

Catholic, or so Catholic because they are so Irish, but I do know that when they lose their Irish spirit they are good for nothing." One has but to look around here to find the old man's thesis proved by experience. Another matter that requires consideration before our next competitions is the form of examination. There seems little doubt, according to the examiners' reports, that the great similarity between many papers from the same schools suggests that the pupils' work was not wholly unaided. The practice hitherto followed of publishing questions some weeks beforehand gave teachers and pupils who had done nothing at all previously as good a chance as those who had kept at the subject daily. It might be better in future to send out to teachers—or better still to the local priest, if he could be persuaded to take an interest in Irish History—a printed question paper dealing with matter specified in the syllabus, and to be answered on paper by the pupils on an appointed date, before which they shall not have seen the questions. All these topics suggest matter for reflection, and we hope Father O'Neill, Father O'Donnell, and Father Lynch will prepare a plan as soon as convenient for them.

### Psycho-Analysis

Oskar Pfister defines Psycho-Analysis as a scientifically grounded method devoted to neurotic and mentally deranged persons, as well as to normal individuals, which seeks, by the collection and interpretation of associations, to investigate and influence the instinctive forces and content of mental life lying below the threshold of consciousness. The great pioneer of Psycho-Analysis was Sigmund Freud, whose studies of the manifestations of the sub-conscious paved the way for latter exponents, like Jung and Adler. It may be called the science of the unconscious, aiming as it does, at "setting free the unconscious with a view to the discovery of the patient's buried complexes, or at investigating the content and working of the unconscious mind and the relations between the conscious and the unconscious." Psycho-Analysts find in the mind two activities, the conscious and the unconscious. Part of our past experience is actually present in consciousness: part is unconscious. Of the latter, part is recallable at will, and is termed the preconscious: part is not recallable, and is termed the true unconscious, or the sub-conscious. No experience through which we have passed is lost to us. "In the unconscious," says Freud, "there is no ending, no past, no forgetting." According to the theory of Freud there are leakings from the unconscious at times. In dreams, in day-dreams, in sudden flashes of memory, in sudden actions and sayings, in strange intuitions and dislikes and likes, something comes up from the sub-conscious at times. "The unconscious," says Freud, "is the larger circle which includes within itself the smaller circle of the conscious. Everything conscious has its preliminary step in the unconscious, whereas, the unconscious may stop with this step and still claim its full value as a physical activity. . . . Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the fact that the real causes of what we do in our acts from hour to hour are hidden from us, and that the majority of assigned reasons are mere pretexts, the real motives being in the unconscious, and therefore, absolutely inaccessible to us." The last sentence, be it noted, is a good sample of the loose reasoning of devotees of the new science. They rush rashly to general conclusions by no means warranted by a few isolated facts and half-understood psychical phenomena. The Freudians regard the sub-conscious as a prison and a hospital into which painful and terrifying experiences are driven and repressed, sometimes giving rise to agonising mental conflicts, which translate themselves externally into nervous or hysterical symptoms. It is the aim of the analyst to search for such experiences and to discover their nature, with a view to restoring peace to the conscious mind. Freud thus sums up his doctrine of the unconscious: "There is no chance in the psychic world any more than in the physical. What look like accidental happenings, are not so in reality. Impulsive acts, nervous physical motions, hysterical paralyses, phobias, and obsessions, have all some counter-

part in the unconscious. 'An idea has been converted into a disease.' A large part of our psychic life remains and operates in the unconscious. We see only end-results which appear detached, incongruous, causeless. But, unconscious and conscious mind are but two aspects of one entity, one inconceivable without the other; both acting and reacting uninterruptedly throughout life."

Going back to the definition, the instinctive forces referred to may be regarded as the central fact of Freudian psychology. For Freud the basal instincts of man are the primitive brutal tendencies which, untamed and violent, exists as cave-dwellers in our unconscious. Freud selects the prominent instinct which, according to him, is called libido, emphasising its sexual character. Bergson calls it *élan vital*; Jung names it *horme*. The primitive instincts are described as egotistic and anti-social, seeking outlet in a pleasurable manner. As we grow up the instincts must be checked and restrained, and this is done by what the analysts call the Censor, or "the sum total of repressing inhibitions."

If the instincts are too severely checked they may produce a *complex*, that is, the mental counterpart of hysteria. Freud, emphasising the sexual character of the primitive instincts, found in their non-fulfilment the most patent cause of complexes and hysteria. He saw in art, poetry, and music, sublimations, or escapes, for the instinct. Such, briefly, if not clearly, is a summary of the outlines of the science of Psycho-Analysis of which we hear and read so much nowadays.

*Criticism.*—The violence of the passions, or animal instincts, is no new discovery. It has been the study of moralists of all times. St. Paul knew better than Freud the nature of the conflict between the law of the members and the law of the mind. What Freudians call the Censor, is only a new name for conscience and good habits, which have, since man was made, been doing the work of curbing evil inclinations. What they call the *complex* is nothing else than evil passion, with its latent associations and physiological components, checked by conscience, but always troublesome. It has always been recognised by Catholic philosophers that man is a two-fold entity, and that we act according to our two-fold nature, animal and spiritual. Freud has added nothing in this respect to the knowledge handed down to us by Aristotle and Aquinas: he has merely given us a new jargon, which tickles the ears of groundlings. What he has really done is some useful experimental work, which illustrates the concrete workings of the mind and of the instincts, normal and abnormal. As rational psychologists, Freudians have done little or nothing; as workers in empirical psychology, they have done a great deal. Psycho-Analysts, especially quacks among them, insist on a complete manifestation of conscience on the part of the patients who consult them. In no case, they say, ought a patient hold back from them any thought or experience, however painful or delicate. In other words, they assume the role of confessors. Men who have had no spiritual training, who may be unworthy of confidence, and liable to abuse it, claim secrets which have for ages been dealt with by trained spiritual directors, bound by solemn sanction never to betray what is revealed to them. In fact, they assume to deal effectively with what is really a moral and not a physical problem; and very often, instead of healing the weak will and rebuilding the moral wreck, they do more harm than good, while, at the same time, wasting no little time and gaining, perhaps, no little money. In theory, it may be lawful to submit to the Freudian methods of dream-interpretation, free-association, hypnotism, etc, under proper safeguards, but cases might easily arise, wherein considerable moral risk might be run, and in which the treatment might be morally unjustifiable. Father Barret, S.J., says: "The more one knows of Freudian psychology and the Freudian spirit and the Freudian view of human nature, the more one is forced to regard with suspicion the method; at least, of those who are avowed Freudians. And as regards the analytic method, in general, the process is far more searching than is found in the practice of confession, whilst it is stripped of safeguards attached to the latter."

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