

BOOK REVIEWS

INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY IN THE SCHOOLS

RUDOLF DREIKURS. *Psychology in the Classroom; a Manual for Teachers*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957. Pp. xvi + 237. \$3.75.

Dr. Dreikurs' latest book is devoted to the purpose of training teachers to handle the many behavior problems their pupils present. Undoubtedly the great need of our teachers today is for just this, and Dreikurs has taken an immeasurable step in helping them to meet their need, for his book fulfills its purpose exceedingly well. The task is obviously neither small nor easy. A course of training must include a clear statement of principles to furnish a check and a guide for practical planning, and many concrete suggestions to give the teacher a starting point for action. Dreikurs has succeeded in both these specifications.

In the first sixty pages he covers the basic principles of psychodynamics as seen within the framework of Individual Psychology. He is a disciple of Adler in the best sense of the word. He understands Adler's position so thoroughly that, having acknowledged the source of his views, he can express himself freely and according to the specific nature of his case material. In this way he has been able to make Individual Psychology come alive into the classrooms of the United States today and to express it in timely terminology (face-saving, warming up, togetherness, etc.). As we should expect, Dreikurs also makes contributions of his own to the theory. For instance, he regards the desire to become a part of the group as the essential aspect of social interest; and he sets up a helpful classification of behavior problems on the basis of four distinguishable goals: attention, power, revenge, and exemption on the basis of disability.

The second part of the book, on practical applications, contains case material furnished by students in Dreikurs' classes for teachers at Indiana and Northwestern Universities. These accounts include descriptions of the child's problem, of its dynamic factors, of the plan for action adopted, and of the resulting effects on the child. Sixty-one cases, comprising richly didactic material, are presented in the chapters headed Encouragement, Natural Consequences (as against punitive measures), Understanding the Child's Life Style, Toward Changing the Child's Goals, Group Discussion, Group Situations, and Effective Procedures. Each case report is accompanied by comments in

which Dreikurs ties in the specific aspects with the principles explained in the preceding section of the book, and evaluates the teachers' measures in the light of the same framework. Such reviewing of the principles all through the practical section is one reason for the effectiveness of the presentation. In this, as well as the simplicity of language, uncomplicated by specialized terminology, Dreikurs is following the tradition of Adler.

The following excerpts will show how simply Dreikurs makes the point for a dynamic creativity, for the subjective approach, and for the advantage of the teleological position over the mechanistic. "The child not only reacts; he also acts." "Discouragement, resentment, and feelings of frustration do not result from external conditions, but from an individual's appraisal of his own ability to meet them." "As soon as the discussion is focused on motivation, the door opens for reconsideration. The child may discover that he actually did not accomplish what he thought he did."

After the teacher has acquired the necessary psychological insight, courage and imagination will still be needed to try out the new techniques. It seems likely that the reader of the manual will catch a spark of courage from the author. Dreikurs' own courage stems from his assessment of the enormous need for correcting the maladjustments of the school child, and the urgency of this situation, as well as from his confidence in the psychological principles he professes. Thus he believes we cannot wait until formulations of the deeper dynamics are agreed upon by all investigators; we must use the most plausible formulations as working hypotheses and constantly test them with our experience. Schools cannot wait until parents have learned to raise socially and emotionally well-adjusted offspring; teachers must do the best they can to fit the present imperfectly reared crop of children to take their contributing places in our democratic society. Dreikurs is not frightened by the possibility that some interpretations of an inexperienced teacher may be wrong, for he believes they cannot do much harm as long as they are concerned not with why the child misbehaves, but with the purposes for which he does so. Thus Dreikurs maintains, "A little psychological knowledge seems preferable to the prevalent lack of it,"—so long as its application to specific cases emphasizes *not causes, but goals*.

After reading the book one feels challenged to see *Psychology in the Classroom* put to the test directly. Its value could be measured by the following simple experiment. One school system, or even one school,

should be organized to put into total practice the training of teachers Dreikurs advocates; the difference which this would make in the children should show through comparison with control groups. Here is a worth-while project to be initiated by a roused community, a group of stimulated teachers, or a beneficent foundation.

