

Science and Psychical Phenomena. By G. N. M. TYRRELL. London: Methuen, 1938. Pp. xv + 379. Price 12s. 6d.

Anyone who develops a practical interest in psychical research, and as a result of his investigations reaches conclusions that are not either completely damning or else expressed so guardedly that no one can draw any definite statement from them, must take his scientific life in his hands. Yet in the face of hostility and bias a mass of experimental results has been obtained on telepathy, precognition and clairvoyance. They appear to be explicable on the assumptions either of a widespread conspiracy to delude the ingenuous, or of the existence in some people of a method of perceiving the mechanisms of which are not at present understood.

One reason for the large-scale ignorance of the experimental results is that they are scattered through many volumes of the *Journal for Psychical Research*, and Mr. Tyrrell's book gives excellent service in collecting a number of them together. His is not a book that gives uncritical eulogisms: he presents experimental work and independently attested facts, and includes some of the failures as well as some of the successes. His strictures on the physical type of mediumship are particularly severe.

He groups the work into three main classes—spontaneous evidence, experimental laboratory work, and mediumistic trances—and offers theoretical explanations of the phenomena. The reader is likely to find the imposing array of facts more interesting and impressive than the theoretical aspects. The weakest part of the book is, perhaps, that which deals with supposed communications from the dead. The evidence presented by the cross-correspondences is involved and intricate, and even when it is unravelled it is as thin and inconclusive as the evidence presented in other parts of the book, for telepathy, precognition and clairvoyance is weighty. For the latter I need refer the reader only to the precautions taken by Miss Radcliffe Hall in the AVB case to check the medium by private inquiry agents, to the laboratory experiments of Rhine and of Tyrrell, and to the well-attested predictive dream of the result of the Derby in 1933 by Mr. Williams. It is unfortunate that in the last case the subject was a Cornish Quaker, ardently opposed to betting and gambling, and that he was therefore unable to turn his rare ability to his own advantage.

I hope that the book will help to diminish the existing prejudice against psychical research.

J. M. BLACKBURN.

Mental Therapy: Studies in Fifty Cases. By LOUIS S. LONDON. New York: Covici. Friede, 1937. Pp. 774. 2 vols. Price \$12.50.

Those who have been sceptical of Freudian theories and their practical analytic applications have frequently twitted psycho-analysts with the statement that lengthy reported cases demonstrating how their therapeutic results have been arrived at have been more or less conspicuous by their absence. It has been said that without these the value of such work could not be adequately estimated from a scientific point of view. Such an accusation is only true in so far as numbers of them have not been published collectively. From time to time isolated cases of interest have appeared in technical journals.

These large volumes, giving detailed records of fifty cases, at any rate amply remedy such an omission. The contents are divided into six parts.