

genetic' (p. 18). In Part One, entitled 'From Religious Experience to Religious Attitude' he discusses the formation of the religious attitude from the point of view of 'structural genetics' with chapters on religious experience, religious motivation, the parental images that underly the image of God, tensions and structures of religious attitude, and atheism. Part Two, 'Outlines of a Genetic Religious Psychology', sets out recent empirical work on religion during childhood and adolescence.

I found the first three chapters by far the most interesting and, while reluctantly eschewing a discussion of Vergote on religious motivation, shall confine myself to a presentation of his leading ideas on religious experience, since they bring some clarity into an area where clarity is sorely needed. He draws on a wide range of authors from Freud to Eliade and on a number of empirical studies carried out under his direction in Belgium.

He is interested in what he calls pre-religious experiences, experiences which lead men to form religious attitudes, rather than with the religious experience of the man far advanced in religion. Modern man is suspicious of traditional pure mystical experience (an I-Thou encounter with God) but is open to various types of pre-religious experience. These include the experience of the cosmic sacred of the Romantics (now only found among working-

class women, rural men, and literary adolescents). Intellectual urbanites are, however, open to the experience of 'the world as a totality; (and) existence seen as something supported and penetrated by a transcendent' (p. 77). Vergote attributes the success of Teilhard de Chardin to the fact that his vision of reality is based on this type of pre-religious experience. The 'oceanic' monist experience frequently described today is termed pre-religious by Vergote because, on the Freudian view which he accepts, it involves affective regression to that period in the child's life when he did not know that he was separate from his mother.

His discussion of the formation of the deity image shows that it is more complex than either the mother or the father image and is influenced by both of them. It follows that: 'Religion, openness to the Other, can only come about by the dialectic force of the two constitutive elements of the human: harmonious and blessed plenitude in man's early life, and the reality principle of which the father is the figure' (p. 162). Normal religious development is not possible in a man lacking adequate parental images. This means that the neurotic will not find God until his own self is reconstituted—a fact that seems in line with traditional religious wisdom.

EMMA SHACKLE

THE PRIESTS WHO GO. An Analysis of fifty-two cases, by Willemien T. M. Quant, H. Scheepers, L. C. M. Meljers, C. J. B. J. Trimbos, translated by Hubert Hoskins. *Sheed and Ward*, London, 1969, 134 pp. 30s. or £1.50.

Eugene Schallert, S.J., who has just completed an American survey of priests who have left the ministry, has said, 'Those who are leaving are some of the best men in the church—some of the most intelligent, most enterprising, most charismatic. They are occupationally top men, capable of holding down really good jobs' (*Time*, 23rd February, 1970). The popular view tends to be more punitive in its approach. The most interesting finding of this Dutch analysis of the dossiers which were submitted to Rome on behalf of fifty-two priests applying for laicization in the diocese of Den Bosch from 1964 until 1967 is that these clergy in no way constitute a homogeneous group.

The data available for the analysis carried out by W. T. M. Quant and H. Scheepers includes the reasons given by priests for leaving the ministry and the statements made by witnesses (selected by the priests themselves) who provided declarations in support of the

petitions. Inevitably the material is based on a selective group: those who were not prepared to follow official procedures could not be included. (Appendices include forms for application and grant of dispensation from Holy Orders.) Most of those included in the analysis cited several reasons for leaving. A wrong decision in the first place and the decision to marry were mentioned most often as the main reason. Moreover, the authors point out, 'in the case of all these priests celibacy is the *immediate* occasion of their leaving: all of them want to marry, already have concrete plans for marriage, or hope for marriage in the future' (p. 18). Doctrinal difficulties were given as the major cause for leaving by only two of the priests. W. Quant and H. Scheepers conclude that the resignation of two-thirds of the clergy studied can best be understood in terms of failure to find satisfaction in the priestly function within the pre-

sent structures of the Church. Resignation follows disillusionment. For the other third, the priesthood still had meaning in the present circumstances: 'for them *it is no very great matter* to part company with an ecclesial order divorced from life, in which there is no place for a married man to hold office' (p. 34). The writers seem to make good use of the data available, but it is only a beginning to the analysis of a complex problem.

