BOOK REVIEWS


The influence of Mrs. Melanie Klein upon psychoanalysis in England has been profound. Ernest Jones explains in his introduction how it caused in the British Psychoanalytical Society a deep rift which he is sure will be reproduced in all other psychoanalytical societies: up to now, however, supporters of Mrs. Klein have been almost exclusively to be found among psychoanalysts trained in this country. The violence of the feelings aroused in this civil war is well known, and some indications of it may be inferred from the 1927 contribution to a symposium on child analysis, here reprinted, in which Mrs. Klein criticizes Anna Freud's work severely, and from the resentful postscript on the same theme written twenty years later. The increasing boldness of Mrs. Klein's interpretations and theory is evident in these papers; the reader is amazed at the courage with which far-reaching generalizations are based on necessarily restricted observation, and are put in a form which seems hardly susceptible of proof or disproof. None of these articles in which Mrs. Klein has revealed her standpoint should be readily accessible to her supporters, her instructed opponents, and the larger body of interested but ill-informed onlookers. There are eighteen articles, mostly concerned with psychoanalytic aspects of childhood.


Psychotherapy has become so intricate and specialized a subject that a book such as this of Kretschmer's seems at once remote and reassuring for the intimidated doctor who is not a psychotherapist. Kretschmer declares roundly that he has no intention of describing or criticizing psychoanalysis; he thinks that its research possibilities have been exhausted, and its fruitful and valid elements already incorporated in the general body of psychiatric knowledge. Such statements indicate the gulf between his views and those commonly put forward in English and American works. In other respects Kretschmer remains in an earlier decade: he values highly, for example, the training method of J. H. Schultz, which is closely akin to the "relaxation" therapy of Jacobsen. As a whole the book shows the common, probably the inevitable, weakness of works on psychotherapy: it contains much interesting material about psychopathology and about clinical conditions which respond in diverse ways to psychotherapy, but about the methods and indications of practical psychotherapy itself it offers scanty information. The first part is devoted to ways of approaching the deeper layers of personality; the second part deals with constitutional problems of personality; and the third part contains chapters on the psychotherapy of schizophrenia, the analysis of dreams, and methods of psychotherapy.


There seems to be a tendency in some medical circles to make psychosomatic medicine a specialty on its own. Those who are particularly interested in the study of organic disease have often restricted themselves to a mere lip-service of the concept of treating the patient and not the lesion. Those more psychologically oriented have made such wide use of psychoanalytic methods and ideas, which are not universally acceptable, that the breach has widened. There is a great need of clinical work which will bridge this gap; it is, however, not to be filled by the work of specialists of a new kind, but by an approach from both sides. The present work, which is produced in collaboration by a general physician and a psychiatrist, makes a not entirely successful effort to do so.

The terms of reference accepted by the authors are very wide. They understand psychosomatic medicine to cover "not only the physical manifestations of neurotic and psychotic disorders; the diseases of the vegetative nervous system; but also, and more importantly, the great variety of mixtures of psychological and structural disorders which make up the bulk of the practice of medicine." The first third of the book is taken up with chapters on personality development and psychopathology, psychosomatic diagnosis, principles of psychotherapy, normal problems in psychotherapy, training in psychosomatic medicine, etc. The usefulness of such a preamble may be doubted. It is not usual to preface textbooks of medicine with chapters on physiology and anatomy. As, moreover, the whole approach to medical psychology is psychoanalytic, the book from its very beginning receives a one-sided slant which detracts from the confidence it will inspire in the detached enquirer.

The second part of the book is concerned with the special applications of psychosomatic medicine, and the matter here is arranged under the various systems. About half the space in this section is occupied by very detailed case histories, whilst the bulk of what remains is devoted to long excerpts from the work of others. It is very difficult to extract the authors' own views from the welter of opinions quoted. The primary lack of balance is shown again in this section; much attention is given to the bodily effects of emotional causes, but practically none is devoted to the emotional changes
 which may arise through organic disease of the brain. The role of the frontal lobes and the hypothalamus is almost ignored. Furthermore, from the therapeutic aspect, although psychotherapy receives a large allowance of space, the physical methods of treatment are allowed only cursory mention.

The book is designed as an all-purpose work for students, general practitioners, and specialists. For this it is not well adapted, and it will be found of greatest value if it is treated as a source book for ideas on the exploration along psychological lines of disorders which are recognized to have connexions with the emotional life of the individual patient. For this purpose the great amount of space given to the case histories is not entirely wasted.


This is a faithful rendering of the teaching of Adolf Meyer, and therefore informative to a generation which wonders how this famous psychiatrist came to exert such a prodigious influence though his published writings were relatively few and scattered. Dr. Harrowes has acted as the dutiful disciple, adding and subtracting nothing (except illustrative records). The modern developments of psychology in their bearing on psychiatry therefore do not appear, nor newer methods of psychological and physical treatment. In spite of these serious limitations, the book is a readable exposition of "commonsense" psychobiology.


