consequences of the particular act complained of, he will be liable for his

torts, just as an ordinary person is liable, i.e., on the ground that he

intended the natural and probable consequence of his acts”.

Chapter III treats of the law of contract, and in succeeding chapters

mental deficiency and marriage, insanity and divorce, and testamentary

capacity in mental deficiency are all dealt with, and are of absorbing

interest. In fact the book generally supplies a want the public, and

medical men especially, have perhaps unconsciously needed, for after

perusing its pages one feels the necessity of always having it at hand.

There are two appendices: (I) a summary of the chief powers and
duties of lunacy and mental deficiency authorities in England—very useful
for reference, and (II) suggestions for the reform of lunacy and mental
deficiency administration—which is foreign to a book of this nature and is
best unread or, if read, quickly forgotten. One would have thought that
the general experience of national bureaucracies during the war and even
before, and their deadening influence and costliness, would have deterred
any one from advancing seriously a proposition which would make the care
and treatment of the indigent mentally afflicted a national charge and
abolish all local responsibility for carrying out the provisions of the Lunacy
Act. Central control of the science and art of medicine would soon strangulate
all initiative and retard progress. However, this is a side issue, and does
not detract from the value of the book or the real ability of the author.

J. R. Lord.

Suggestion and Mental Analysis: an Outline of the Theory and
Practice of Mind Cure. By William Brown, M.A., M.D., Wilde
Reader in Mental Philosophy in the University of Oxford. Crown 8vo.
Pp. 165. 1922. London: University of London Press. 3s. 6d. net.

The author states that he has set out to correlate the therapeutic methods
of suggestion and analysis, also to review the claims recently put forward
by M. Coué. A simple explanation is given of suggestion and the essential
principles of psycho-analysis. The author gives his own theory of dreams,
which is that they are the expression of a compromise between the ‘instinct
of sleep’ and other conations both conscious and unconscious. He states
that “sleep is an instinct like pugnacity, etc.”, but he does not tell us on
what grounds he has arrived at this somewhat novel conclusion. He
criticizes the Freudian transference by transposing the Freudian thesis
that suggestion is merely a form of transference, holding rather that trans-
ference is merely a form of suggestion.

A case is described illustrating hysteria as a dissociation, and hypnotism
is discussed, in which connection the author expresses himself in agree-
ment with the teaching of Charcot rather than that of the Nancy school.
Neurasthenia and compulsive neuroses are described and the use of auto-
gnosis in their treatment. Hypnosis and suggestion are dealt with at greater
length; the view is upheld that no person who is completely normal can
be hypnotized, and the degree to which hypnotism is possible is a measure
of his abnormality. The author regards hypnotism as a dissociation, and
therefore not the same thing as suggestion, and not an advisable form of
therapy except for reviving dissociated memories for the purpose of re-associating them. He discusses and criticizes Coué’s theory, especially the so-called law of reversed effort, pointing out that what Coué calls ‘will’ is not will at all, but a spasmodic conflict between a suggestion and its opposite. With the practice he finds himself in agreement, but points out that autosuggestion can hardly be started except by heterosuggestion and that some sort of autognosis is necessary. The last three chapters are devoted to an exposition of Bergsonian philosophy, but it is not explained how the author’s psychological and therapeutic teaching are connected with this system. Why, then, this philosophical digression, which is somewhat inadequate and therefore hard to follow? Apart from this, the book is simple in its wording, and should at any rate serve to stimulate those interested in the subject to read more widely, but one would have liked to see a psychologist of the reputation and standing of Dr. William Brown making it more clear that many of his assertions are of the nature of concepts and policies rather than phenomena.

R. G. Gordon.


As a popular but up-to-date exposition on ‘nerves’ and all that that term embraces, nothing but praise can be accorded to the authoresses. Within these pages Freudian principles and their practical applications are dealt with in a homely way which should appeal to a wide section of the community. When it is so essential that society should be educated towards a truer understanding of what ‘nerves’ and a ‘nervous breakdown’ really mean, it is highly gratifying to find that the reader is at once told that there is nothing the matter with a person’s nerves, that a “nervous disorder is not a physical but a psychic disease. It is caused not by lack of energy, but by misdirected energy, not by overwork or nerve depletion, but by misconception, emotional conflict, repressed instincts, and buried memories”. Such a veridical statement cannot be sufficiently impressed upon the mind of the laity and also upon the medical profession, in view of the fact that even at the present day there is a tendency to regard every possible abnormal mental symptom, including even the writing of libellous postcards, as due to some hypothetical nervous exhaustion. No progress in mental medicine can adequately take place until such a fallacy is invalidated. In a plain but interesting manner the story of the instincts, the subconscious mind, and the relations of mind and body are tellingly presented, thus leading up logically to the why and wherefore of the development of symptoms and the rational psychotherapy for their removal. Suggestion, persuasion, and psycho-analysis as methods of treatment are discussed and given their true value, and it is logically pointed out how in the majority of instances the principles involved in the last-named have to be applied in order to reach the fons et origo of the disorder.

There are, however, some adverse criticisms to be made. It is curious, after showing that ‘nerves’ are really mental in origin, that the statement