Reviews and Notices of Books.


The text-book of nervous diseases written by the late Professor H. Oppenheim has long since become a classic, and in its new, seventh, edition represents the high-water mark of attainment in neurology founded largely on the clinic-anatomical method. Its success, its international fame, are based on its comprehensiveness, its readableness, its abundant references to the literature—above all, on the combination exhibited by its distinguished author of wide clinical and pathological experience, shrewdness in estimating the value of the neurological contributions of others, and fairness of comment on the many vexed nervous problems of the day. We feel that these qualities stamp the production with the hall-mark of soundness and worth, and we commend it afresh to a new generation of students and neurologists to whom Oppenheim can now, unfortunately, be no more than a name.

The four well-known German authorities under whose ægis this new edition has appeared in their introduction that since the death of their teacher there is no one in Germany capable, by himself, of dealing with the whole wide range of present-day neurological doctrine, hence the collaboration which the appearance of their names on the title page implies. They have endeavoured to incorporate recent advances in knowledge, more especially such as have resulted from the experiences of the war. Epidemic encephalitis and extrapyramidal diseases are among those which have been more fully considered. In the tables of contents the chapters revised by the four new editors respectively are indicated.

Dementia praecox, intermediäre psychische Schicht, und Kleinhirn-Basalganglien-Stirnhirnsysteme. By Dr. Max Loewy, Privatdozent for Psychiatry and Neurology in the German University, Prague. Pp. 120. 1923. Berlin: S. Karger. Price not stated.

The thesis sustained in this monograph is, briefly, that the symptomatology of dementia praecox is largely one of psychomotor disorder, coupled with disturbances in the affective and intellectual spheres. These symptoms can be regarded as impairment of function of an 'intermediate psychic layer,' an assumed functional field lying between the 'Allopsyche' and the 'Somato-
psyche' of Wernicke, i.e., between consciousness of the external world and consciousness of one's own body; here the author places, schematically, the functions of common sensibility, psychomotility, and of the emotional life. The argument is that, on the authority of Kleist, physiological dysfunction of the anatomical cerebello-thalamo-frontal system gives rise to symptoms of a psychomotor kind analogous to those observed in dementia praecox; hence it is suggested that the anatomical basis of the symptoms of that disease will be found to consist of lesions in the associational system mentioned. No pathological proof, however, is vouchsafed the reader, who will probably feel that neither the anatomical nor the psychological explanations of the disease given by the author are sufficiently comprehensive, apart from the difficulty of including symptoms of an endocrinological order in the scheme. The views advanced, however, are not lessened in interest because of their speculative character.


This thesis emanating from the service of Dr. J. Babinski contains a useful clinical analysis of certain of the involuntary movements that have occurred with considerable frequency after attacks of epidemic encephalitis.

Two groups are distinguished: (1) Bilateral, more or less symmetrical, rapid, short, involuntary muscular contractions resembling those usually called myoclonic; (2) unilateral, relatively slow, comparatively infrequent spasm-like contractions involving all the muscles of a limb or segment of a limb, occasionally spreading to neck or trunk, and always leading to a change of attitude for the time. With either of these groups other disturbances of motility, e.g., of a Parkinsonian nature, may be associated. Dr. Krebs considers that the myoclonias of the first class can be separated by their intrinsic characters from the varieties hitherto recognized, and he is of the opinion the spasms of the second class approach spasmodic torticollis, athetosis, and chorea, as well as torsion-spasm, in their main features.

The pathogenie and pathologico-physiological explanations of the syndromes, unfortunately, are not examined by the author. A bibliography is appended.


Dr. Reys's clinical study is based on some 150 cases of the disease occurring in epidemic form in Alsace-Lorraine in 1920–21; in 1922 only two fresh cases came under observation though epidemic influenza was rampant in France at the time. Males were affected about four times as often as females; the age of the youngest patient was five months, and of the eldest sixty-three years. Dr. Reys gives a useful clinical summary and double classification, distinguishing eight cardinal anatomo-clinical varieties (mesencephalie,
bulbar, lenticular, thalamic, cortical, meningeal, neuritic, and meningo-myeloradicular) and six evolutionary forms (acute, subacute, relapsing, 'fruste,' ambulatory, slow-progressive). Sequelae and treatment are discussed; many useful statistical tables add to the value of the clinical documents.


The book is started by a chapter of special pleading in defence of the psychoanalytic method as compared with those of orthodox psychology. Certain examples are given of problems which could not be elucidated by any other method.

Next, a series of pictures by a neurotic artist is analysed in the same way as dreams, but the material is too restricted to be of much service to aestheticians. It is, however, suggestive that much might be learnt with regard to this difficult subject were more careful attention paid to the relation and interaction of the stimuli with the conscious and unconscious 'wishes' of the artist. But it would also be necessary to pay attention to the complexes and resistances of the critic as well.

The author then turns to the psychology of war and peace. The former he describes as a regression to primitive barbarism due to the discovery by the nations that the life-task they have undertaken is too difficult of achievement. Peace, if it is to be real and lasting, may necessitate a regression of a different kind to the childlike simplicity illustrated by New Testament teaching, but it must be associated with a progression towards sacrifice and altruism.

A long chapter is devoted to psychoanalysis and philosophy. After a demonstration that Freud and his followers take a positivist standpoint, the views of various analytic authorities towards both metaphysics and ethics are given. Finally, the author gives his own views as to the relation of psychoanalysis to ethics and concludes that while the analyst must be careful not to let ethical considerations intrude too much into his therapeutic efforts, a successful analysis tends to improve the ethical standard of the subject by means of the Socratic method of fuller self-knowledge leading to better self-discipline. A chapter pointing out the importance of analytic investigation in the understanding and treatment of difficult and abnormal children follows, with a fairly complete analysis of a neurotic of twenty-five showing how his early conflicts determined his condition. Finally, the possibilities of psychoanalysis in missionary work are discussed, the resemblance between various primitive religious cults and neurotic symptoms being pointed out.

The book is certainly interesting, and if there is nothing startlingly new in it, the author is not led away into any extremes of hypothetical reasoning. However, with all the assertion as to the use of psychoanalysis in freeing the soul from its fixations, there is more than a little in the book which suggests a fixation of a somewhat emotional and infantile type on the person of Sigmund Freud.

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