Reviews and Notices of Books.


The subtitle of this useful book is 'A Survey of Modern Approaches,' and its aim is to provide a review of the work of the various schools, and to indicate their relationship and points of convergence. Each chapter is devoted to the point of view of a particular authority, but there is throughout a thread of criticism and comparison which seems to bind together the mass of material. After a short historical introduction the teachings of Morton Prince, Freud, Adler, Jung, Rivers, and Watson are successively described. The four following chapters deal with the approaches in which a definite attempt is made to correlate a psychological with a physiological or chemical attack. Here is included the work of Kempf, Berman, Kretschmer, and the biochemists. In a final chapter on 'Combined Schools,' Dr. Nicole endeavours to summarise and classify the views of the various authorities, and to indicate the large class of writers who adopt an eclectic standpoint and make use of conceptions drawn from several of the principal schools of thought. He has some excellent remarks to make on the confusion which at present exists, and effectively criticises the prevalent tendency to use the same word to denote different things, and different words to denote the same thing.

The appendices, which occupy over a third of the book, comprise reprints of three articles already published. These are not in the direct line of the main scheme, but throw considerable light on the problems which arise therefrom, and form interesting and useful additions.

The aim which the author has set before him is almost impossibly difficult in a book of this size, and the endeavour to get so large a theme into so small a space necessarily militates against adequate perspective. He has undoubtedly achieved a great measure of success, however, and has produced a book which goes some way to satisfy a definite want. Its chief
service is that it provides a handy work of reference, indicating the avenues along which psychopathological work is being carried out, while an excellent bibliography shows the direction in which more detailed information on the various topics can best be obtained.


This book, translated from German into excellent English by Dr. Flanders Dunbar, originally appeared as a part of Bumke’s *Handbuch der Geisteskrankheiten*, and must have been known in its earlier form to not a few students of psychiatry in England. Conceived on strictly scientific lines and enriched by numerous clinical illustrations, Professor Kahn’s work deals seriatim with varieties of abnormal and unstable personalities—psychopaths who for one or other reason fall behind in the race or fail to react adequately to their environment. His view is that such persons are constitutionally inferior or handicapped, whether the defect be one of impulse, temperament, or character. His analysis of the types exhibiting these respective deficiencies is singularly thorough and penetrating; for example, some 14 species of sexual psychopaths are distinguished and discussed, and not much fewer temperamental psychopaths, categorised as belonging to hyperthymic, athymic, hypothymic, dysphoric, and poikilothymic classes. Another chapter deals with complex types, among which ten major groups are differentiated. A classification based on semeiology is of service for didactic purposes, but despite its general interest more significance attaches to the author’s investigation of personality structure and of relationships between character and physique. He does not accept the view that close and exclusive correspondences exist between definite psychopathic types and definite physiques; many psychopaths have been observed without recognizable physical deviations or peculiarities. It may justly be claimed, rather, that mutual reaction takes place between physique and impulse-temperament, whence result the particular attitudes of the subject concerned both towards his ego and towards his environment.

Professor Kahn’s contribution to the study of abnormal personality is suggestive and free from dogmatism; he follows the clinical method and seeks to establish generalisations based on clinical research, a procedure which has much to commend it at a time when theorising is rampant and objective study often relegated to the background.

Those who have known and appreciated Dr. Ernest Jones' slender monograph entitled Der Alptraum, which appeared in German in 1912, will be glad to learn that, much enlarged and combined with new material, it forms the nucleus of this entrancing book on nightmares, in which the author's analytic skill, erudition, and powers of clear exposition are seen at their best. It matters nothing for the reader's intellectual enjoyment of this feast of traditional lore and modern learning that possibly he may not be inclined to accept in its entirety Dr. Jones' thesis that the malady known as nightmare invariably is indicative of intense mental conflict centreing over an incestuous desire. The neurologist may reasonably affirm that Dr. Jones has hardly recognized with sufficient definiteness the clinical relationships between nightmare and other forms of what the late Sir William Gowers called vaso-vagal attacks, of which the psychological is but one explanation. The possibility of their representing a variety of periventricular 'epilepsy' conditioned by other factors than those of the dream life is not to be brushed aside. Dr. Jones asserts it is a mere truism for the psychoanalyst that the type of emotion connoted by the word Angst has to do with the psychosexual system of activities; but Angst attacks of classical form are known to the clinician for which a simple explanation of this kind does not serve. Be this as it may, however, there remains the question of whether the physical phenomena are the mere reverberation in the soma of the conflict in the psyche, or whether the physical disorders may not colour the mental content of the moment. The argument cannot here be prosecuted, or, for that matter, sketched with equal shortness and clarity. Throughout Dr. Jones' vivid descriptions it is assumed that the intense conflict of which the attack is the outcome never takes place in consciousness and that no other form of conflict is capable of producing the same effects; yet he does not, we think, make clear whether in each and all of the cases submitted to investigation in recent times, when knowledge is adequate, there has been unmistakable evidence of a sexual dream at the time of the disturbance.

All this, we say, can in no way detract from the reader's appreciation of the conspicuous ability with which the author handles successively his themes of vampire, werewolf, devil, witch and night-fiend, or lessen recognition of his mastery of literature, new and old, bearing on the topics concerned. Had he not produced any other work this alone would stamp its author as a gifted writer, possessing in signal degree the arts of arranging complicated material readably and of clothing his ideas in graphic language. His little translations of German sentences and paragraphs are models of faithful yet unstereotyped reproduction.

