

modern thinking about the education of the handicapped. He gives a most illuminating discussion of the differences between Kanner's and Asperger's syndromes, and the whole book is a distillation of prolonged and productive clinical experience.

Hermelin and O'Connor do not go in for philosophical disputation but confine themselves to empirical investigation. They are well aware of the clinical observations of their psychiatric colleagues, and however complex their experimental technique it is always firmly grounded in the specifics of the child's behaviour. They demonstrate that autistic children find it difficult to make use of information received through the various senses (kinaesthetic handling seems most reliable). The children have good memories but cannot cope with grammar. Meaningless sentences are recalled as well as meaningful ones, particularly if emphasized. Meaning does have some influence, however, since nouns and verbs are better recalled than linking words, even if the latter are emphasized. The children's problems are most marked in expressive functions, both in speech and in gesture. Apart from their echoed speech, they can comprehend somewhat more than they can produce. This is what has given rise to the old wives' tale that the children 'understand everything that is said'. The authors also include, from their EEG studies, that the hypothesis of over-arousal is much too simple to be heuristically useful.

Many psychiatrists (but few parents) will be surprised to learn that autistic children are comparatively more responsive to human beings than to inanimate objects, and that although they do not visually fixate as much as control children there is no selective visual avoidance of other people. These experiments are especially elegant and show how laboratory work can amplify and illuminate clinical observation. The authors suggest 'that it might be fruitful to look at the social and interpersonal behaviour of autistic children in terms of the absence of simple skills which are basic to the more complex skills involved in social and linguistic behaviour'. They conclude that one central cognitive deficit, an inability to encode stimuli meaningfully, could underlie all the abnormalities described. This is not very far from the explanation in terms of a general inability to comprehend or use language, and it is plain that this view must now be developed further.

J. K. WING.

REFERENCE

- WING, L. (1971). 'Perceptual and language development in autistic children: a comparative study.' In Rutter, M. (ed.). *Infantile Autism: Concepts, Characteristics and Treatment*. Churchill.

The Care and Training of the Mentally Subnormal. By CHARLES H. HALLAS. John Wright & Sons Ltd. 4th edition. 1970. Pp. 296. Price £2.60.

This book, written by a nurse, first published in 1958, aims to provide the nurse in mental subnormality with an awareness of the recent changes of thinking and policy in this subject. Such chapter headings as 'motivation through therapeutic care' emphasize the role of the nurse as it should be, rather than the position of custodian into which she may be driven in the overcrowded and understaffed wards that still exist today.

The book has now reached its 4th edition but unfortunately it still contains several mistakes of fact or of printing, and serious confusion could occur through these. Some sections are outdated and give rise to a curious mixture of the old and the new. Serious omissions also reduce the value of the book, e.g. no mention is made of the dietary precautions necessary for patients taking monoamine oxidase inhibitors. However, used alongside other textbooks, it could be an asset to the nurse who has the ability and motivation to check her facts.

J. BICKNELL.

Mental Retardation and Social Action: A Study of the Associations for Retarded Children as a Force for Social Change. By ROBERT M. SEGAL. Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, Ill. 1970. Pp. 211. Price \$9.50.

This book is a study of three local branches of the National Association for Retarded Children (U.S.A.), the branches selected for study being those of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. The study is sociological, and its purpose was 'to examine the role that voluntary parents' associations concerned with the general welfare of the mentally retarded have played as a force for social change'.

Amongst the most interesting findings are those relating to the composition of the membership: predominantly white, middle and upper middle class, with an income of at least 15,000 dollars a year.

The twenty tables at the end provide a lot of useful information, but the χ^2 tests are of doubtful value.

B. W. RICHARDS.

PSYCHOANALYSIS

Four Psychotherapies. Edited by LEONARD HERSHER. London: Butterworths. 1970. Pp. 152. Price £2.60.

Psycho-Analytic Insight and Relationships: A Kleinian Approach. By ISCA SALZBERGER-WITTENBERG. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1970. Pp. 178. Price £1.50.

