

HANDBUCH DER SPEZIELLEN PASTORALMEDIZIN. By Dr Albert Niedermeyer. (Erster Band, Verlag Herder, Wien, 1949.)

This handbook on a special aspect of Pastoral Medicine, namely the sexual one, is planned in six volumes, and it is the author's aim to cover the entire field of sex in all its ramifications. The first volume, which is the only one to have been published so far, deals with the physiology and pathology of sex and includes a special section on marriage, the origins of this institution, its Christian meaning, and the various duties, rights and problems connected with it. The book does not only give the most modern medical and biological teaching, but also the legal aspect to questions wherever it is necessary. Most important of all, the author is intimately acquainted with psychoanalytic thought and over and over again points out that disturbances in sexual matters and recurring difficulties should be dealt with by advising psychological treatment. The existing volume has a most valuable and extraordinarily comprehensive list of literature used appended to the end of every section. In an appendix of particular interest the author compares the biological theories of St Thomas and his teachings on the differences between the sexes with modern biological, sociological and metaphysical ideas in which he succeeds in showing that they do not clash, but that on the contrary St Thomas's genius was so great that he was conscious of problems which science has become aware of only in recent times.

It seems to me that this work will be of the greatest help not only to priests but to doctors, psychologists, social workers and teachers as well, and we await the appearance of the other volumes with impatience, particularly the volume which is to deal with the psychotherapeutic approach. It is a pity that an English translation is probably too big a task to be undertaken.

VERA VON DER HEYDT.

THE INVERT AND HIS SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT. By Anomaly. (Bailliere Tindall and Cox; 8s.6d.)

This book was first published in 1927 and has now appeared in a second edition with a sequel. The book is primarily a plea for understanding of the problems that beset the male invert. Throughout the book the sincerity and Catholic devotion of 'Anomaly' are apparent but to the reader of 1949 the stresses and emphases of a book written on such a subject in 1927 seem to be inadequate and misleading. There is so much more known today, not only about the environmental conditions which influence the love-life of the child and adolescent but also of the component parts of the individual personality. Studies of the child in the family have shown the important part played by the parents in its development. Work on the individual psyche has shown that each one contains both masculine and feminine characteristics. It is faulty relationship

between and adjustment of these qualities which result in homosexuality and many other abnormalities and neuroses.

The book errs in stressing the great difference between the invert and the normal. It is not an inherent difference but one of development and experience.

Bearing this criticism in mind the reader will find much of interest and value here.

DORIS LAYARD.

PSYCHOLOGY AND MENTAL HEALTH. C. W. Valentine. (Methuen; 4s.)

A recent BLACKFRIARS criticism of rehashes into book form of broadcast talks (March 1949, page 140) could readily embrace this 'brief introduction of medical psychology based upon five broadcasts printed largely as given'. To the listening public the author may have driven home successfully his salient points: for the more leisured reading public, however, the adapted book comes as an unbalanced and inadequate exposition.

In it a number of abnormal mental processes and modes of therapy are arbitrarily, as it seems, juxtaposed. Thus, at the end of chapter 2, on emotional and environmental strain, a number of superficial means to circumstantial adjustment is appended, including, curiously, a paragraph upon the efficacy of religion 'whether true or not'. Again, in chapter 3, four pages are devoted to the discussion of 'irritability', better relegated to the later chapter on emotions: while 'complexes', one of the headings of the chapter, receive the barest mention.

Even in so short a book balance demands some treatment of the principles underlying the various modes of dissociation and the group of obsessive-compulsive phenomena; and a whole chapter devoted to hypnosis, suggestion and auto-suggestion gives undue prominence to these relatively less-used methods of psychological influence, particularly when commoner methods are passed by.

Nevertheless, Prof. Valentine makes a number of wise remarks, interspersed with apposite poetical quotations. A short but useful bibliography and an excellent index are appended.

S. J. G. SPENCER.

FATHER OF THE MAN. By Sir Ernest Barker. (National Council of Social Service; 5s.)

PLOUGHMAN'S WISDOM. By Norman Carew. (Faber; 15s.)

WEST COUNTRY SHORT STORIES. Chosen by Lewis Wilshire. (Faber; 12s.6d.)

Education and ploughing may usefully be considered together, as both are human arts with particular lessons to impart to those who would see the many conflicting facets of country life blossom out in the full neighbourliness of communal living. Education is now in transition, and perhaps plans that are aimed at the adult will lead