It is unusual for the ophthalmological and otological aspects of neurology to be dealt with at length in a combined monograph, although the method is not devoid of usefulness. One of its more obvious merits is that it helps to counteract the tendency to regard these two 'ologies' as self-contained sciences (and arts) divorced from the study of the central nervous system. The authors commence by a concise description of the local semiology of cerebrum and brainstem with the direct intention, we may presume, of linking central and peripheral disorders of eye and ear, a purpose that must be commended. Throughout both parts of the book the neurological side of the affections under discussion is clearly set forth, with the aid of excellently reproduced diagrams and figures. Indeed, such disorders as cannot be ascribed directly or indirectly to participation of neural factors are omitted.

According to English ideas, the account of the pathogenesis of papilloedema is rather sketchy and the authors do not indicate which of the diverse theories alluded to they favour themselves. Similarly, the Argyll Robertson phenomenon is discussed briefly without any hint, so far as we have noted, of difficulties concerned with its precise definition or with the so-called 'myotonic' pupil. The notice of Leber's atrophy is confined to a single paragraph of five lines. In connexion with lenticular degeneration the brownish-green pigmented corneal ring of Kayser-Fleischer is mentioned, though no explanation of its origin or possible diagnostic significance is supplied. Apparently the authors consider dystrophia myotonica outside their province, which is rather to be regretted, for its association with cataract is intimate and some account of the condition would have been surely justified. On the otological side affections of nose, sinuses, larynx, etc., with a neurological bearing are included and obtain concise description.

As a whole, the volume furnishes the reader with a satisfactory account of brain-ear and brain-eye relationships and bridges the gap of which many clinicians are conscious between the respective specialties.


PROFESSOR BING's textbook of nervous disease is not perhaps very well known in this country—at least, not so much so as his Compendium of
topographical diagnosis. Its ground plan is a series of thirty lectures covering clinical neurology with some completeness, the classification being partly pathological (e.g., encephalorrhagia and encephalomalacia), partly anatomical (e.g., diseases of the cerebellum), partly symptomatological (e.g., aphasia, apraxia, and agnosia). No doubt the practical merit of the arrangement to some extent makes up for its patent disadvantages from the standpoint of nosology. The descriptions are clearly written and appropriately illustrated; with a good index, and bibliographic references to each chapter collected in an appendix, there is little that is wanting from the requirements of a standard textbook. Treatment receives attention on a scale corresponding with the pretensions of the volume. The section devoted to intracranial tumours contains few if any indications of recent developments associating different types of growth with different localities and enabling a surer diagnosis and prognosis to be given. or of the advances that have been made in regard to the life-histories of different histological forms. Narcolepsy is dismissed in four lines without mention of cataplexy. The specificity of the adenoma type underlying acromegaly is not alluded to, and other criticisms might be adduced to which no reference need here be made. But any student or practitioner using the work as an introduction to more elaborate treatises will find that it provides an excellent grounding in clinical neurology.


The work carried on in Tokyo by Professor Ken Kuré and numerous associates for a period of years has not perhaps yet aroused that interest which its remarkable quality deserves. One of the most obscure of all problems in neurology concerns the pathogenesis of the muscular dystrophies, whose clinical and pathological descriptions have reached a terminus and can take us no further. Professor Kuré adduces an immense amount of experimental and histological evidence favouring the view of a double innervation of skeletal muscle, cerebrospinal and autonomic; the latter has itself a double source, sympathetic and parasympathetic, the former includes both pyramidal and extrapyramidal supply. An equally elaborate series of studies leads to the conclusion that muscular dystrophy ensues on removal of 'trophic' influences exerted by sympathetic and parasympathetic, and that hypertrophy follows augmentation of autonomic tonus. In an ingenious fashion Professor Kuré endeavours to explain clinical varieties of muscular dystrophy by reference to the respective content of innervating and trophic elements in the muscles involved. The sympathetic quota is specially responsible. Nevertheless he is unable to understand why diaphragm and
intercostals, richly supplied with sympathetic fibres, are so seldom implicated in the myopathies, though on his theory they should suffer first and most.

As a fully documented and original contribution to the problem of myopathic degeneration this monograph merits wide attention.


The series of booklets in MM. Masson’s collection entitled Médecine et Chirurgie Pratiques has for its latest addition a useful account of cerebral abscess and its treatment, from the pen of Professor Piquet of Lille. His description follows conventional lines and avoids unnecessary detail; it possesses the merit of conciseness yet embodies present-day knowledge and experience in an accurate and readable way. Practical in its outlook and methodically arranged, the book should be of service not merely to the practitioner but also to the neurologist and otologist.


The tenth volume in the series of neuropathological studies emanating from Professor Schaffer’s clinic in Budapest maintains the high level of its predecessors. It contains a number of papers most if not all of which have already been published elsewhere, and some of which have already been abstracted in the pages of this Journal. Prominent among them are those (five in number) dealing with one or other aspect of the pathology of amaurotic family idiocy and cognate affections. The volume constitutes a Festschrift in connexion with the twentieth anniversary of the foundation of the Hungarian Hirnforschungsinstitut and is dedicated to Professor Ramon y Cajal.


This volume of collected papers contains some 50 items, of which a considerable number have already been abstracted in this Journal. They cover a wide and diversified field, and in their present form make a useful addition to the neurologist’s library.