

reluctant to advise certification in these cases. By arrangement with the Board of Health a large number of such cases of all ages have been accommodated in Stobhill General Hospital, Glasgow. After the age of adolescence the colony system for supervision of all defectives is advocated.

With regard to lunacy, there is an increasing tendency to reduce certification to a minimum, and to give all cases the advantages of admission to observation wards or to asylums as voluntary patients. Several of the Royal asylums have established nursing homes for private patients, and one proposes to set up a dispensary and clinic for the early treatment of mental disorder.

A contributing factor in the decreased number of those "boarded out" in private dwellings has been due in the urban areas to the cost of living, and in the rural areas to the higher standard of living produced by the rise in value of agricultural produce and increased wages diminishing the desire of many guardians to add to their household income by accommodating patients. The Board regard these conditions as being a result of the war and temporary in nature. Similar circumstances have occurred in France.

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*English Theologians: The Lady Julian—A Psychological Study.*

By R. H. THOULESS, M.A., Ph.D. London: S.P.C.K., 1925.  
Crown 8vo. Pp. 122. Price 4s. 6d. net.

The Lady Julian was an anchoress living from 1413 to 1473 in a cell still to be seen abutting on the Church of St. Julian at Norwich. Within the narrow confines of this cell, with a window opening outwards, through which she could hold converse with those who sought her counsel, and another window opening into the church for the purpose of hearing mass, she had in her solitude the series of visions and locutions described in this book. Dr. Thouless gives a running commentary on them as considered from a psychological point of view. He writes with sympathy as a member of the same Church of England, and with scientific acumen as a professor of psychology.

Religion of any form he defines as the felt practical relationship with what is believed in as a superhuman being or beings. That which distinguishes the religious mystic from the ordinary religious person, is the fact that the mystic experiences certain peculiar mental conditions in which he feels that he comes into real and convincing contact with spiritual objects. These replace the ordinary religious experiences of thinking about and imagining a person by the experience of actually seeing and talking to that person. The mystics' reports are written as those of eye-witnesses, not as the fruits of meditation or reasoning. They claim to have an ineffable perception of God, an experimental knowledge of His indwelling, and a direct apprehension of Him.

The idea is prevalent that mystical revelations are either pathological or the offspring of a deranged state of mind. But Dr. Thouless's book very strongly and ably advocates the view that the

religious experiences of mystics are mainly, if not wholly, the resultants of the working of well-established psychological laws.

In the establishment of this proposition the initial question is as to the origin of the religious sentiment. Is it based on a primary instinct, and if so, on which? There have been several different answers given to this question. Some writers have spoken of the "religious instinct," implying that the religious sentiment is based on a particular instinct specifically religious—"a deep-rooted instinct" comparable with hunger or the desire for exercise. Others have asserted that religion is based on an instinct indeed, but that it is a sex-instinct. Another theory is that religion is founded on the herd-instinct, while yet another is that the first impulse in certain early religions was the effort to find "givers of life" whereby the individual's existence should be preserved, and this impulse sprang from the self-instinct. But, in truth, we find rather that a complex growth from several instincts—self, sex, and herd—is involved.

So the religious sentiment arises from primitive instincts evolved for biological ends.

Two fundamental principles of psychology modify this mechanism. The first is "suppression"—the witting refusal to translate into action the impulses to courses of conduct forbidden by the claims of society, etc. The second, which always closely follows, is "repression"—the unwitting relegation into the subconscious of those animal and infantile elements in our psyche which are incompatible with the demands of civilization. The sole means of neutralizing the evil consequent on these repressions—the liability to mental disorder—lies in the sublimation of the instinct-impulses. The energy of the repressed desires can be utilized by the mind for other purposes. The enthusiasm for religion, exactly as in the case of art and various other cultures, is evolved by the utilization of the energy of these instinctive desires.

The effort for sublimation to a religious content springs from the innate and universal sense of a wrongness about us as we stand. Criticism of this wrongness takes the individual consciously beyond it, and in touch with something higher. This sense is forced upon everyone at some time or other of life by reason of failure, disappointment, the vanishing of riches, fame, love, youth, health, pleasure—*alia aliis*.

At this point arises the pertinent question—Is that "something higher" merely our own notion, or does it really exist, and whence comes the impulse for union with it? All philosophies from the earliest ages agree that this exists—either in the shape of a personal God or gods, or as an ideal tendency embedded in the eternal structure of the world. As to the union with such, there have been, and still are, endless controversies, and no coercive arguments can be adduced for the following hypothesis concerning it. But the hypothesis seems to fit all facts, and to be in accordance with logic. Psychologists will readily recognize this as possible.