ROWENA R. ANSBACHER

THE TWO BIOGRAPHIES OF ALFRED ADLER

HERTHA ORGLER. *Alfred Adler, der Mann und sein Werk; Triumph ueber den Minderwertigkeitskomplex*. Vienna: Urban & Schwarzenberg, 1956. Pp. xi + 259. S 96.-, DM 16.-.

PHYLLIS BOTTOME. *Alfred Adler; Apostle of Freedom*. (3rd Ed.) London: Faber & Faber, 1957. Pp. 300. 25s.

It is gratifying to know that the biography by Mrs. Orgler, which was published originally in English in 1939, with a second edition in 1947, and which has been translated into Dutch and French, has now also appeared in Adler's native tongue. The German edition is not the work of a translator but of the author herself. It differs from the first English edition in that a number of passages have been added, while others have been omitted, generally in the interest of bringing the material up-to-date. The most prominent new part is the autobiographical account of 16 pages by the ex-convict whom Adler employed as his gardener.

An addition of theoretical interest is the statement on p. 96 that Adler, in his later days, referred to *Gemeinschaftsgefuehl* as *Mitmenslichkeit* and *Soziales Interesse*. We have, however, found no support for this contention. Two German papers by Adler, published in 1937, use the term *Gemeinschaftsgefuehl* exclusively, and it is the general usage in his last book, *Der Sinn des Lebens*. The accepted English translation of the term, however, has indeed become "social interest," which was also chosen as the title of his last book.

On the formal side, the German edition contains a photograph of Adler which, to our knowledge, has not been published before, bears Adler's signature, and is dated 1927, although it appears to have been taken earlier. New are also a sample of Adler's handwriting in the form of a letter to Mrs. Orgler, and an index of names. The book is introduced by Professor Oskar Spiel, who pays tribute to Adler, summarizes his contributions, and points out the qualifications of Mrs. Orgler for her biographical task.

Miss Bottome's biography also was published originally in 1939. It appeared simultaneously in England and the United States. While the American book has been out of print for some years, the English book had a second edition in 1946, with an additional printing in 1947, and has now appeared in its third edition.

Compared to the first edition, the book has been extended by two chapters, one on "Organ Jargon," and the other on "Humour in Psychology." Names which had to be omitted originally, due to the political situation, have been filled in, and the latest developments in Individual Psychology have been taken into account. Also, the index has become much more detailed, thus increasing its usefulness. On the other hand, whereas the American edition had eight illustrations, of Adler, his family, his friends and his house, the new book includes only one portrait of Adler.

Throughout the book, longer paragraphs have been replaced by several short ones, consisting often of only two or three lines. Thereby the author has succeeded in further enhancing the vividness and immediacy of her presentation.

Miss Bottome's new preface is searching and perceptive. She considers why Individual Psychology, despite its simplicity, should have met with as much resistance as it does, and offers the following explanation:

The real difficulty in Adler's psychology, and the reason for the sharp antagonism it often arouses, is that it involves a fundamental change in the human being who accepts it; and is something of a reproof to those who refuse it. A man can be a Freudian and yet remain very much what he was before he became one, plus some interesting intellectual discoveries. But if he becomes an Adlerian he must actually move towards a goal which destroys prestige-living; he must try to become a 'socially-interested' human being.

At the same time she wonders why the clergy have not shown a more positive interest in "the one psychology that has a practical approach towards the goal of all religion—man's love of his neighbour." Individual Psychology could well become a fresh ally to religion without encroaching upon it, for Adler "would never have claimed any final explanation of man's significance in the universe; this he left to religion." All Adler wanted to accomplish was to help a patient "to free himself from the bondage of his own self-love and the havoc of his tendentious wishes." It is in this sense that Miss Bottome explains her subtitle, *The Apostle of Freedom*, "because the essence of Individual Psychology is the release of a man from the compulsion of his own desires."

H. L. A.

ADLER IN PAPERBACKS

ALFRED ADLER. *Understanding Human Nature*. New York: Premier Books, Fawcett World Library, 1957. Pp. 224. 50c.

This is the most widely translated and most frequently reprinted of Adler's books. First published in 1927 and based on a series of lectures given at an undetermined earlier time, it is a systematic and broad presentation of Adler's psychology, including such topics as perception, learning, emotion. It deals with the normal personality.

