

In dealing with the relationship and specific role of the husband and wife the author repeats meaningless generalizations such as the husband's intellectual superiority over his wife, particularly unfortunate since the example that follows is that of a married woman doctor. This bias is further shown in asserting woman's alleged inferior capacity for abstract thought and similarly about her 'rational capacity to things'. Such statements not only ignore modern psychological scholarship, but by straying from reality, contribute little to what is a genuinely complex contemporary problem. The relationship between parents and children is similarly treated with little imagination.

Despite these unsatisfactory aspects, this book will more than justify its existence if it leads readers to the original material, which is the hope both of the author and of Fr M. O'Leary, the Chairman of the Catholic Marriage Advisory Council, who has written a foreword.

J. DOMINIAN

ESCAPE FROM LONELINESS, by Paul Tournier, translated by John S. Gilmour; S.C.M. Press; 21s.

I have always thought that Orson Welles, though wittily malicious, was more than a little unkind about the Swiss. 'What have they produced in over three hundred years?' he asked in that unforgettably haunting film *The Third Man*. And snap came the answer—'the cuckoo clock'. Myself I think he might have added two more things at least—neutrality and Jung. Both are relevant to this book.

Its author, a Swiss Protestant doctor and psychiatrist (though he prefers to call it 'counsellor') writing however in the manner of a clergyman or pastor or evangelist, is well aware of the limitations of his society. These he attributes in part, and not altogether frivolously, to the watch industry which causes his countrymen, so he says, to 'see every thing small'. The mountains, too, may play their part in restricting the horizon of the Swiss (though you would not easily get an English mountain-lover to agree with this). And then they are a people who have no access to the sea. This adds to their sense of being hemmed in; to their terror of suffocating, of being swallowed by their neighbours and losing their identity. So they turn in upon themselves, narrowing their world.

Out of such a background comes this book. It is a background very different from our own, and this is reflected in the case-histories to which the writer, as a practising psychiatrist, alludes. His people and their particular anxieties are simply not, in superficials, like ourselves. Nor is their religious sense ours. They talk forever about having 'spiritual experiences' as a result of which a husband, perhaps, ceases to make intolerable demands on his wife, or a young girl recovers from a broken engagement. Naturally, we have no reason to doubt the reality of these. But it remains that English Catholics, or Catholics of any sort, do not talk like this and do not exactly feel like this either.

It could be of course that, unlike Protestants, we have come to take our religious experiences for granted and cease to be alert to them—the way we slumber over our mass gives point to this. Or it could be a more profound reflection of the differences between Catholic and Protestant spirituality. The author here is not concerned with differences such as these. What matters overwhelmingly to him is that we all should share the one same Christ our Lord.

Nor can we fairly quarrel with his thesis as a whole: that what the world lacks most is faith, what man suffers from is loneliness.

Seneca once said that society was 'a bringing together of wild beasts'. In this he was being picturesque, but scarcely accurate. Wild beasts do seem to have a sense of solidarity that is not often apparent in men. And as for ants and bees, says our author, 'just try preaching individualism to them!' It is only man who tries to make himself a law unto himself and ends by crumpling up in total anguish.

Nor can he hope for cure until, in common with his fellows, he turns in perfect faith to God alone, Father of all, and learns from him how to preserve the delicate balance between freedom and submission.

ERIKA FALLAUX

WHAT IS MAN? by René Le Trocquer; Burns and Oates, Faith and Fact Books, 8s 6d.

Any attempt to confront the Christian and existentialist philosophies on man is faced with this difficulty: the two philosophies imply certain seemingly irreconcilable presuppositions. Man as depicted in Christian philosophy has his origin and his end in God; sin being the source of suffering and death. Human existence therefore, in all its historical phases has a 'reason': we can explain it, give a coherent account of it. In the existentialist view such a claim is utterly gratuitous, faith not fact. It is not a question of whether the Christian view is true or false, but whether it is an authentic picture of man's historical condition as we find it, or whether the Christian view offers any effective means for suppressing or supporting the tragedies of life here and now. Existentialism claims to interpret the historical fact of human existence, and finds it devoid of 'reason': meaningless and absurd, having only one future certainly—death and disintegration of the human personality. The Christian and existentialist philosophies of man are talking about the same thing, but because their views are so radically different they speak a different language. They may be using the same words but with different connotations. This linguistic difficulty makes it extra hazardous to attempt any sort of dialogue between them.

The small book under review is an effort to express the Christian philosophy of man in existentialist language. Man is made to the image of God. A composite of spirit and matter, man's vocation consists in the arduous task of reaching a closer personal relationship to God. It is this vocation that defines man.