

Book reviews

CONTRIBUTION À L'ÉTUDE DE L'ÉPIDÉMIOLOGIE DE LA DÉBILITÉ MENTALE By J. Cordier. (Pp. 253; 14 figures; 66 tables. FB.300.-) Université Libre de Bruxelles. 1963.

The decision to undertake extensive streaming in schools according to intelligence was accompanied by a close study of the progress of the children over a number of years. Mental retardation accompanied by brain injury was relatively independent of the socio-economic status of the family, whereas both 'subcultural' mental retardation and scholastic retardation were closely associated with poor socio-economic background. This is a very interesting report, and throws much light on the problems of mental retardation in children. It is weakest in the genetic aspects: Penrose's Colchester survey does not appear in the bibliography, nor was the opportunity taken to employ any of his methods. Otherwise there is a full and valuable survey of this experiment.

THE DIVIDED SELF. The Healing of a Nervous Disorder By W. S. Stewart. (Pp. 246. 40s.) London: Allen & Unwin. 1964.

In the Introduction Sir Cyril Burt describes the record of painful experiences set down in this book as a typical example of the commonest form of nervous disorder, and he classifies it as chronic depression. As a general diagnosis this will do, but the condition is by no means typical. There are many odd features, not least the Voice whose injunctions controlled so much of the author's behaviour. It is difficult to refrain from attributing some of the anomalous features to the effect of amphetamine and other drugs which were given him over long periods. But, whatever the clinical setting, the description of his tormented state of mind by a sensitive, highly intelligent man, gifted with a fine capacity for self-expression, provides an absorbing piece of autobiography. The reader who is tempted to suspect secondary elaboration, screen memories, and literary distortion, is reassured by the copious extracts from diaries and poems written at the time of the acute illness. The author, who has read widely in the literature of psychiatry, has found that C. G. Jung offered the most satisfying interpretation of what he went through in this protracted and crippling illness, from which he has not fully recovered.

PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING IN A SMALL COLLEGE By E. Hanfmann, R. M. Jones, E. Baker and L. Kovar. (Pp. xi + 131. \$3.95.) Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman. 1963.

A counselling service set up in a small American university was used by about one-third of the undergraduate population, requiring the time of four (equivalent) full-time psychologists for 1,600 students. This small book gives an interesting account of the problems involved in such a service, in particular the necessity of separating

the service from the university administration. Too little attention has been paid in Britain to mental health in the student population, and many problems discussed in this book could usefully be considered here. The American answer depends largely on the widespread prevalence of (analytically-orientated) psychotherapy undertaken by psychologists: the present organization of psychology in Britain precludes this solution.

A further volume from these authors is promised: it is hoped that more information will there be given of the type of problem presented, the time spent in therapy, and the outcome. And surely the problem is of sufficient size and importance to warrant a controlled trial of the value of counselling in a university setting: psychologists by reason of their training have no excuse for avoiding this difficult but essential requirement.

A MANUAL OF PSYCHIATRY. 6th ed. By K. R. Stallworthy. (Pp. 389. 30s.) Christchurch, New Zealand: N. M. Peryer Ltd. 1963.

This book gives a clear concise and accurate account of psychiatric illnesses: its popularity amongst medical students is indicated by the issue of six editions since 1950. The presentation is perhaps too didactic, and the student may be left with the impression that there are few controversial issues in psychiatry. The absence of references to further reading enhances this notion, and the effect of the book may be that students will pass their final examination but may not be inspired to become psychiatrists.

MANKIND BEHAVING By J. K. Feibleman. (Pp. viii + 275. \$10.50.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1963.

This book is an approach from the standpoint of both philosophy and psychology to the problems of the understanding of individual human behaviour, particularly in its responses to the need to know, the need to do, and the need to be.

PSYCHOLOGY'S IMPACT ON THE CHRISTIAN FAITH By C. Edward Barker. (Pp. 220. 28s.) London: George Allen & Unwin. 1964.

The author is concerned about the psychological abnormalities, in particular obsessions, masochism, the sense of sin, and sexual distortions, displayed in the teaching of the Church. He argues that these features are attributable to St. Paul and the early Fathers and are not to be found in the teachings of Christ. The author's experiences as a Methodist minister and as a lay psychoanalyst have led him to distinguish between the essential and the additional teachings of the Church, and to emphasize that the former are compatible with a 'healthy' psychological outlook.