of the scientific method in hypnotism; the clinical period of Charcot and Janet; and, lastly, the analytical schools of Freud and Jung. The subject is simply but very interestingly and instructively presented. It is a pity that such a useful little work addressed to the public should be relatively expensive.

C. S. R.


The veteran Professor Bechterew gives in some four hundred pages a revue d'ensemble of his life-work in respect of human personality. Pointing out in some detail the shortcomings of all subjective methods of approach to personality problems, he emphasises afresh the value of objective methods, and while not here vouchsafing the reader a full description of his technique he elaborates rather the results this has furnished in all levels of neural activity, from the lowest to the highest. For him the psychical processes of the higher animals are brain-processes: all the actions of living beings can be classed as reflexes of offence and defence, consecutive to specific external stimuli and inward ruling conditions. The general thesis is maintained with an extraordinary wealth of illustration, much of which is distinctly impressive. The actual basis of Freudian hypotheses can be set out, according to the author, in terms of reflex action. Incidentally, he refuses to link his work in any way with the behaviour psychology of Watson and others, since its inception dates back to the eighties of last century, and since it is erected on wider conceptions.

Not a little of the interest of the closely reasoned argument resides in its effort to unify neurological and psychological mechanisms. So far from conceding the existence of unbridgeable gaps between the physical and the physiological, and between the latter and the psychological, Professor Bechterew holds the view that “neuro-psychical energy” underlies all manifestations, physiological and psychological, and that it itself is but a special form of that physical energy which is all-pervading.

The volume will repay close perusal.


This small volume, which we noted in its first edition, has evidently fulfilled a useful purpose. In this edition there are small and unimportant changes. Mental nurses undoubtedly should have some insight into psychology, but we
think it a pity that they should be taught that "brain is the organ of the mind"; that "mind is the process of thinking"; and that "it is the delicate structure of the brain that is deranged in patients suffering from mental disorder." These are narrow and somewhat inaccurate statements, and a poor foundation will thereon be laid for further conceptions of mental functioning. The terms "unconscious" and "subconscious" are loosely and at times wrongfully used. Much of McDougall's teaching is in evidence, but we fear that an endeavour to explain manic-depressive psychosis by reference to the instincts of self-abasement and self-assertion will not help. Many other minor criticisms might be made, but we have no wish to undervalue the worth of these pages, which should not only prove instructive to the probationer but stimulate to further learning.

C. S. R.
Reviews and Notices of Books

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