

Book Reviews

1. PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

A Psycho-Analytic Dialogue. The letters of Sigmund Freud and Karl Abraham. 1907-1926. Edited by HILDA C. ABRAHAM and ERNST L. FREUD. Translated by BERNARD MARSH and HILDA C. ABRAHAM. London: Hogarth Press. 1965. Pp. 406. Price 63s.

To put pen to paper was one of Freud's pastimes. He liked to write not only for the sake of recording his thoughts and psychoanalytic discoveries, but also to engage in an epistolary conversation with his many correspondents. Three volumes of his letters have recently been published. This is the fourth volume, and it contains the exchange of letters between him and Karl Abraham. Out of nearly 500 extant letters, the editors have chosen more than 180 from each correspondent. Abraham belonged to the small group of able disciples who gathered around Freud in the early and heroic days of psychoanalysis. They were a sectarian group whose teaching met with the entrenched disbelief of a hostile world. The history of sectarian groups in such situations commonly shows that their existence can be more decisively threatened by internal dissensions than external animosity. Abraham, as his letters reveal, often saw this threat more clearly than Freud. When, for instance, in 1908, he doubted Jung's devotion to the cause, Freud countered with a diagnostic reproof: "I fear you have a rather excessive mistrust of him, a trace of a persecution complex." But five years later Freud realized that his diagnoses of the characters of both Jung and Abraham had been at fault. Jung, he grumbled, "is following in Adler's wake without being as consistent as that pernicious creature". Thereafter, Freud soothed his disappointment with a witticism: "Jung's bad theories do not compensate me for his disagreeable character." But there was no despair, only the clarion call of all threatened sectarian groups. "There is the cause," he wrote to Abraham, "and we shall sacrifice ourselves for it without complaint." To which Abraham replied by return of post: "I always have the feeling that I cannot really do enough for our cause."

They certainly worked hard. Ten or eleven hours of analysis were only a prelude to further work in the evening. As Freud put it: "I have to recuperate from psychoanalysis by working [that is, writing], otherwise I should not be able to stand it." But that can hardly have been the whole explanation, for even on

holiday Freud always found time for his recreation of writing. From Rome, for instance, he reported in 1913 that he had "in his free time between museums, churches and trips to the Campagna finished a foreword to the book on totem and taboo, an expansion to the congress paper and the sketch of an article on narcissism". To say nothing, of course, of his daily ration of writing letters and cards.

It is interesting to see how both Freud and Abraham succumbed to the wave of patriotic enthusiasm at the outbreak of the First World War, though it halted their psychoanalytic work. But as the war dragged on in spite of the glorious victories reported, and as life became more miserable through shortages of food and fuel, Freud's patriotism began to ebb. He was dispirited; even the pleasure of writing had palled. "I am at daggers drawn," he writes in December, 1917, "with writing, as with many other things. Included among them is your dear German fatherland." He adds his opinion of the two warring sides, quoting an anal-erotic German variant of "a plague on both your houses". "I have definitely adopted the viewpoint of Heine's Donna Bianca in the disputation at Toledo: '*Doch es will mich schier bedünken...*'" Donna Bianca's viewpoint after listening to the interminable disputations of a rabbi and a monk on the respective merits of their religions may perhaps be translated into English like this:

'But the truth is that I think
of the rabbi and the monk
That it's both of them who stink.'

There are in this most enjoyable book many endearing and intriguing glimpses of the life, work and world of both Freud and Abraham. The editors deserve our thanks for having made these letters available.

F. KRÄUPL TAYLOR.

Psychoanalysis and Current Biological Thought. Edited by NORMAN S. GREENFIELD and WILLIAM C. LEWIS. Madison and Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin Press. 1965. Pp. x+380. \$8.00.

This volume contains the 16 contributions made to an interdisciplinary research conference held in 1963 at the Wisconsin Psychiatric Institute. This is by no means an introductory book containing as one might suspect lofty overviews from various aspects, but on the contrary all the contributors move on a