Review

Author(s): J. E. L. Oulton

Review by: J. E. L. Oulton

Source: *The Irish Church Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 40 (Oct., 1917), p. 287

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30067704>

Accessed: 21-06-2016 08:14 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Irish Church Quarterly*

ADVENTURES OF THE CHRISTIAN SOUL: being Chapters in the Psychology of Religion. By K. J. Saunders. With a Preface by the Very Rev. W. R. Inge, D.D. (University Press). 3s. 6d. net.

St. Augustine expresses his astonishment that men "go forth to marvel at lofty mountains and mighty torrents, and the expanse of the ocean, and the movements of the stars,—and pass themselves by." But the present age is hardly in danger of making that mistake. The last thing it would think of doing is to pass itself by; it is pre-eminently self-conscious.

Mr. Saunders' book is the child of the age, in that it deals with the Psychology of Religion, purposing "to relate these adventures of the Christian soul to biological and physiological processes in the more ordinary, but not more natural, affairs of every-day life." In the course of a short volume we are conducted through a number of subjects—the Subconscious, Religion and Childhood and Adolescence, Conversion, Mysticism, Prayer and Meditation, always in an interesting, if somewhat discursive, manner. The excessive use of technical terms has obscured some pages; otherwise the treatment is arresting and popular, in the best sense of the term.

In the first chapter, we are very properly warned against the idea that the unconscious is necessarily purer and more divine than the conscious self. By no means; the former is only a lumber-room or store-house, filled with all sorts and conditions of things, and as likely to contain Mr. Hyde as Dr. Jekyll.

But perhaps the most interesting part of the book is that which tabulates results of experiments as to the awakening of the religious conviction in childhood and adolescence. This has, obviously, an important bearing on the age for Confirmation, and it would seem that 13 to 14 is attested by results to be the usual period for the first really profound religious impressions. Mr. Saunders also deals very sympathetically with that most difficult period when the youth is growing into the man, a period marked by depression and melancholy, and a striving after self-expression. We think, however, that 18 to 21 is too brief a limit for this phase; it should be extended two or three years longer, as is testified by the expression "the malady of twenty-three," sometimes given to these growing-pains of the soul.

The Dean of St. Paul's, in an interesting preface, supplies a wholesome corrective to those who would exchange Religion for Psychology.

J. E. L. OULTON.