The subconscious self is nowadays a well-accredited psychological

entity, and the hypothesis postulates that whatever the "something higher" may be, the connection with it which is felt in the religious experience is the subconscious continuation of the conscious life. It is one of the peculiarities of invasions from the subconscious regions to assume objective appearances, and to suggest to the subject an external control. The theologian's contention that the religious man is moved by an external power seems thus to be vindicated.

"God" is the natural appellation to Christians for the "something higher." God and we have business with each other, and, therefore, we cannot but expect that He will communicate with His creatures. But, as His dealings with us are universally through his invariable laws, we reasonably expect that the Divine influence will be exercised through the mechanism of Nature. And when, relative to this special point, we use the method of all true science—observation, classification, formulæ—we find that the channel of the subconscious presents itself as the passage through which the revelations of God enter the conscious. Here, as elsewhere in cases in no degree specifically religious, the invasions of ideas have usually come in sleep or at other such periods when the conscious has been wholly or partially dormant, when the unconscious is more or less uncontrolled and consequently more subject to suggestion. If the grace of God, then, miraculously operates, it most probably operates through the subliminal door.

The difference between the more common religious mental condition and the mystical is quite obvious and oftentimes immense, yet psychologically both seem to result from the same cause. Diversity in human character is caused chiefly by varying susceptibilities of emotional excitement, and the different impulses and inhibitions which they severally bring in their train. These susceptibilities are conditioned by the relative suggestibility of the subject. It is an undoubted fact that the suggestibility of the highly religious is well developed and can be increased by cultivation. The mystic carries his cultivation to the highest degree by contemplation and meditation, and, in order that for this purpose he may be entirely free from the distractions of this-world affairs, practises continual asceticism. He separates himself from his fellows, denies himself everything that ministers to desire—food and comfort—aims at directing his whole libido, *i. e.*, the energy of the mind which is differentiated into particular desires, such as hunger and love, wholly to God; and this attempt is by way of violence to all his natural affections. This tendency, however, is by no means peculiar to the religious mystic. Devotees to various pursuits show the same peculiarity. For instance, scientific research workers often exhibit a like indifference to the demands of natural affections. For by a law of mental life this violence of detachment tends to a profound impoverishment of other attachments.

The further question now claims attention, Is mysticism in any degree authoritative? Does it furnish any warrant for the supernatural which it asserts? Mystic states are absolutely authoritative over their subjects. Our rational beliefs are based on evidence

similar in nature to that which mystics allege for theirs. Certain facts have been assured to us by our own senses, and on this ground we accept them unhesitatingly. But mystical perceptions are just as direct perceptions of facts for those who have them as any sensations accepted by us as conclusive proofs. On the other hand, we cannot admit that they are more than a presumption. At the same time their recitals of visions and locutions are uniformly consentient, providing a mass of evidence which we cannot refute, and their uniform type of experience cannot surely be altogether fallacious.

The value (and it is great) of such a book as the one under review, with whose arguments, as outlined above, we are entirely in accord, lies in the fact that if, as is the wish of the author, it induces a study of the mystics' writings instead of a superficial scanning of them from a book about them—a common and injurious present-day custom in all branches of literature—a clearer insight into the realities of religion will be gained. At all events, mysticism overthrows the claims of philosophy and metaphysics to be the sole dictators of what we must or may believe. Ratiocination by itself is an inadequate and insecure approach to the Deity. Our rational consciousness is only one type of consciousness, while parted from it by the thinnest of veils there are potential forms of consciousness of a different specific quality. Mystical states, abnormal in the sense of being outside ordinary religious experiences, may be as windows through which the mind looks out upon a larger world; they offer hypotheses which we cannot disprove. They persuade to a supernaturalism and an optimism which may be the truest solutions of the enigma of life.

EDWARD J. HOCKLY.

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*Inside Experience.* By JOSEPH K. HART, Ph.D. London: Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 1927. Large crown 8vo. Pp. xxvi + 287. Price 10s. 6d. net.

This book reminds us of a symphony. In its earlier stages, such a musical composition may strike the auditor as a collection of harmonies, not unpleasant, but with no obvious connection. As the performance proceeds, a dominating *motif* appears, and renders the work intelligible. So it is with this book. The earlier chapters consist of a series of reflections, quite true, quite striking, but without patent inter-relation. Then the intention of the author comes into view, and the book appears as a consistent whole.

Every living organism has a constant series of experiences. In the case of man, these are organized and their meanings classified inside experience. Unhappily, there is a false as well as a genuine experience. Bastard experience claims the right to control, and to classify, all future experiences, and insists that such of these as cannot be brought within the old system of classification are detestable and wicked. This bastard experience is the Apollyon with whom we have to contend. Such experience is always the result of an invidious selection; it claims to represent ultimate truth, and it appertains to the dogmatic scientist quite as much