

consideration, and attributes the offence to less subtle causes of faulty instinctive functioning. . . . Ultimately the conscientious student will probably come to regard as causative factors of certain criminal acts both mental conflict and instinctive tendencies in their respective settings." In regard to the choice of intelligence tests Dr. East is eclectic, but as he points out, the ultimate criterion of mental deficiency is the capacity for social adaptability, and not any more or less conventional standard of educational attainment. The medical witness who is not expert can easily be placed in a difficult position by an astute counsel, and he will find much sound and helpful advice from the chapter on Practice and Procedure. Attention is drawn to the fact that technical knowledge and impartiality are the justification for the presence of the medical witness at a criminal trial, and that he can claim no privilege for confidences disclosed to him by a prisoner.

The chapter on Criminal Responsibility is a carefully thought-out summary of the problem, and usefully includes both the questions propounded to the Judges by the House of Lords in the McNaughton case and their answers thereto. The latter are so often omitted, and yet without them the judicial rulings cannot be fully understood. The detection of the simulation of mental disorder as a device to escape punishment must always be kept in mind, and may sometimes cause the examiner much anxious thought. Dr. East offers many practical suggestions which may help in the detection of malingering.

The greater part of the volume is devoted to a consideration of the various forms of mental abnormality, and is illustrated by a large number of cases. Not the least of the merits of the book is that it forms an admirable text-book of general psychiatry, based for the most part not upon experience of cases already certified as of unsound mind, but of persons upon whose liberty there has hitherto been no restraint, and who, until the committal of the act with which they are charged, have been free members of the community.

As a guide to the forensic aspects of psychiatry, "full of wise saws and modern instances," the book is admirable.

G. A. AUDEN.

Mental Hospitals and the Public: The Need for Closer Co-operation.

By Lt.-Col. J. R. LORD, C.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.P.E. London: Adlard & Son, Ltd., 1927. Pp. 33. Price 1s. 6d. net.

This essay has been written by Col. Lord in aid of the work of the National Society for Mental Hygiene, of which organization he is the Hon. Secretary. The writer aims to put in words some small things achieved which are designed to improve the lot of the mentally afflicted person, to soften the attitude of the "group mind" towards him, to find a place for him within the community during his necessary segregation, as we do those sick in body, and not outside of it, or on the fringe of it, estranged from the

world as though he were a pariah or outlaw ; to improve and facilitate his treatment by bringing in the wake of the psychiatrist the great body of medical knowledge to bear upon his infirmity ; and, finally, on his recovery, to welcome him back to full citizenship, and to find him suitable work so that he may live and thrive.

What the attitude of the society has been in the past towards the psychotic is vividly depicted by the writer in an historical sketch of the treatment of mental disorders in ancient and mediæval times. That this attitude is very different now becomes evident when we compare the mental hospitals of to-day with those of a comparatively few years ago, but, as the writer shows, public opinion has never really emancipated itself from the thralldom of mediæval thought in its ideas of insanity. It is, indeed, probable that many years will elapse before mental disease is regarded in quite the same light as physical disease. For one thing, its origin in many cases is veiled in obscurity. If (say) dementia præcox were found to be due to some recognizable germ, it is probable that the occurrence of this disease in a member of a family group would be accepted with much more composure than is at present the case. Then, the very nature of a psychosis tends inevitably to isolate its subject from contact with common life ; he lives essentially in a world of his own ; his conduct is (apparently) unmotivated ; he becomes indifferent to public opinion and impervious to external solicitations. Such attitudes are calculated to produce uneasy tensions in normal people ; they feel themselves to be in the presence of something uncanny and outside the range of their experience. It is disconcerting to deal with an individual whose conduct fails to be influenced by methods hitherto found effective in dealing with other human beings, and no doubt the fear of the biologically abnormal has something to do with the attitude of society towards the psychotic.

In concluding his essay, Col. Lord suggests directions calculated to bring the public generally to look on the sick in mind and the work of the mental hospitals in the same light and with the same sympathy and interest as they do those sick in body, and the work of the voluntary general hospitals. In this connection he stresses particularly the value of a recognized hospital visitor as a communicating link between mental patients and their homes, and gives an interesting account of the work which is being done at Horton by Miss Dale, who is giving her services at that hospital as a " Visitor " from the outside world. This and other matters of practical interest to the psychiatrist are discussed. We hope, however, that this paper will not only be read by those connected with mental hospitals, but also by the general public, for whom it is primarily written. It cannot fail to exert a beneficial influence, and should do much to dissipate the misconceptions which are rife as to the work and aims of those who are responsible for the treatment and care of the mentally sick.

H. DEVINE.