to those changes. The second chapter is a particularly profound and suggestive discussion of the *mystère d'Israël*. The third and fourth together provide an invaluable commentary on the whole idea of Catholic action. Action as the overflow of contemplation (charity); Catholic Action therefore imitating Christ who, in the words of the Pope, 'won souls and led them to follow him by charity: there are no other means for us'; why Catholic Action is most typically *communautaire*; the precise sense in which the principal object of Catholic Action is, as Pius X put it, 'the practical solution of the social problem, according to Christian principles'—a question which leads to the discussion of the triple plane of action: spiritual, temporal, and a third plane on which spiritual and temporal meet. The distinction is of vital practical importance; and makes possible a clear statement of the character of Catholic Action in its full extension in face of internal diversity of opinion and of external attack. The last chapter throws further light on the question of means. 'Christian liberty is one of the last hopes of mankind . . . In face of the frightful spectacle offered to-day by the nations one is forced to say: the spirit is humiliated to the depths. It is being punished for its own defaults. The forces of vitality, animal, elemental, are chastising it for having too long failed in its duty, having too long failed human realities. There is no other resource left to the spirit than to go down, with the understanding of love, to the depths of these elemental realities If it is true that

the spiritual reintegration of the masses, their return to Christendom, is a first condition of the salvation of civilization, then it is clear that these multitudes must be approached not with menaces and violence, but with love Nothing is more serious, more scandalous, than to see, as we have seen for some years in these countries, the employment of wicked and barbarous means by men who invoke Christian order, Christian civilization It is a truth inscribed in the very nature of things that Christendom will re-establish itself by Christian means or it will come to its compete undoing.'

GERALD VANN, O.P.

THE SALVATION OF THE NATIONS. By Hermann Franke. (Coldwell; 4s.)

'Our present age insisently demands a theology of nationhood.' This little book, a translation from the German by Canon George Smith, with a preface by Karl Adam, is a distinguished contribution to such a theology. 'The writer is well aware of the difficulties of his task: but he considers that by having recourse to the sources of Scripture, Liturgy and patristic writings, by dint of emphasising statements which have already been explicitly made and synthesising available items of knowledge, it may be possible to formulate the principles on which such a theology must rest' (p. 12). This is the spirit of Maria Laach which has already found a deep response in this country. The atmosphere round this subject is undeniably tense. In England we are liable to serious distractions from politics. Yet nationhood is not primarily a political matter: it is metaphysical and religious. There is little to read from a Christian standpoint on this urgent contemporary issue. Yet the recent crisis has released a vast amount of desultory thinking on the problem of nationhood and related problems such as pacificism and national regeneration. This book supplies a real need. It may, however, lose many readers who think that they are not concerned with 'the problematical juxtaposition: Germanism and Christianity.' On the other hand, many who read it may be led by a merely benevolent interest in what the unfortunate German Christians are thinking about the political situation. In the first place 'it is perhaps appropriate that this (German) nation, which has been called "the source of perpetual unrest" in the Church, should seem destined to call attention to the fact that a liberalistic individualism is not a Catholic outlook; that the Church of Christ is a Church of the Nations' (p. 12). The words of a Catholic German theologian to-day are likely to be valuable for