

different stages in the development of culture. There is certainly a danger of over-systematisation and consequent distortion, as there is in so much German thought about the history of philosophy: and specialist historians of philosophy will feel doubtful about a good many of Dempf's particular pronouncements. But Dempf himself repeatedly reminds us that we are dealing with groups of men endowed with free will, not with 'culture-souls' or 'spirits of the age' and must not expect too absolute a regularity: and if this is borne in mind it seems likely that the framework of his thought will stand up to specialist criticism.

In some ways the most impressive passages of Dempf's book are those in which he speaks of the failure of philosophy, showing how at its highest it fails to overcome its own divisions and cannot order the whole world or change the heart of man, and how in its failure it points the way inescapably to the supernatural, to the God-Man and the grace of his redemption.

The little book on Dostoevsky's psychology of character is an excellent example of the range and quality of the special studies on which Dempf has built his great synthesis.

A. H. ARMSTRONG.

DIE REFORMATION IN DEUTSCHLAND. By Josef Lortz. 3rd Edition. 1949. (Herder, Freiburg, 1949; 45DM.)

The time has not yet come when it is possible, even amongst professional historians, to mention Lortz's *Reformation* in the secure assumption that everyone present will be acquainted with it and will have come to regard it as the very best history of the Reformation in Germany. But one can hardly doubt that if the first edition had not appeared during the early stages of the war Lortz's two fascinating volumes would have already found a place as a standard work, even in the Channel-bound British universities. Perhaps this new edition will speed the process of assimilating 'our Lortz'.

This history of the Reformation has almost acquired a history of its own. Itself the fruit of Professor Lortz's deep concern for his separated Protestant brethren its complete charity has gained him their confidence and has done more than many conferences to provide a common basis for the work of reunion which is so dear to the author himself. This fact, it is hoped, will be an encouragement to those Catholic scholars in Britain who are working along similar lines; it confirms one's belief that the best results are achieved by historians not when they feel that they are ruling in their own little kingdoms of arid scholarship but when they are moved by a desire to share the truth with all men. *Die Reformation in Deutschland*, precise and measured in its judgments, is truly the work of a scholar and yet, as Lortz himself says, it is written for the general public; the learning in other words lies in the text instead of being paraded in the critical apparatus.

Everyone who reads this book will find himself picking out different chapters as particularly brilliant. The character sketch of Erasmus, for instance, is worth the attention even of Erasman specialists. The exciting pages on that power house of spirituality the Charterhouse at Cologne are in themselves an invitation to Catholic scholars in all countries to search more diligently than ever for that Catholic Reform before the Reformation which has long been neglected; an English reader is inevitably reminded of the skill with which the Mathew brothers handled a similar theme in *The Reformation and the Contemplative Life*. But for all these interludes the one personality who dominates these pages is Martin Luther; the picture of him which results from them can only be appreciated, as Lortz warns us, if the reader follows the argument throughout the whole of the book. As a reward for taking the author's advice the reader has the satisfaction of arriving at a thoroughly convincing conclusion.

Faced with the task of writing a few lines about these two volumes, the reviewer is perhaps justified in confessing his desire to give a précis of every single chapter; that being impossible, he can only add his voice to the chorus of praise which has greeted *Die Reformation in Deutschland* and suggest that Catholics throughout the country should have it placed in university and college libraries. B.D.

GOETHE AND WORLD LITERATURE. By Fritz Strich. (Routledge; 25s.)  
 GOETHE: WISDOM AND EXPERIENCE. Edited by H. Weigand. (Routledge; 16s.).  
 GOETHE. By Albert Schweitzer. (A. & C. Black; 6s.)

The bicentenary of Goethe's birth has seen the publication of so much literature concerning Germany's most illustrious son that there can no longer be any excuse for the average educated Englishman's ignorance about him.

Professor Strich is recognised as one of the foremost Goethe-scholars of today, and *Goethe und die Weltliteratur* first appeared in Switzerland in 1945. That it should now be translated into English (which Goethe knew and loved well) is eminently fitting, for, as the author makes clear, translations were for Goethe one of the chief agents of that universal, intellectual commerce which was what he meant by 'world literature'. When Goethe was born German literature was, if not non-existent, at least almost unknown outside Germany: when he died it was worthy to rank with the other great literatures of Europe. For this development Goethe was largely responsible. Always receptive to foreign influences, Goethe's own influence on foreign literatures was extensive (we have only to think of Byron, his 'spiritual son') even if as in the case of 'Wertherism' certain phases of it operated abroad long after he himself had abandoned them.

Professor Strich traces the development of the idea of 'world