The language of this book, which is designed to make psychiatry plain to general practitioners, is admirably simple and free from technical terms: but the author (who is a neurologist) allows the habit of simplified explanation to grow upon him, so that he tells the reader, for example, that Huntington's chorea is a disease of adults which runs in families, and that in petit mal there are periodical interruptions of consciousness; the chapter on physical examination would be too elementary for a final year medical student. His accounts of psychiatric conditions are sometimes equally banal or superfluous: the numerous case reports read like novelettes, as though Dr. Thorner had concluded that the doctors for whom he wrote could not be interested in sober records which would make some demand on their attention. There is nothing incorrect in the book, and the practitioner will find in it much good advice, but he could obtain all that it offers by reading a much briefer volume.


Psychological research depends greatly on statistics. Professor Quinn McNemar, whose competence in this field is well known, has here produced a lucid, exact, well-organized text carrying the reader through all the statistical techniques commonly used in psychology, except factor analysis. The latter omission is deliberate, and in view of the limited purpose of the book, warranted. Sampling theory is dealt with early, in a masterly chapter, and there are also some final notes on sampling and statistical inference which come after correlation and analysis of variance have been expounded. The three chapters on variance and co-variance are exceptionally clear.


This is a collection of fourteen essays presented by past pupils and associates to Professor Golla on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. This is a happy thought, and the outcome in this volume, is outstandingly successful. The distinguished contributors seem to enjoy the freedom to put down their thoughts in essay form, and the result is both instructive and stimulating. A list of the first six essays will suffice to whet the reader's appetite:


This large volume gives the detailed results of bilateral removal of various areas of the prefrontal cortex in 24 psychotic patients. Twenty-four "controls" with similar mental aberrations were also studied. A considerable amount of information, some of it apparently contradictory, already exists on the functions of the frontal lobes, and this was used to determine which function should be studied in searching for change after operation. In general, attention was directed to psychological functions, clinical psychiatric assessment, neurological examination and autonomic changes. As might be expected from the small numbers involved, no clear correlations emerge between change of a given function and a detailed area removed. In describing the areas, Brodmann's classification was used, and Mettler in a discussion on the cytoarchitecture of the removed tissue suggests that this classification is broadly confirmed. Operations in individual cases included fairly isolated removals of areas 6, 9, 10, 11, and 44 with combinations of these, and areas 8, 45, and 46. No constant psychological changes were noted, though a frequent reduction of anxiety, tension, and sometimes retardation, was seen. This was correlated with psychiatric improvement, and involvement of areas 9 and 10 seemed to be necessary for its appearance. Thirteen of the 24 operated patients were improved, and 9 of these were described as "at home and working" a year later. The adverse changes in personality sometimes seen after leucotomy, did not seem to occur here. No convincing neurological abnormality was found except as a temporary effect of
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some posterior removals. Changes in autonomic response sometimes occurred, and an interesting point was the appearance of a reticulocytosis in some patients. However, as this was not correlated with haemoglobin level it may have been merely a haemorrhagic effect.

Nothing very new emerges from the work. Nevertheless it is a useful addition to the subject, and will be of value in guiding future research. In a field still largely uncharted, such a detailed study even of a few cases is probably necessary, but it may be doubted whether the bulky psychiatric case histories are really of much value, and negative findings seem at times unnecessarily elaborated. The array of specialist talent collaborating in the work is impressive, though the English reader may get a suggestion of advertisement for the principle of the "combined research project". The book will undoubtedly be of interest to neurologists and psychiatrists, especially as it has an adequate reference section. It is a pity the price in this country is so high.


A book which has reached its third edition within seven years needs little introduction. The new edition, which includes the results of experience gained in the war years on the penetrating wounds, remains an excellent monograph on head injuries and a book indispensable to those engaged in accident work. The references given to each subject are particularly well chosen and show how much the value of a book is enhanced when attention is paid to this important but often neglected detail.

"Microscopical" on page 45 is presumably a misprint for "macroscopical", and there is a grammatical error on page 144.

The operative section is reliable. Further details of the efficacy of the operation advocated for external hydrocephalus would be welcome. It is surprising to note that the author still advocates the use of amnion for dural repair.

In looking forward to a further edition we hope that it will be possible for the author to give us a clearer indication of the incidence of epilepsy following head injury, a matter on which advice is so often sought. The section on birth injuries might well be expanded to describe more fully the clinical syndrome and treatment of subdural hematoma in infancy.


The first two-thirds of this interesting but unconvincing book gives very brief descriptions of the electrical phenomena found to influence, or supposed to influence living tissues. In the next 156 pages, water divining and kindred phenomena, including radiesthesia (pendumlum phenomena), are discussed. Then follows a bibliography of 1,496 references with a large section on the use of the divining rod. This bibliography forms a useful source of references to electro-biological phenomena and can be recommended to anyone beginning the study of the less known phenomena in bio-electricity. The accounts of the various subjects discussed are too short and too free from critical comment to give much indication of the validity of the various phenomena described.

The author is a professor of geology in Cairo. He attaches much weight to scientific tests made in physical and physiological laboratories in Holland during 1946 and 1947. These are said to have indicated that "divining phenomena are not due to charlatanry and suggestion, but really exist." He does however remark on page 289, in regard to the general literature of dowsing, that the facts are "partly true and partly fantastically imaginative," and "it is doubtful whether so much investigation and discussion have been bestowed on any other subject with such lack of positive evidence for the reality of the observed facts."

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Review in a later issue is not precluded by notice here of books recently received.)


