

Part II.—Reviews.

Character Analysis. By WILHELM REICH, M.D. London: Vision Press and Peter Nevill, 1950. Pp. 516. Price 35s.

In this book Dr. Reich describes his therapeutic technique. Genital sexuality has to be freed from the repression of religious morality. It is therefore necessary to disrupt and destroy the repressive influence of the patient's character by "character analysis." "Genitality" is thus "crystallized out" from the jealousy, fear and anger which has invested it secondarily to its repression by a society which is afraid of sex. The "orgasm reflex" and "orgastic potency" are established. Oral, anal and genital sexuality are "instinctual," but "the morals of the ego are a foreign body."

Dr. Reich says that this treatment by character analysis is unpleasant for the patient, but the achievement of genital sexuality through a sensual transference, masturbation and sexual intercourse is worth it. Towards the end of this treatment it is preferable that the patient should marry, but if this is impossible, or if the patient's spouse should not give satisfaction, then sexual intercourse should be sought elsewhere according to the pleasure-unpleasure-principle; for the patient, having become a "genital character," has powers of rational thought, judgment, energy and love which make the prevalent religious and social morality unnecessary.

The orgasm is considered next as a "basic vegetative function." Technical neologisms abound. "Vegetotherapy" consists of non-genital manipulation in order to release the "giving" and "cosmic longing" of the orgasm. This treatment, also, should be completed by the patient finding a lover. Dr. Reich says "perhaps science will one day succeed in making humanity's dream of happiness a reality."

The book concludes with an account of the treatment of a single woman, aged 32, who was suffering from schizophrenia. Dr. Reich describes in a quite brilliant way the vacillation of his patient between accepting sensuality as such and as the "forces" of her delusions.

There is no doubt of Dr. Reich's sincerity and zeal. He is most sensitively aware of the "tragic experience" and wasted energy caused by the repression of sexuality in "small children," adolescence and maturity, and he believes it is quite unnecessary. He is therefore very disturbed by the complacency of the world, including psychiatrists. He does not believe the world need fear sex, if his teaching is accepted. No consideration is given to the present sexual morality being the result of the community's bitter experience that, in certain circumstances, to-day's pleasure becomes to-morrow's greater pain. He does not reflect on the jealousy, fear and anger displayed by mating animals, but attributes these reactions in human beings to the results of repression. He resents the religious morality which condemns fornication and adultery, but he does not give credit to the same religious morality which blesses a greater degree of sexuality in marriage than is achieved by mating animals.

Dr. Reich does a splendid service to humanity by insisting on the problem of the unfulfilled desires of *Homo sapiens* for sexuality and love, but by taking a narrow, one-sided view of the problem, and by arousing, unconsciously, what many will consider to be false hopes, his book invites more indignation and antipathy than the sympathy he so ardently desires and the subject deserves.

C. E. H. TURNER.