Behavioural Worlds. The Study of Single Cases. By P. G. HERBST. Tavistock Publications. 1970. Pp. 248. Price £2.50.

None of these books is for the person who reaches for his gun when he hears the word 'theory'. Hersher's 'Four Psychotherapies' deals with client centred, rational emotive, behaviour, psychoanalytic therapy in theory and practice. It is the first two that give distinction to the book: a sensitive discussion of client centred therapy (Murray), and an incisive up-to-date account (by Cautela) of behaviour therapy. rational emotive therapy (Ellis) seems of minor interest, and the account of psycho-analysis (by Seidenberg) is so arrogant and uncompromising that it would in my opinion, be better forgotten.

Salzberger-Wittenberg's book gives an account of the psycho-analytic theories of Melanie Klein, with particular reference to their possible application in social case-work. The book is illustrated by a number of clinical case studies. It seems unlikely that the Kleinian framework will replace the more usual ego-psychological framework as a workable everyday theory for psychiatric social workers, but as a basis for seminar discussion in an advanced training course this book should have a place.

Herbst's *Behavioural Worlds* is yet another attempt to develop a generalized theory of behaviour, rather in the genre of classical learning theories such as those of Hull, Tolman and Guthrie. The difference is that Herbst is influenced, not by academic psychology so much as by socio-dynamic theory, e.g. Lewin von Bertalanffy. He describes different types of quantitative technique for studying single cases. I concentrated on one area, marriage, because I am familiar with what can be offered by other methods of theoretical analysis. Herbst takes longitudinal data covering a sequence of events from time of first meeting of a couple, through dating, engagement, to making wedding arrangements. His quantitative methods describe quite well (to use his language) 'behaviour trajectories', 'affect trajectories', and changes in 'life-space structure', but would have to compete (to my mind) with other attempts to objectify complex psycho-social phenomena such as the Semantic Differential and the Kelly grid. This section (Chapters 10, 11) is, however, well worth looking at by researchers evaluating methods of coding and analysing interview data. All in all, this is an odd hypertheoretical book that gave me

the feeling that if I were cleverer, better read and more mathematical I *might* think it brilliant!
SIDNEY CROWN.

Basic Psychoanalytic Concepts on the Theory of Instincts. Edited by HUMBERTO NAGERA. Pp. 136. Price £2.50.

Basic Psychoanalytic Concepts on Metapsychology, Conflicts, Anxiety and Other Subjects. Edited by HUMBERTO NAGERA. Pp. 233. Price £3.25. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 1971.

These two books form the third and fourth volumes of a series whose purpose it is to present the origin and development of concepts evolved by Freud. It is the work of the Concept Research Group directed by Dr. Anna Freud. The first two books were reviewed in this *Journal* in 1970 (Vol. 117, p. 110). The third volume divides the historical development of the instinct theory into four phases extending over altogether forty years. Among the topics dealt with in special articles are the component instincts, the death instinct, masochism, sadism, bisexuality, and others. The various reformulations and amplifications of the instinct theory by its originator are clearly presented in their historical context.

The fourth volume is a miscellaneous one. It deals with the development of Freud's theories regarding concepts such as fixation, regression, ambivalence, reality-testing, transference and counter-transference. The metapsychological approach, which is peculiar to psychoanalysis, is described at some length. This is to be welcomed, because the term and its meaning have often bewildered readers of Freud's writings. A special chapter is devoted to masturbation. Freud's observations on this subject, in which he took a persistent interest, are listed and commented on. They are still worth reading today.

The editor and his team have succeeded in what they have set out to do. Their concise glossaries should be of great help to students and teachers of behavioural science, psychopathology and psychotherapy.

E. STENGEL.

DEPRESSION

Neuropsychopharmacology and the Affective Disorders. By JOSEPH J. SCHILDKRAUT, J. & A. Churchill Ltd., London (for Little, Brown & Company, Boston). Pp. 99. Price £4.50.

Concepts of Depression. By JOSEPH MENDELS. John Wiley & Sons Ltd. Pp. 124. Price £2.50.