While Adler stresses here the logic of communal living as the "absolute truth," and social interest as the ultimate criterion for appraising a person, he still describes the basic dynamic force as the striving for power, for significance, for superiority. He had not yet reformulated the striving as one for completion, totality, perfection, and overcoming. Adler clarified the matter completely not until several years later when he said: "The striving . . . is towards overcoming, not towards power. Striving for power, for personal power, represents only one of a thousand types, all of which seek perfection, a security-giving plus situation" (1933).

Also, shortcomings of the translation need to be mentioned. In his translation, Beran Wolfe endeavored to be idiomatic. The idiom of his time, however, was influenced by the prevailing behavioristic frame of reference. Thus, on numerous occasions a term from the subjectivistic, phenomenological frame of reference was translated into an objectifying term, thereby introducing a subtle distortion. For example, *Lebensschablone*, which means "schema of life," is translated as "behavior pattern;" *Leitlinie*, meaning "guiding line," as "graph of life;" and *Weltbild*, meaning "image of the world," as "cosmic picture."

It would be highly desirable if in some future edition the two points raised here would be taken into account.

H. L. A.

LEWIS WAY. *Alfred Adler; an Introduction to his Psychology*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex; Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1956. Pp. 252. 32/6. 85c.

This is one of a series of Pelican Books edited by Professor C. A. Mace to present the thought of the great psychologists according to

the principle "let the man speak for himself" as much as possible, and at the same time to give an account that is rounded out and readable. Mr. Way, who also wrote *Man's Quest for Significance* and *Adler's Place in Psychology*, does this very successfully indeed.

The material is organized into five chapters dealing with the life style and its foundation; neurosis, its predisposing conditions and symptoms; sex and its disorders, and love and marriage; psychological diagnosis and treatment; and education at home and in the school. This is preceded by a full-length biographical chapter of Adler. The back-cover of the book gives a portrait and a biographical sketch of the author.

In accordance with the editorial plan, the book is replete with often long quotations from Adler's books, giving the desired authenticity. The most frequent source is *What Life Should Mean to You*, used 64 times. Next are *Social Interest* and *Problems of Neurosis* with 23 references each. *Understanding Human Nature* follows with 15 references, and nine further sources are used with lesser frequency, including some unpublished material. The excellent biographical chapter is based primarily on Bottome's biography, but also on Orgler's, and on the autobiography of Stekel.

If the book has shortcomings, these seem to us to be that some of the cornerstones of Adler's system, such as social interest and creativity, are not sharply enough focused upon. At the same time, the earlier writings of Adler on organ inferiorities and their compensation receive perhaps too much emphasis. This appears to be born out in the editor's foreword where the theory of inferiority and of compensation is singled out as a major thesis of the Adlerian system. Actually, Adler in his later years, increasingly replaced the idea of striving as a compensatory process—which corresponds to deficiency motivation (Maslow)—by the conception that the upward striving is something primary, part of life itself, a striving for an unattainable perfection or completion—corresponding to true growth motivation. While Way does quote Adler as stating that the child strives "towards a goal of perfection that appears to offer him fulfillment," the difference of this from a striving for mere compensation is not brought out.

Despite such shortcomings, Mr. Way's book is easily the most convenient and best introduction to Adler and his work available to the general reader.

A PSYCHIATRIC TEXTBOOK ON NEUROSES

HENRY P. LAUGHLIN. *The Neuroses in Clinical Practice*. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 1956. Pp. 802. \$12.50.

This book is one of the recent well received psychiatric texts. It deals in a thorough manner with the diagnosis, symptomatology, course, and treatment of the neuroses; includes a comprehensive index and an excellent glossary of terms; and is well written in a clear, although verbose, style.

One can criticize this volume firstly for its extreme redundancy and repetitiveness, and secondly for the introduction of the author's personal nomenclature. The latter only furthers the present chaos in terminology and classification.

The psychodynamic theory used is the one prevalent in American psychiatry, drawing in large measure on Freud and stressing the causalogic approach and the importance of intrapsychic equilibrium and defenses. However, this is not exclusively the author's position, as is shown by his interest in the purposive, teleologic aspects of neuroses in the chapter entitled "Illusory Gains of Emotional Illness," and by statements such as, "After all, the most important task for the patient is his learning in what way he inadvertantly contributes to his own defeat, discomfort or misery." This is an example of the way in which concepts which we regard as Adlerian are being increasingly introduced into American psychiatry.

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