tactile memory and can be differentially injured. Moreover it commonly uses only one eye at a time so that visual training can be done exclusively in a monocular field. Professor Young and his co-workers have made full uses of these opportunities, as this book testifies.

In transferring the information gained to the human organism—which is not of course Professor Young's concern—the meaning of words may prove a stumbling block. To the clinician memory means the voluntary recall of past experience usually with some element of correct temporal orientation. It implies not only objective behaviour but also an element of subjective 'consciousness'. Professor Young, however, defines memory in more precise but more limited terms as 'the unit within which a record is stored'. The record is itself 'a representation within the memory'. This clear definition of terms is valuable and a safeguard, particularly when applying the findings to human memory. However, the anthropomorphic occasionally intrudes. The octopus's response in one situation is 'slow and cautious'. Slow is factual enough, but cautious seems to carry man-made implications. Nevertheless the computer approach which Professor Young uses to memory and other brain mechanisms can be a profitable mode of thought: and the concept of the brain as the computer of homeostasis for the organism will be recognized as useful as much by biologists of the human as of other animals.

This book is much concerned with the information code of the brain and in this context it considers especially neurones and their inter-connexion. The organization of dendritic fields is for instance examined as a possible anatomical basis for aspects of perception. Such a mechanism poses difficulties over 'generalization', an important aspect of learning and memory in higher mammals. Professor Young's solution is to reexamine the process of generalization and to suggest that it does not exist in a true sense: and that 'what we call by that name may be the result only of the great variety of experiences that active learning homeostats such as ourselves acquire over the years'. He seems less willing to accept chemical change as a basis for learning. 'We shall not understand (neural memory) by thinking of its chemistry alone, any more than we should learn how information is stored in a book by studying the chemistry of ink.' But neurones have nuclei and if chemistry includes the structure of D.N.A. the analogy with printer's ink is hardly valid.

This book contains valuable ideas and new and profitable ways of considering cerebral function. It also includes some distressing obscurity of thought or perhaps of expression. It should be widely read. It will both irritate and stimulate its readers.

C. W. M. WHITTY


Dr. Richter has rendered a service in bringing together these informed and informative papers about a complex, rapidly advancing subject. In a brief introductory note he draws attention to the diverse meanings attached to the two key words in the title, and very reasonably indicates that this slender book can deal with only limited aspects. The amount of ground covered is nevertheless considerable, and a number of the essays not only provide a survey of existing information but put forward theoretical proposals and hypotheses. This is particularly true of the characteristically far-sighted and luminous chapter by the late Sir John Gaddum. The majority of the papers are concerned with human beings, viewed from the standpoint of the neurologist, the psychologist, or the neuropathologist. However, in a lengthy final chapter Dr. Steele Russell digests the findings of some three hundred papers on the experimental study of learning and memory in animals.


Among Kretschmer's original contributions to psychiatry, the little monograph on delusions of self-reference occurring in morbidly sensitive persons had a considerable influence in Germany from the time of its publication in 1918. But in English-speaking countries it had little impact. The reason usually given is that in it Kretschmer claimed too much and explained too little; but it is more likely that its intractable designation was responsible for the neglect it suffered: 'sensitive delusions of reference', the customary translation, is clumsy as well as incorrect.

The concept deserves a better fate. It is clear from this fourth edition, to which Professor Kretschmer's son has added an illuminating chapter on the history and scientific standing of the reaction type, that Kretschmer was introducing, concurrently with Birnbaum, the notion of multiple causation and dynamic relations whereby clinical structure could be analysed and utilized, without recourse to Freudian metapsychology. It was the same approach, broadly, as Adolf Mayer propounded in the U.S.A.


This well-intentioned statement of a blameless superficial attitude towards psychosomatic disorder would be more welcome if it were more discriminating and better written. Mixed metaphors abound—'Freud's findings not only removed the iron curtain that opened the door to the unconscious, but are at the very roots of the doctor-patient relationship'—and the meaning is sometimes impenetrable, e.g., 'disease is not an abstract concept; it only occurs in individuals whose body and mind inevitably and unalterably remain well attached and completely integrated'. The literature cited is rather elementary, and many of the most solid and valuable papers are overlooked.

REIFUNG UND FORMUNG VON PERSÖNLICHKEITEN By M. Tramer. (Pp. 402; 5 figures; 1 table. DM 39.) Erlenbach-Zurich: Eugen Rentsch. Professor Tramer, who was best known for his contributions to the psychiatry of childhood, had also a profound interest in the development of personality. He
believed that much could be learnt from close examination of the autobiographies of people with creative ability. This book contains summaries of the biographies of 12 such men and women, with his comments and conclusions. His chosen subjects are a motley group: Benjamin Franklin, Hans Anderson, Henry Stanley, T. E. Lawrence, Simone de Beauvoir, Anne Frank, C. G. Jung, Lou Andreas-Salome, Charles Bonnet, Heinrich Zschokke, Chow Chung Cheng, and Richard Welti. Bonnet was a Swiss zoologist, Zschokke a writer and Swiss politician, Chow Chung Cheng a Chinese upper class woman who became a European expatriate, and Welti was a Swiss prodigy who died at the age of 16.

Dr. Tramer's conjectures and explanations are interesting, but their truth is hard to assess: they are based on suspect information. As G. W. Allport pertinently observed, 'biographies, especially autobiographies, are frequently nothing more than characterological palimpsests. The picture which the interpreter desires to create is not the true picture'.