The other two sections of the book relate specifically to the celibacy issue. In the chapter on the 'Married Priest', L. C. M. Meijers explains the background to the papal edicts of the eleventh century strictly enforcing celibacy as a universal requirement for the priesthood in the Western Church. The influence of monasticism, especially that of Cluny, on the reform of the ordinary priestly life instituted at this period is well known. Both Gregory VII and Urban II had been monks at Cluny. This proscription against married clergy culminated in the provision of the second Lateran Council (in the next century) that those who received

the higher orders were incapable of contracting a valid marriage.

Less well known than this extension of monastic asceticism to the ordinary clergy is the secular problem with which married clergy faced the Church at this time. In the feudal society that grew out of the dark ages they posed a problem which could not have arisen in any other age. This problem was the attempt by married priests to dispose of Church property as their own inheritance and even to regard their office as inheritable, as a kind of private franchise, so typical of an age which tended to treat public offices as private property.

It was against this kind of abuse that the 'canonists found an appropriate weapon against inheritance of ecclesiastical offices and property in the provision that a priest's marriage was null and void' (p. 43).

Perhaps the most important point made by the book is this: 'if it is becoming a normal thing for priests to resign, that should tell us more about the church itself than about the priests in question' (p. 2). JOAN BROTHERS

CHILDREN UNDER STRESS, by Sula Wolff. *Allen Lane The Penguin Press*, London, 1969. 248 pp. 42s.

THE PREVENTION OF DAMAGING STRESS IN CHILDREN. A Report edited by Jonathan Gould. *J. & A. Churchill Ltd*, 1968, 156 pp. 21s.

CHILDREN IN DISTRESS, by Sir Alec Clegg and Barbara Megson. *Penguin Books Ltd*, 1968, 175 pp. 4s.

In her important book, Dr Sula Wolff describes the main reasons for stress in children—illness and going into hospital, bereavement, illegitimacy, family disruption, the neurotic family, cultural deprivation, constitutional disorders and mental illness. The Report edited by Dr Jonathan Gould for presentation to the 7th International Congress for Mental Health, London, August 1968, recognizes the same stressful situations and vulnerable children, with chapters and suggested remedies by doctors, psychiatrists and social workers. Dr Wolff was one of the contributors to the original study group that compiled the report.

Children in Distress by Sir Alec Clegg and his administrative assistant deals with children under stress as revealed by, and dealt with or neglected by, the educational system in the West Riding of Yorkshire where Sir Alec has been Chief Education Officer since 1945. His findings have relevance for the country as a whole.

The Report estimates a risk-rate of damaging stress (excluding delinquency) of nearly 10 per cent of our children, and comments that although the number is not overwhelming it seems to be on the increase and 'the problem

touches at the moment at least one million of our children under fourteen years of age'. Sir Alec puts the figure a little higher at 12 per cent. By distress he means 'children who are often wretchedly unhappy because of the strain put upon them at home'. He estimates that in the West Riding some 5,000 children receive curative help, but a further 25,000-30,000 need preventive help and receive very little of it. 'Much more should be done to tackle behaviour problems the moment they are detected in the incipient stage of distress rather than waiting until the courts compel some more urgent action.'

Dr Wolff's theme is illustrated with case-histories, Sir Alec's with scores of trenchant comments from teachers and others dealing with children in school. One head wrote: 'I have spent hours with him and am no nearer getting through the barrier that has been created than I was two years ago.' An infants' headmistress said: 'Of the nineteen children admitted in September there were eight who could not fit red to a red jersey or blue to a blue bead. . . . For some, communication by speech is an art to be acquired in school, toilet training has not been established, and the