

and moral training of the feeble-minded are judicious and philosophical. Dr. Montesano has a firm grasp of the whole subject both analytically and synthetically. Some of the devices to attract the attention and enlist the interests of the pupils are novel and ingenious. The motor and sensory exercises are displayed by twenty-nine figures. Altogether this little treatise well fulfils its purpose. It might be profitably translated into English for the use of the training schools in Great Britain and America.

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*Metaphysik. in der Psychiatrie.* Von Dr. P. KRONTHAL. Fischer : Jena, 1905. Pp. 92, medium 8vo.

Dr. Kronthal has made wide and diligent readings of the works of the metaphysicians, ancient and modern, English, French, and German. As Voltaire said, metaphysicians are like ballet-dancers. They skim, skip, wheel about for a while, only to end at the place they set out. One learns from their books little else than so many definitions. From his studies Dr. Kronthal has taken a point of view which leads him to treat modern psychiatry in an inconveniently sceptical way. He reminds us that no one knows anything besides his own sensations. What appears yellow to him may be a quite different impression to another man. The real method of natural philosophy is to cling to direct observation, and to be very wary of inferences or general realisations. All men's doings are to be regarded as reflexes aroused by stimuli applied to the sensory nerve tract. No nerve-fibre either begins or ends in a nerve-cell. The fibre is not a continuation of the cell or of its fibrillæ. The nerve-cell to which such great functions have been assigned by some pathologists never divides; it is a dead body and serves to isolate the nerve-tracts. Dr. Kronthal's views on this question, founded upon serious microscopical studies, are given at length in his paper in *Archiv für Psychiatrie*, 41 Band, 1 Heft. The author blames Kraepelin, Ziehen, and other well-known psychologists for using metaphysical terms, amongst which he enumerates perception, association, will, imagination, anger, grief, and fear. To his mind there is nothing in the living body save reflexes, and the psyche is the sum of all the reflexes. But to do without these familiar expressions would be awkward. Metaphysicians will prove to you that there is nothing save a modification of your own consciousness; but then there are modifications and modifications. All our doings may be owing to reflexes, but we need some qualifying adjective to distinguish them. There are reflexes, strong, lively, weak, swift, slow, abnormal, accompanied by pleasure or by pain. It may be an assumption to guess what another man feels and thinks under the changes of his countenance, but to act in this world one must begin by assuming something. Memory, the author tells us, is something which has happened before, the repetition of similar or identical stimuli. He does not explain how the repetition of a second impression is recognised. To awaken the memory one must have a change; identical impressions do not rouse us. A man is not like a puppet, moved by pulling strings;

between the sensory end and the motor end there are a variety of processes with which the psychiatrist has to deal, and for these we must have expressions, which may be called metaphysical.

While he is a little confident on the affirmative side, Kronthal is dogmatic on the negative. He denies free will, reasoning after the manner of Buckle, who argues that men's actions are proved by statistics to depend upon circumstances beyond their control—*e. g.*, the number of marriages in England is always low when bread is dear. But it may be replied that men desire to be married under certain conditions. No sane man will take a wife if he knows he cannot buy for her enough of bread to eat. The dearness of food does not take away the will to marry, but the opportunity for doing so.

As conclusions, Dr. Kronthal presents us with his views upon these grave questions which lie near or beyond the bounds of our knowledge, and which have been debated for thousands of years. In the universe he sees an everlasting energy. [Is energy not a metaphysical expression?] Pantheism (*Allbeseeltheit*) is, he tells us, adopted by the best thinkers, not only amongst those eminent in the study of natural phenomena, but by those who are styled philosophers. Spinoza, Leibnitz, Lotze, Wundt, v. Nägeli, Zollner, to name a few of them, hold that nature is besouled in all her parts, not this or that body. The survival of the soul after death he considers to be an illusion, for which he offers an explanation on his last page. We cannot, in a limited review, discuss the weighty subjects for which Kronthal's own pages give insufficient room. He has applied his mind closely to the question which he treats, and his pamphlet deserves the attention of psychologists.

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*La Démence.* By Dr. A. MARIE. Paris: Octave Doin, 1906. Pp. 492, 8vo.

The present work forms one of the *Bibliothèque Internationale de Psychologie Expérimentale*, a series of fifty volumes, written by various authors, under the general editorship of Dr. Toulouse, of Villejuif, the whole being intended to show the stage at which the various divisions and applications of experimental psychology stand at the present day. "Experimental psychology" is apparently understood in its widest sense, and implies the scientific as opposed to the metaphysical method, rather than the strictly quantitative procedures with which the phrase is associated in this country.

Dr. Marie sounds the keynote of the whole book in his statement that "psychological states are to be regarded as a function of the brain." This irreproachable postulate, however, leads him, in many places, to adopt theories which, founded on the slenderest hypothesis, must be regarded as unproven and unfruitful. As an example may be cited the oft-repeated application of the theory of nerve-cell amoeboidism to the explanation of psychical states. The text often tends to give one the impression that the theory is a matter of established fact, rather than a centre of heated controversy.