

THE WAY OF A PILGRIM, trans. R. M. French. *SPCK*. xv + 125 pp. New ed. 1972, with Introduction by Anthony Bloom. 50p.

At last the SPCK have relented and reprinted *The Way of a Pilgrim*, that remarkably *simpático* little book which did more than anything else to foster the revived interest in hesychasm and the Jesus Prayer throughout the whole of Christendom—it was, for instance, one of the factors leading to the decision to reprint the *Philokalia* in Athens in 1957. This time, too, it is a paperback at very modest price; and there is a new Introduction by Anthony Bloom. Perhaps this last feature is a little disappointing; Anthony Bloom is so concerned to protect the Jesus Prayer from some of its less ecclesiastical enthusiasms that his tone is decidedly cool. Of course he is right to remind us that hesychasm is not magic; it presupposes that one is living the full Christian life within the Church. And there are

hazards that may be fatal for the foolhardy who venture too far without proper supervision. And it should not be taken as an invitation to social irresponsibility. But surely the cardinal message of the book is that the Lord is our shepherd, and we must trust in him; he will lead us to teachers and helpers as we need them. Presumption is only one of the vices we are tempted to; timidity is surely just as lethal, if not more so. If *The Way of a Pilgrim* inspires people to turn to God, however foolishly, surely our response must be to encourage them, and try to lead them further; not merely to pour cold water on them.

All the same, it's an excellent ten bob's worth; and all thanks to the SPCK for relenting and letting us have the book once more.

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HEALING IN DEPTH, by Culver M. Barker. *Hodder and Stoughton*, London, 1972. 191 pp. £2.50.

DEPTH PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF, by Christopher Bryant, S.S.J.E. *Mirfield Publications*, Mirfield (Yorkshire), 1972. 75 pp. (price not given).

One of the greatest temptations in reading popularized psychology is to turn the tools of the trade against the author himself: when the writing becomes unbearably banal or bombastic, one can always make sport of it by trying to tease out a repressed desire or a hidden complex behind the facade of argumentation. But some books, like Culver Barker's *Healing in Depth*, deserve a more charitable reading in spite of the academic crudeness of their theorizing. For it is only very rarely that a successful analyst and a competent theoretician come together in one man; to a great extent our understanding of the healing power of clinical psychology must still appeal to the case-histories of relatively naive but serious-minded alienists like Dr. Barker.

The stamp of C. G. Jung's ideas and prejudices is impressed on every page of the book. Dr. Barker's unswerving, almost idolatrous, fidelity to the 'Master' will make what he writes difficult to stomach for those of other persuasions, and indeed even for Jungians interested in re-examining the assumptions of

archetypal psychology. Hence it is hard to agree with van der Post (who is himself no stranger to the hyperbole) that 'there is no psychologist living who could afford to ignore this book' (p. 5). Nevertheless, the essays gathered together here do reflect the life-long dedication of an honest and able analyst whose experiences often lead one to pause and wonder at the mysteries of the human psyche.

*Depth Psychology and Religious Belief* is much less impressive. Its author, Christopher Bryant, is an Anglican clergyman who has tried to press counselling psychology into the service of spiritual direction. The approach is loose, full of metaphor and pious advice, and disconnected from actual clinical experience. Moreover, it is hard to see how anyone could overlook the glaring contradictions in his case against atheism and his appeal to Christian faith as a cure for neurosis. With books like Fr. Bryant's, one may feel far less guilty for engaging in parapractic hermeneutics.

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