

REVIEWS

SOUL AND PSYCHE. An Enquiry into the Relationship of Psychotherapy and Religion. By Victor White, O.P. (Collins and Harvill Press; 21s.)

This book, which expands the 1958-59 Edward Cadbury Lectures in the University of Birmingham and adds nine appendices, is built in three parts. The first (chapters 1-2) takes the common ground of psychology and religion and the predicaments in which they land themselves when each goes its own way. The last (chapters 9-11) takes the integration of evil in a full account of experience and the correlations of mental health and holiness. These are its strength, and show firm underpinning by theological and philosophical principles, for the chapters in between (except for 5, on symbols and dogma in Christianity), are less solid constructions—more provisional pavilions for a country where we speak in metaphors and breathe a mistier air.

Attempts have been made to reconcile the differences between the psychologist and the theological moralist by urging that they are occupied with different things, one the psyche of man and the other his immortal spirit, each with its own purposes and each requiring the appropriate method of treatment when it falls short of them. These may well appear to clash. For if outside phenomena could be simultaneously interpreted by diametrically opposite hypotheses, why not inside phenomena also? Such was the easy solution, which many on both sides were ready to adopt, once the salad days were past when they went for one another, poo-hooing religion as a superstition produced by Super-Ego mechanics or scolding psychoanalysis for prurience. After an uneasy truce it dawned on the two parties that the people they should be dealing with were often of mutual interest, for whereas those who are just ill do not engage the spiritual director and those who are just wicked do not engage the psychotherapist, the majority, the working majority that is, come down on both sides of the fence. For fence it becomes when pastor and psychologist agree to differ—both verbs are important—and respect but keep out of the other's sphere of influence.

A theologian brought up in the school of St Thomas is uneasy enough with the division of soul and body; he is still more uneasy when the soul itself is separated into the image of God and the centre for neuroses or psychoses which can be treated, like a fracture or a blister, without positive reference to the embracing truths of religion. For while he is not disposed to admit that there is no such formal discipline as Catholic psychological medicine (except materially and *ad hoc* to meet a concrete case) or that the particular arts and sciences derive from and are subservient to a general philosophism or theologism (since each should wrestle honestly in its own proper medium without looking for answers from outside, and practical psychology in particular should not evade its occasions in the name of ethical or mystical values), nevertheless he will be quick to react against any 'double-truth theory', be it, as in St Thomas's day, the statement that the

theologically true can be the philosophically false, or, as in our days, the suggestion that good psychology can be bad morals, or the other way round, that good morals can be bad psychology.

As might be expected, those depth psychologists with a reputation for being rodent about religion are likelier to contribute to such a disjunction than those more given to sentiments of awe. Apparently French moralists who approach questions of psychotherapy get on better with Freud than with Jung, and therefore make a split between soul and psyche. It may be because their academic climate is still charged with Descartes. Or perhaps there is a grain of truth in the remark that an organized religion feels itself less threatened by a rival racket than by a supplementary revelation and mythology. Father White, however, does not fear the gift-bearing Greeks, nor is he embarrassed by his allies.

Certainly he will not have the theologian retreat into the fastnesses of the spirit and leave the psychologist to roam at large in the territory of the psyche, for in fact their interests not only overlap but are concentrated on one thing. So, affirming the objective identity of soul and psyche, he echoes the teaching of St Thomas, for whom there was but one single *anima*, the principle at once of intelligence and of the lowest vegetative functions, that by which man can see God and that by which his toenails grow. At this stage a useful disquisition on formal and material objects would have been welcome; instead Fr White shows that scriptural theology does not mean by soul a religious preserve fenced in from the rest of life, then pushes the point that the most clinical psychologist cannot afford to write off man's metaphysical curiosity and burden of immortality.

The figures of neurotic, psychotic, and even subintelligent saints provide one reason for the eagerness to divide soul from psyche. Can the soul be all right and the psyche all wrong? The final chapters are addressed to this question. Holiness or health are not simple concepts; they cannot be elucidated so long as theology inculcates a resigned defeatism to sickness and the grave instead of the triumphant challenge of the first Christian centuries, or so long as medicine defines health by the absence of disease, or equates it with a normal, or fails to recognize that death processes are conditions of life. This section is extremely well done, with a mastery of the technique of systematic philosophy and theology concerning evil as *privatio* and concerning the difference between sanctifying grace, whereby a person is God's friend while yet a prey to the effects of Original Sin, and the grace which restores human nature in Christ, a psychic integration still rather an eschatological hope than an accomplished fact. The bones of scholasticism do not poke through, but they shape a sensitive and sympathetic discourse, and may leave some readers regretting that all the chapters do not similarly share out the riches of the author's own tradition.

For, with the exception already noted, the middle part of the book seems a protracted parenthesis, which strays appreciatively, though not uncritically, through the fields of Jung, and, we may add, of Pythagoras. The tone becomes less assured and more tentative, as well it might, when dealing with the importance of Quaternity as well as Trinity, and with the

search for the Missing Feminine. Father White is free from Wardour Street, or perhaps one should call it Harley Street prehistory, but he is not a poet, nor the writer of Genesis or the Apocalypse, and does not avoid the bookishness of the mythologizing with which he is conversing. Many, however, will find the main excitement in this useful reconnaissance. If conventional apologists are surprised at what is reported, they will be advised to observe that Fr White does not mix his systems of reference. He knows when he is talking of the significant content of dogma and when of its psychological fringes; he does not imagine that he is explaining when he is only exclaiming—let it be said, sometimes pungently, often pregnantly. He is out to restore living symbols, and he is aware, as St Thomas was, that the articles of a creed are responses to the divine as thing, not scheme; they are not substitutes for, still less protections against, a living experience. Theologians and psychologists will agree that he has given them a work of communication and friendship, all the more congenial because its 'doxy' has both a clerical and a gypsy sense.

THOMAS GILBY, O.P.

KOMMT DER DIAKON DER FRÜHEN KIRCHE WIEDER? By Josef Hornef.
(Seelsorgerverlag Herder; DM 6.80.)

REVERRONS-NOUS LE DIACRE DE L'EGLISE PRIMITIVE? Par Josef Hornef.
Traduction française par Nicole Durieux. (Editions du Cerf; 6 NF.)

Do the needs of the Church today demand the revival of the deacon's office and function as it was originally practised in the early Church? Should we, in other words, have permanent deacons, married or celibate, helping to combat the critical world shortage of priests (especially in the missions), bridging the gulf which in many countries has opened up between priest and people, sharing the burdens of married people as the priest with his celibacy cannot share them, caring for the practical affairs of the Church, supplementing the priest's work in the parish, entering on specialized fields where, as experience in France has shown, the priest cannot enter, fulfilling, finally, a liturgical function without which the Church's official worship can hardly be expressed in a manner fully representative of all her children?

An influential and growing body of opinion within the Church would answer all of these questions with an emphatic affirmative. In an impressive series of articles ranging over several years, Herr Hornef has shown himself the protagonist of this cause. Now he recapitulates his case in one small volume. Those who have followed his previous work will at once recognize its distinctive qualities here. Here as elsewhere the author first treats of the essential meaning of the sacrament, then of the liturgical function proper to it, finally of the practical work in the community which corresponds to it, thereby demonstrating most impressively the absolute continuity between all three; for the *practical* ministry of the deacon in the community simply extends into the broader context of the outside world the *liturgical* exercise of his *sacramental* Order on the altar. In the sacrament of Order the deacon receives the power to distribute Holy Communion and to read the Gospel,