of outstanding merit to the always interesting and difficult problems of the interrelation of mind and brain. It contained an amazing amount of neurological material of precisely that kind of which the student of organic neurology rather tends to fight shy, inasmuch as it is concerned with Grenzgebiete into which he gropes his way with some hesitation. What pleased most in connexion therewith was the approach of the author strictly from the neurological, as opposed to the psychological side, yet the book was conspicuous for its fairness and for its obvious sympathy with the standpoint of the student of mind. The book has served as an introduction to the problems mentioned above second to none, in the reviewer's experience, for its combination of organisation of data with ability to draw therefrom conclusions of both neurological and psychological import—a feature conspicuously wanting in many more ambitious productions.

On the whole, Mr. Ogden's translation reads easily and follows the original not slavishly but with sufficient closeness, when allowance is made for idiomatic differences. Yet some comment seems worth while. It is regrettable that the translator uses the word 'medullary' instead of 'spinal' as an equivalent for the French 'medullaire,' since the English student is familiar with 'medullary' as standing for 'bulbar' (we use the term medulla almost entirely in reference to the medulla oblongata). 'Prickly pain' cannot be considered a proper rendering of 'douleur à la piqure,' and 'median' for 'mesial' is similarly apt to be misunderstood. 'On the median side there is evidently a confusion of the two lateral innervations, each corresponding to a decussation of the hemisphere,' is a faulty translation of 'il y a évidemment, sur cette région médiane, un enchevêtrement des deux innervations latérales correspondant chacune à l'hémisphère croisé.' However, these and various other imperfections do not detract from the worth of the translation as a whole, and can in no way, of course, impair the value of the book.

S. A. K. W.


Any contribution calculated to throw some light on the still obscure problem of the child who is congenitally word-blind is welcome. Dr. Bachmann's slender brochure deserves attention, although he has not been able to elucidate the essential nature of the condition better than those who have preceded him, nor has he, so far as we have noticed, given full consideration to the recent work of Orton on the subject, referring solely to a now somewhat old communication by that author. The accounts of Dr. Bachmann's personal cases are descriptive rather than analytic, and have their value. According to him, the chief features of the condition may be summed up as follows: inability to associate correctly the individual letters forming a given word,
taking the form both of defect in arranging them properly for writing or combining the letter-sounds into the word for purposes of reading. In addition, failure to find the right sound of a word in pronouncing its parts, its correct ‘word-melody,’ is usually noticed, and also failure to grasp the symbolic meaning of the word. Once more, ‘speech-feeling’ is faulty, thereby being signified the ‘natural’ effort to build words into a sentence and to arrange them in the way that corresponds to the speech customs of the nationality of the individual concerned.

Dr. Bachmann dismisses as pure conjectures all previous efforts to correlate the condition with lesions of specific, localisable, cerebral mechanisms, since apparently no autopsy on such a case has up to the present been conducted. That a definite connexion nevertheless between structure and function is likely appears from the fact of the inheritance of word-blindness in some families, as reported by Hinselwood and by Stephenson.


This is a collection of essays on psychology and ethnology. In the psychological section perhaps the most interesting are those on Freud’s concept of the censorship, which Rivers tries to bring into line with the control of the cortex over lower centres, and on the primitive conception of death. The failure of the primitive to distinguish between those whom he thinks ought to be dead and those who are dead is a decidedly fascinating question and one which might be introduced into more cultured society.

In the ethnological section there are several interesting papers on customs and culture in Polynesia. Professor Elliot Smith contributes an introduction, in which he draws attention to Rivers’s powers of applying his knowledge in one department to clarify his investigations in another.

The papers as a whole come up to the standard we have learnt to expect from the late Dr. Rivers and the publishers are to be congratulated in presenting this further collection of his work.

R. G. G.


This little book deals mainly with the question of chronic arsenical poisoning due to contamination arising out of domestic, as opposed to industrial, contact, and therefore with an aspect of the subject of some importance and hitherto to a large extent rather neglected. Some time ago a questionnaire was sent round to the physicians of Sweden bearing on the development of arsenical poisoning from such sources as domestic utensils, wall decorations, and others connected with the dwellings of the persons concerned, and much useful in-