In the understanding of delinquency it is now accepted that neither nature nor nurture alone is likely to provide a complete aetiological explanation. Yet controversy continues on the relative importance of congenital and environmental factors, and much research is directed towards uncovering mechanisms which might be relevant in their interaction.

Professor Stott has, for some time, been a prolific contributor to the debate, and in this, his latest work, he presents a broad theoretical formulation as well as summarizing one aspect of his researches. The first part of the book is taken up with case histories of 33 children with disorders of conduct. The deviant behaviour described is considered particularly in relation to adverse influences in pregnancy and early childhood, and much weight is placed on current signs of what the author terms 'somatic and neural impairment', for example, blackouts, dizzy turns, enuresis, headaches, restless sleep, and watery eyes.

These case histories provide a somewhat discursive introduction to the middle part of the book which is likely to be of most scientific interest to psychiatrists and psychologists. Numerous interesting comparisons are made here between a group of 305 truanting children and two similarly sized control groups, both from the same school as the truant, but one matched for age alone while the other; the 'neighbourhood' control was chosen in addition because he lived in the same area as the truanting child. The results support Stott's contention that neighbourhood influences alone are inadequate to explain this type of delinquency, and that truants show a high rate of general maladjustment regardless of home conditions, family structure, parental attitudes, and reasons for truancy. Surprisingly, frequency of truancy is of minor importance in the amount of general disturbance found.

In the final section the author puts forward his view that temperamental differences in early childhood which arise as a result of damage to the nervous structures render the organism particularly susceptible to environmental stresses of all types. It is always difficult to present evidence fairly in a field where social and biological factors interact so closely together. The account given here provides a useful summary of some of the work supporting a congenital origin for delinquency. Alternative explanations are, however, available for many of the studies described, and research which might lead the reader to a different view is given little space.


In this book the author presents the results of his study of 225 hypochondriacal patients, most of whom were followed up for six to 10 years. In addition, he has reviewed the huge literature on hypochondriasis, much of it unavailable in English: a bibliography of several hundred titles testifies to his thoroughness. His labours enable the reader to find material about not only the standard themes but also less well-known aspects of the subject, such as delusions of parasitosis, hypochondriacal euphoria, or the relationship of 'coenaesthetic schizophrenia' to cerebral atrophy, with many illustrative and interesting case histories.

Unfortunately the book does not lend itself to easy reading, as is so often the case with works which originate from doctorate theses in other languages. Nor is its clarity improved by a generous representation of psychoanalytical views on the subject. It is also much too expensive. Nonetheless, it can be recommended as a source of information on an important topic in psychiatry and medicine.


This book contains the proceedings of the twentieth annual meeting held by the Society of Biological Psychiatry in 1965. It is the eighth volume of a series which usefully reflects the research fashions favoured by American workers with an interest in the biological aspects of mental disorder. Though the reports cover a wide spectrum of topics, modern developments in neuropharmacology and electroencephalography are the dominant themes. Two distinguished visitors also contributed interesting papers to the meeting: Sir John Eccles on 'Conscious experience and memory' and Professor Detlev Ploog on 'Biological bases for instinct and behaviour'.


The problem indicated by the title of this book is as old as the Hippocratic Oath; unfortunately the simplicity of the issue stated in such absolute terms in that ancient formula is now gone, whether we look at it from the point of view of ethics or of legality. Dr. Slovenko, who is a lawyer, holds that the psychotherapist is not ade-
Book reviews


This book is addressed to students and practitioners of psychiatry and mental health. The authors consider that psychiatry should be broadly founded on basic behavioural and biological sciences, and include an introduction on the contributions of psychology, sociology, anthropology, neurophysiology, neurochemistry, and ('last but not least') psychoanalysis. In conformity with recent trends in the United States there is a more critical approach to psychoanalytical doctrine and therapy, and less reluctance to use pharmacotherapy as anything other than second best to psychoanalysis. There is a disappointing omission of quantitative data on matters such as distribution of age at onset and outcome of treatment, data which are essential if psychiatry is ever to be put on a scientific basis. Nevertheless this book is a valuable complement to the more constitutional approach of British psychiatry.

Notices

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON ALCOHOL AND ALCOHOLISM

The 28th International Congress on Alcohol and Alcoholism will be held from 15 to 20 September 1968 in Washington, D.C. Further information may be obtained from the Secretariat, 28th International Congress on Alcohol and Alcoholism, 1130 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, U.S.A.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY

The IVth International Congress of Group Psychotherapy will take place in Vienna, Austria, from 16 to 21 September 1968. Further information from the Secretariat of the Congress, c/o Wiener medizinische Akademie, Stadiongasse 6-8, A.1010 Wien, Austria.

SCANDINAVIAN NEUROSURGICAL SOCIETY

The 21st meeting of the Scandinavian Neurosurgical Society will take place in Århus, Denmark, on Friday, 30 August, and Saturday, 31 August, 1968. Further information from Professor Rich. Malmros, Neurosurgical Department, Kommunehospitalet, Århus, Denmark.

CONGRESS OF NEUROLOGICAL SURGEONS

The 18th annual meeting of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons will be held at the Royal York Hotel, Toronto, Canada, 24-28 September, 1968. Further information from Dr. John M. Thompson, 1955 Blossom Way South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33712.
Book reviews

Aubrey Lewis

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