

## REVIEWS

HEILIGKEIT UND GESUNDHEIT. By Josef Goldbrunner. (Verlag Herder, Freiburg; DM. 1.20.)

To say that Goldbrunner's booklet should be translated into English would not be enough; it should be translated and distributed to anyone who has charge of souls, whether they are psychologists, schoolmasters or priests. Without pretending to be anything more than an essay indicating the lessons to be drawn from 'deep-psychology' it does, in fact, succeed in being the sketch of a book which someone is going to have to write some day, a book on the relations between the Church's practical psychology (as means of grace!) and the findings of the deep-psychology gentlemen. So much that is written upon the subject at present rests on a shaky ontology.

The first part of 'Holiness and Health' is divided into three sections. First of all the author shows that 'holiness is health', but that 'it is a fundamental law of the striving for perfection, that the road to holiness goes by way of death. Man is conformed to God [who is health and holiness] by following Christ on the way to the Cross'. On the Cross one kind of bodily health is destroyed, but a new kind is born of this destruction. However, the author points out that not all illness necessarily leads to this higher kind of health, because besides legitimate and necessary illnesses there are illegitimate and unnecessary kinds, which are the result of illusions about holiness, arbitrary figments of one's imagination. The second section, on the body's part in the striving for holiness, rejects the false dualism which has often characterised Christian asceticism, and suggests that we should stop playing at being angels but welcome the fact that we are men, body and spirit. Much longer is the following section, a discussion of 'the soul in the striving for holiness'. 'The soul is not something that we can do what we like with': as creatures we are given life, and if we try to take what is not 'given' our souls become sick; if we do not accept our limitations then we break ourselves on them, both bodily and spiritually. After illustrating how this false ideal of sanctity influenced the early life of St Teresa of Lisieux the kernel of the argument is brought out by saying that neurosis inevitably results when a person tries to realise an ideal of sanctity which has been proposed to him, as it were, from outside. 'He is living an untruth, because it is not the truth for him. A man is only healthy in his soul when he is living *his* truth', when he is pursuing his own, unique, vocation. And yet neurosis not only represents a symptom of disease, it is even more a sign that a person does fundamentally want health and holiness; by interpreting it positively one can see that the neurosis reveals the very point at which the remedy will be found. Therefore one must never run away from such illnesses; one must live through them. This section of the book, in common with most of the others,

contains accounts of dreams to bring out the full force of the argument. In this case the dream is a brilliant example of a person attempting to ignore the 'givenness' of her nature, trying to impose an ideal of sanctity upon her soul; the soul revolts, and, through the unconscious, shows to her the way of sanctity which is meant for her. (Is it not true that, when modern psychologists are stressing the importance of the unconscious, they are saying very much the same as St Thomas says when he describes the capacity of the human person as a *potentia obediencialis*? The whole question of how modern man has lost his passivity is worth investigating; it is not unconnected with the loss of 'feminine' qualities—in both sexes. The remedy, it seems, will be arrived at through the woman who said, 'Be it done unto me according to thy word'.)

The second part of the book deals with the three theological virtues in their relation to health. Anyone who has given up trying to deceive himself must know that the crucial experience of modern man lies in his *Angst*, his anxiety, his terror, his forlornness. What is he terrified of? Of 'nothing'—the nothing whence he came and to which he must return, the nothing which sickens his soul and chills his body. Again, he must not try to run away from this anxiety and nothingness; by living through it in faith his soul will be strengthened, and he will arrive at a higher kind of health. He must have no more care than the birds of the air, but, like them, as Goldbrunner pertinently remarks, must be prepared to die of hunger and cold. 'God did not promise his disciples a "good" time', even if they took no care for the body.'

The Christian waiting for his Lord to come is like the beloved waiting for her lover. Because she knows that he will come soon, she waits in *hope*, and the world round her takes on a fresh beauty, everything is changed; the joy of the future has actually penetrated into the present. She becomes young again, radiant with youth. It is the same with the Christian who through hope is caught into the life of God; and God, as St Augustine says, 'is younger than everything'. Hope means eternal youth; 'holiness is health'.

At the centre of human life is the virtue of love, the crux of man's relations with God. 'C. G. Jung has accused the Church of identifying Eros (love between the sexes) with sex (the sexual instinct)' which has meant that 'Eros has been treated, like sex, as filthy' and has 'acquired a bad conscience'. 'Christianity has ceased to be a religion of love and has become a religion of chastity'. The truth of the matter, however, is that 'Eros and religion are intimately connected. When they are separated and enmity is sowed between them a division springs up between the love of God and the love of man. If Eros and religion exclude each other the first becomes vulgar and the second grows cold'. It is this division which accounts for the frequent neurosis in those people who are given to narrow-minded, pinched-faced piety'. Because they love no human being, they imagine that they love God'. a telling quotation from Péguy cited

by Goldbrunner. 'The theological virtue of love draws us into the stream of love in the Godhead. Quickened by his love we are more capable of union with others. The thirst for love, both inside and outside marriage, is satisfied by serving other people in love. Relations with the other sex are marked by an unembarrassed openness resulting in genuine community, even without the ties of sex. Truly, a healthy life of communion in holiness! If we are prepared to bring our love to the Cross our Lord will graciously fulfil our longings in himself. On the Cross Agape takes Eros into its arms and redeems it.' Here the ambiguities of Eros are removed. If Eros has its way until the end only death can result, death even to human love; the Cross is the ultimate consummation of human love itself.

Goldbrunner ends his book with a description of how the pattern, Eros, the Cross, Agape, was exemplified in a most beautiful dream, and how the dreamer became radiant with health in the Order to which God had called her. 'Holiness and health are united in the Cross of Christ'.

DONALD NICHOLL.

CHRISTIANITY AFTER FREUD. By B. G. Sanders. (Geoffrey Bles; 8s.6d.)

This book deserves a recommendation because it is written by a believing Christian who approaches Freud's psychology without the usual prejudice. The author has set himself to 'examine the Christian religion from a psychoanalytical point of view and to show that still religion may remain a reasonable faith'. Applying the fundamental principle of the Freudian system—early trauma, defence, latency, outbreak of neurosis, return of repressed material—to the different stages of religious development in human history, he has succeeded in explaining religious phenomena in the rationalistic, Freudian way. But contrary to Freud he shows that this system is compatible with the knowledge of God's existence. The revolt of the sons against the father as the head of the horde is just put back a few stages to the revolt of Adam against God. In a fascinating way and always in analogy with individual analysis his arguments culminate in the main theme according to which Jesus is the divine psychiatrist and analyst; his task is to bear and to resolve the transference of libido which suffering mankind had repressed and misdirected. Unfortunately the author, who apparently is a non-Catholic, does not stop here; he tries to fit into the Freudian system, e.g. the sacrament of Holy Communion by maintaining that it is an 'anamnesis' in which the individual 're-lives emotionally the experience which as a member of mankind he felt' collectively 'when the remembered experience actually took place'. This process of abreaction, however, is for a Catholic, if at all, only a by-product of a far higher issue. The same applies, in my opinion, to the whole concept of interpreting Christianity by psychoanalysis. What actually is done is not—and of course cannot—be