

of such quality; and it is a standing reproach to this nation that it has produced no quite comparable society within the ambit of the Catholic Church (there are of course comparable societies in other fields of action).

Jacques Leclercq's book is of course quite a different type of production. Here, in about 350 pages we have both historical analysis and present-day observation, on the question of admitted standards of liberty of thought. The style is attractive and lucid, the thought ranges boldly. Did we really need to experience Hitler before learning to come down on the side of liberty? But it is obvious (and obvious to Leclercq too) that in discussing liberty the philosopher and the theologian are in the same position as when they are discussing the status of the laity: they have to accept the facts which history has provided them with. The public attitude of the church of today towards secular societies and governments, is fundamentally founded, not on Papal encyclicals (which formulate the church's reactions to given situations, and do not create the situations) but on the fact that the United States of America won its freedom during the first great ideological revolution of the modern world. If today—voluntary members of the 'free church in the free state'—we owe so much to the Belgian pioneers of the 1830's, and to American practice, we ought surely to consider more seriously our lack of appreciation of the greater revolution which is closer to our own times, and which will undoubtedly rule the ideas and fashions of our successors.

MICHAEL COOK

THE PRIEST AND MENTAL HEALTH, edited by E. F. O'Doherty and Desmond McGrath; Clonmore and Reynolds, and Burns and Oates; 25s.

This book (presented in a dust-jacket with rather repulsive colours: sage green and reddish purple) is a gathering of papers read at the first Stillorgan Conference on this topic. There are seventeen chapters written by fifteen different authors. Dr O'Doherty himself has three chapters: on 'The Priest and Mental Health', 'Psychoanalysis, Psychotherapy, and Spiritual Direction' and 'Sexual Deviations'. The subject of 'Alcoholism' is shared out by three writers and 'Marriage Problems' by two. There are six priests, seven psychiatrists, and one lay psychologist. These items of information alone will indicate the variety of topics dealt with. It might be thought that such heterogeneity might result in a superficial approach, but this is not so. The topics are dealt with in a direct practical manner, with avoidance of all superfluity. There is also a nice balance between the empirical and the moral approach.

It is impossible to appraise or criticise so many different articles and one is tempted to dwell on the three contributions by Dr O'Doherty himself; especially the first of these, which is outstanding in its clear presentation of the limits set to the domain of the doctor and priest and propounds for the latter some most searching questions. The most important statement in this first chapter is concerned with the distinction between soul and psyche, in order to counteract

the fallacy, as Dr O'Doherty sees it, of considering holiness and wholeness to be synonymous, or that 'spiritual well-being is proportioned to, or intrinsically related to natural mental health'. As he clearly puts it: 'The soul, rich with sin, is quite capable of being the first principle of a mental life free from natural illness, and conversely, a soul in a state of grace, even in a state of baptismal innocence, can be the ultimate source of processes of the psyche which are very sick indeed'. Confusion might arise here on account of the use of the word 'psyche' which is defined as being wider than 'mind', because the contemporary psychologist or psychiatrist does not use the word 'psyche' (except of course as a prefix) and speaks of 'mind'; but if we are allowed to use the term 'mind' in this wider sense, as when we talk of 'mental' health or disorder, the distinction stands. He adds that the term 'psychogenic' is pure Thomism, and indeed he draws upon St Thomas largely to illustrate his points, in a way which, I dare say, will not commend itself to all theologians and/or philosophers. It is also rather hard for the layman to follow the Thomistic dynamisms translated into modern processes, in the second chapter, but it is well worth the effort, if only to make one think.

With regard to other topics, I would say that his chapter on 'Sexual Deviations' while good on the psycho-sexual development of the child, is too dogmatic and clear-cut on sexual habits and perversions. One may also regret that on the subject of 'Child Psychiatry' Dr Stock is only given six pages.

All-in-all this book is a brave effort to spread the light of knowledge in a sphere which is too often obscured by ignorance and prejudice, and can be warmly commended.

CHARLES BURNS