

being offered to the faithful in books of devotion, it difficult to see what useful purpose they serve, and easy to see what harm they do.

It is a pity that the minor abridgment made in editing Vol. I was not sufficiently ample to exclude the spurious text of St Thomas quoted on page 188 to support an unthomistic doctrine.

STANISLAUS PARKER, O.P.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION. By L. W. Grensted. (Home University Library; Oxford; 6s.)

THE RECOVERY OF BELIEF. By C. E. M. Joad. (Faber and Faber; 15s.)

As a result of the impetus given by William James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience* at the beginning of the century, and the translation into English of the works of Freud a little later, a vast literature has accumulated under the general heading of 'Psychology of Religion'. Yet in spite of, or perhaps because of, the large number of books which have been written on the subject, there is still considerable confusion as to the real status of the psychology of religion in the modern 'scientific sense'.

Professor Grensted believes that 'perhaps the time has come when some attempt can be made to begin the process of sorting matters out', and it is with this in view that he has written his book. The difficulties of such an undertaking are emphasised in the first few chapters, dealing with the terms of reference. 'There is no agreement as to the field which should be properly included under the general heading of religion, and still less is there agreement among psychologists as to the methods, aims, and subject-matter of psychology itself.' Nevertheless, the author does succeed in giving a fairly coherent account of the emergence over the last fifty years of a subject which, though still 'nebulous and ill-defined', is yet discernible as an important branch of the study of human behaviour.

It is this historical section, together with the excellent bibliographical note at the end, which makes the book such a valuable introduction to the subject for the general reader. The survey of the main aspects of religious behaviour, such as conflict and conversion, prayer and worship, mystical states, etc., may be found difficult by those not acquainted with the technical terms of psychology, though on the whole it is very readable. Obviously, from the Catholic point of view, the treatment of such themes in a work like this must appear at least inadequate at many points, and doubtless some of the author's statements will be contested by psychologists. His conclusion would seem sober enough: 'The findings of psychology are of less importance theoretically and of more importance practically than is commonly supposed to be the case'. Theoretically one might say that the chief value of the work of psychologists to date has been to demonstrate the impossibility of a purely psychological interpretation of religion; and in view of the increasing tendency of psychology to be more

and more experimental and statistical in its methods, it does not look like becoming any easier to use these methods for the better understanding of religious behaviour, or even of human behaviour of any kind. It appears that all one can say is that certain psychological procedures have proved and are proving of help in the understanding and treatment of certain religious problems in the concrete.

Dr Joad's latest book, *The Recovery of Religion*, is a welcome and forthright reaffirmation of the intellectual approach to religion. He calls it 'an account of some of the reasons which have converted me to the religious view of the universe in the Christian version'. The news of this conversion will not have been unexpected by those familiar with Dr Joad's recent writings, especially his *God and Evil*, in which are recorded the earlier stages of his journey from complete scepticism, a journey which has brought him at last to the complete (intellectual) acceptance of the claims of the Christian religion.

Largely owing to the influence of modern psychology of religion, with its emphasis on the non-rational elements of the religious response, the intellectual approach to religion has become unfashionable. For this reason Dr Joad's restatement of its importance is welcome. The fact that in his own case it was the result of a 'psychological compulsion' to adopt the most rational hypothesis which would seem to cover most of the facts might have been expected in view of his temperament and previous training. But the act of faith is obviously more than the adoption of a hypothesis, however plausible. Understandably, perhaps, in the apologia of a modern professional philosopher hardly on the threshold of the household of the faith, the theological implications of his journey thither are not worked out very clearly. Dr Joad, however, shows a real grasp of the doctrine of divine grace in relation to the moral conflict in man, a problem which for him has not been a purely speculative one. In his case, as in that of most ordinary mortals, moral integration does not necessarily follow immediately on intellectual conviction. Even under the influence of divine grace it may take a lifetime to achieve; perhaps it may never be achieved in this life. The important thing is that a man should acknowledge his need and nakedness before God, and this, in spite of an obvious, and indeed legitimate 'pride of intellect', Dr Joad has done.

Having read this book, one is reminded of the words with which Justin Martyr ended the account of his conversion in the second century. 'That is how and why I became a philosopher.' (*Dial. with Trypho*, II, 6.) We have seen another example of a classical 'pattern' of conversion. A man seeks truth by the unaided effort of reason and is disappointed; truth is offered him by faith and he accepts; and having accepted, he finds that it satisfies his reason.

EGBERT COLE, O.P.