

that the 500 men had enjoyed, the different kinds of previous employment in civil life, and the inevitable processes of selection that had been at work to produce this batch of 500 men—processes by which men more highly endowed had been reserved for higher walks of military life, and by which, on the other hand, obvious imbeciles had been excluded. He considers, in various lights, the possibility that some of these 500 should be regarded as weak-minded. He gives some brief critical remarks on some conclusions that would be reached by applying to this material certain supposed criteria of weak-mindedness.

SYDNEY J. COLE.

On the Biological Basis of Sexual Repression and its Sociological Significance. (*Brit. Journ. of Psychol., Med. Sec., July, 1921.*)
Flugel, J. C.

Psycho-analysis has shown that repression is due to intraphysical conflict; the exact nature, however, of the forces which produce the repression and the circumstances under which they act have hitherto not been adequately studied. Freud speaks of the ego-trends as constituting a source of instinctive energy which frequently acts in opposition to the sexual trends, but light has not been thrown upon them to anything like the same extent as upon the libido. By the study of repression from the biological point of view a deeper insight into its nature can be determined.

The biological factor, which is the thesis of this paper, consists "in the existence of a necessary biological antagonism between the full development of the individual and the exercise of his procreative powers—between *individualism* and *genesis*, to use the terms employed by Herbert Spencer—an antagonism of such a kind that (other things being equal) the energies devoted to the life activities of the individual vary inversely with the energy devoted to the production of new individuals. The relative amount of energy devoted to the two ends is determined (within the limits imposed by individual modifiability and racial variability) by the action of *natural selection*, there being some influences which favour the devotion of energy principally to purposes of *individuation*, while other influences favour the devotion of energy principally to purposes of propagation; so that there is brought about (within the individual and within the race) a struggle between the two lines of development corresponding to the two conflicting influences of the environment, this struggle manifesting itself within the mind as a conflict between sexual tendencies on the one hand and the self-preserving and self-regarding tendencies on the other; a conflict as the result of which there takes place the general sexual inhibition with which we are here concerned." The true meaning of the antagonism between *individuation* and *genesis* only becomes manifest when we bear in mind the tremendous influence of the struggle for existence, as revealed by Malthus in its operation on the human race and by Darwin in its application to all forms of life. On the psychological side the sexual (and parental) instincts correspond to *genesis*, and the sublimation of these to *individuation*. At present the human reproductive tendencies and capacities are greater than is biologically advantageous.

Malthus' remedy for over-population, with its attendant evils of poverty, war, disease and premature death, is the postponement of all sexual relations till relatively late in life. This requires a very extreme degree of sexual inhibition; under the Neo-Malthusian practices of contraception the sacrifice of sexual satisfaction is far less.

The effects of the recognition and application of these principles are traced. The writer considers that "in birth control we possess a weapon for rendering the individual human being longer lived, more amply provided for with the necessaries of life, and less exposed to the rigors of the struggle for existence—in other words, for attaining those ends which the majority of social and political reformers have principally in view." Rational insight and conscious control will be substituted for methods of blind prohibition and taboo. The inhibitions due to over-reproduction will be entirely removed, but the need for sublimation will remain and will continue to necessitate a considerable degree of sexual inhibition.

This enlightening article deals in detail with the many sides of the problem, only the fringe of which can be touched upon in this epitome.

C. W. FORSYTH.

2. Neurology.

The Hereditary Transmission of Huntington's Chorea [Chorea degenerativa]. (Zeitschr. f. d. ges. Neur. u. Psychiat., Bd. lxxvi, April, 1921.) Harms zum Spreckel, H.

The author gives a genealogical tree of certain agricultural families in the Erzgebirge (Saxony), showing the incidence of Huntington's chorea in four generations of descendants of a woman (*A*), who was born in 1785 and who herself at the age of 43 became affected with the disease. The taint seems to have originated with her, for though there was some question whether her mother may not have had the disease, the evidence that the author has unearthed leads him to reject a diagnosis of chorea in that instance, and none of *A*'s 4 grandparents was affected. Besides 2 children who died young, *A* had 2 sons (*B*, *C*) and a daughter (*D*). *C* and *D* had chorea; *B* escaped the disease, but died at the age of 37, *i.e.*, before expiry of the age-period of liability to it. Seven of *A*'s 20 grandchildren, at least 10 of her 43 great-grandchildren, and, up to the present, 2 of her 51 great-great-grandchildren, have become choreic. They are: 1 of *B*'s 5 sons (but none of this son's descendants); 3 of *C*'s 10 children, and 2 of his 9 grandchildren; and 3 of *D*'s 5 children, 8 of her 25 grandchildren, and 2 of her 25 great-grandchildren. Ten of the cases have occurred in men, 12 in women. In ten instances the author has been able to confirm the diagnosis by personal study of the patient. He adds that among *A*'s great-grandchildren, besides the ten here reckoned as affected, there are 3 others in whom slight choreic movements have been noticed by relatives, though he himself in his personal examinations has hitherto failed to detect them. In twelve cases the disease has been inherited from the father, in 9 from the mother. Except in the solitary instance of *B*'s son, the transmission has always been direct, without