

THE FAMILY PATIENT OR CLIENT? Published for the Family Welfare Association by the Faith Press; 8s. 6d.

Everyone concerned in social work, whether in a lay or in a professional capacity, knows that there is a hard core of families with problems, defying most social agencies, who require lengthy, specialized casework help. In *The Family Patient or Client*, a study has been made of this kind of casework done by a social-worker of the Family Welfare Association who was sent her clients from a local hospital, selected by the almoners who felt that in each particular case the underlying social problems were more overwhelming than the actual illnesses for which the hospital was treating them.

The early tradition of the Family Welfare Association was mainly to offer material help to alleviate distress but since 1948 this need has steadily declined and it is interesting that amongst those involved in the project there were even fewer needing material help than amongst their usual clientele. This in itself was a problem, removing the initial and most obvious excuse for an inability to cope and exposing at the outset other and deeper causes of unhappiness.

It is always difficult in social work to define success, but of the thirty-one referrals who kept their first appointment it is thought that twenty-two were successfully helped and part of this was certainly due to the skill with which the almoners selected the cases. This is a book which is well worth reading, if only to see how a statutory body and a voluntary agency can combine without jealousy to help some of our more desperate neighbours to feel that they are people again. The case histories make the report live and the statistics are reduced to a very pleasant minimum. It is perhaps more readable for the professional worker; the lay reader may sometimes wonder whether a field worker is someone with straw in the hair or someone more 'purposeful and meaningful?'

HILARY HALPIN

Shorter Notices

FAITH AND FACT BOOKS (Burns and Oates, 8s. 6d.) continue to provide their regular ration of useful introductions, and among recent titles Alec Robertson's *Music of the Catholic Church* is notable for its authoritative yet sympathetic treatment both of the history and use of liturgical music. *The Prophets*, by Joseph Dheilly, and *Biblical Archaeology*, by F. du Buit, O.P., are valuable additions to the scriptural section of the series.