

promise, behind which so many Christians are sheltering today. For this last reason alone he deserves the attention of all who profess Christianity.

MAURICE McLOUGHLIN.

TOWARDS CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY. By Sir Stafford Cripps. (Allen & Unwin; 5s.).

Nearly a hundred years ago Sewall, the founder of Radley, wrote to Gladstone: "Let us have a few men standing up everywhere throughout the country in the legislature, in the Churches, in our schools, in Society, announcing truth as it is, and in a very short time, unless God has decreed otherwise, the Nation will be brought round." Reading this latest work of Sir Stafford Cripps one is irresistably reminded of these words, in so far as his book is that rare phenomenon, a profession of religious faith by a Cabinet minister. In style it is uneven and jerky, but this very ruggedness seems to increase the sincerity and almost evangelistic fervour of the message. In its essentials it is simple, for he insists on two points: personal sanctification and Christian action, summed up by outlining the task of Christians as 'First, so to conduct ourselves as individual Christians that, in spite of the difficulties of our surroundings, we may work towards the establishment of God's Kingdom here on earth; and second, so to influence and change our social, economic and political environment as to encourage both ourselves and others to take the Christian way of life.'

Much of what Sir Stafford writes has already been said, and perhaps better said, by social Catholics and by the large school of thought among our non-Catholic brethren who express themselves through *Christendom* and *The Christian News-Letter*; and so the interest of this book lies more in the person who says it. The theological basis is perhaps a little vague, and there is an almost impatient tone about the references to the "theological complexities that have grown up around and encumbered Christ's teaching over the last nineteen hundred years". On the question of property, he wishes to see all private property abolished that gives one individual power over another because "I know of no Christian principle or teaching which lays down the sanctity of private property." This surely argues a blind spot, because it is difficult to see how men who oppress one another as individuals, which Sir Stafford admits, will cease to do so when they become completely dependent on "the State", even when it is qualified by the magic words "democratically controlled". A criticism that one might hazard is that Sir Stafford has fallen into the latter-day error of assuming that the use of the adjective "democratic" confers grace *ex opere operato*.

In fine, despite its blemishes, a book to be welcomed not only because of its *provenance* but because of its simplicity and sincerity and its reassertion of a Christian humanism. J. FITZSIMONS.

DOOM AND RESURRECTION. By J. L. Hromadka. (S.C.M.; 5s.).

Dr Hromadka describes the currents which have swept civilisation,