by the genetic or causal method, and that ‘creativeness’ as well as ‘mechanism’ had to be taken into account. The following quotation serves to indicate Dr. Putnam’s view as to the possibility of innate ‘higher’ impulses in human beings: “. . . sublimation is neither solely a by-product of ‘libido’, nor due solely to the combined action of that influence and of the influence of social pressure. It represents, in addition, the unfolding, or coming to light, of powers which, however dependent they are for expression on both the factors mentioned, exist essentially in their own right . . . ”.

Dr. Putnam did not succeed in convincing his colleagues that his wider formulations could legitimately be included in their conceptions of human behaviour. They felt, no doubt, that all questions concerning ethical values lay outside the sphere of psychological investigation.

H. Devine.


The Depths of the Soul (Psycho-analytical Studies). By Dr. Wilhelm Stekel. Translated by Dr. S. A. Tannenbaum. Cr. 8vo. Pp. 216. 1921. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. Ltd. 6s. 6d. net.

These engaging volumes, in which Dr. Stekel sets out a part of a philosophy of life, show little indication on the surface of any kinship to a scientific treatise which alone might be supposed to interest a reader of this journal. On the contrary, they are manifestly the work of an artist who is the fortunate possessor of exceptional literary skill with which to express himself. As literature they will be read by a larger circle than can claim any medical knowledge; and as a portrayal of many aspects of human nature by an author with rare insight, penetrating but kindly, into the little ways of his fellow-creatures, their appeal will be as wide as is the interest in human nature.

Beneath the surface, however, each work presents a structure of quite another kind. Strip any of the chapters of its imagery and poetical allusions, and there appears an exact framework of psycho-analysis. This it is which gives form and strength to the whole, though the plan of decked out science in the habiliments of art may seem at first view something of an offence. But psycho-analysis, which as we know never permits any deflection from its aim of reaching to the roots of things, necessarily includes much that is elemental and primitive, and for this reason is unpalatable to a good many. To these, psycho-analysis is a fundamental, raw-beef way of attacking things, as opposed to the school which serveth gravy on a gold platter. But the objection to this alternative way is, of course, that no matter how splendid the platter, one never knows what cheap unwholesome stuff may not have been used in making the gravy. Dr. Stekel, however, who has long been well known as a psycho-analyst, now comes forward to please both parties. He serves his gravy on a gold
platter, but in the making of the gravy only beef—the best beef—has been used. The result is a dish which everyone will call appetizing, and the expert will know is highly nutritious as well.

This novel experiment—psycho-analysis applied artistically to inform the masses—though not unexpected, possesses a peculiar interest. Human behaviour has been discoursed upon by the great men of all ages, and their wisdom is highly prized. But they all wrote empirically, and no one except the greatest could set down reflections which are true enough to survive the passage of time. Now, however, psycho-analysis supplies the scientific basis for all such attempts, and by applying its rules men of no extraordinary calibre will be able to produce works which are no less true, and in important respects are more profound, than anything that came from these giants of old. A parallel case is found in the history of pictorial art. Painters—but only the greatest of them—drew in perspective before ever Leonardo discovered the laws of perspective, but since he formulated the science beneath the art it has been open to any painter equipped with measure and rule to draw not only in perspective but in much more accurate perspective than even a Botticelli could command. It seems probable that in psycho-analysis a similar instrument of precision becomes available, by the use of which it is possible for writers other than first-rate to attain a degree of accuracy in their psychology which hitherto has been possible only to geniuses. Dr. Stekel’s experiment goes far to establish this probability as a certainty, and it foreshadows a development of unusual significance.

D. F.