

## From Our Friends

In September, 1951, Dr. Dreikurs received a letter from Phyllis Bottome, Red Willows, St. Ives, Cornwall, which we present, in part, as follows:

"I, too, felt greatly surprised that Adler's book on Organic Deficiency and its Psychic Compensation should reveal any root inconsistency with his later views, as the critic in the *Bulletin*\* seems to find. We have no translation of this early book in this country and therefore no such difficulty has arisen over here. We assume that organ delicacy, as Adler did, is only one likely cause of neurosis, but by no means the only one. Spoiling and ill-treatment can equally produce in a child 'the flight from responsibility' which Alfred Adler, from the earliest experience of his Individual Psychology group in 1913, defined as neurosis. This is no mechanistic hypothesis since it includes the choice of the person involved in the flight.

"No doubt time and practice both developed, and sometimes checked, Adler's original theories and it is possible that his desire to exclude all limitations and prescribed treatment may have led to misunderstandings or to contradictions which he himself might have solved. His books are very misleading revelations of what he gave through his lectures and treatment of his patients, and through personal contact with his friends. . . .

"We feel, too, that there are helpful portents for the spread of Individual Psychology, and Spiel's book, written from thirty years' continuous experience in his Viennese school, is an immense clarification of Adler's ideas and their dynamic effect on children. I do not know if you have read Manes Sperber's *Burned Bramble*. This is another unexpected and tremendous contribution towards the artistic representation of Individual Psychology through dialectic.

"I was not wholly satisfied with Lewis Way's book myself but I feel that he has a scholar's grasp on Individual Psychology and that we should do well to recommend it in its own field as highly as possible. I think the *Bulletin* reviewer should have pointed out that all paradoxical theories seem to contradict themselves, to unthinking minds, although the underlying unity is deepened rather than destroyed by these seeming contradictions. We must never forget that Alfred Adler was not only a scientist, he was a very great artist."

---

\* "Adler's Place in Psychology," by Bernard H. Shulman, M.D., *Individual Psychology Bulletin*, Vol. IX, 1st Quarter (1951), p. 31; an analysis of *Adler's Place in Psychology*, by Lewis Way, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London, 1950.