

Book Reviews

The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child. Volume 32. Edited by RUTH S. EISSLER, ANNA FREUD, MARIANNE KRIS, PETER B. NEUBAUER and ALBERT J. SOLNIT. London: Yale University Press. 1977. Pp 623. £16.20.

The 32nd volume of this annual publication reaches the usual high standard of the series. Its 22 papers are grouped under familiar headings, and include Contributions to 'Psychoanalytic Theory, Clinical Contributions, Psychoanalysis in Education, and Applied Psychoanalysis'.

The title not only implies relevance to psychoanalysts and child psychiatrists, but highlights the contributions of both to the understanding of adult psychiatric disorders.

Of the many interesting papers I should like to single out especially Anna Freud's 'Fears, Anxieties and Phobic Phenomena'. This paper describes concisely the theory of phobia formation, essential to the effective treatment of both adults and children.

Kurt Eissler's paper 'Comments on Penis Envy and Orgasm in Women' interestingly draws in ideas ranging from psycho-analysis to biology and physiology. Though various groups might disagree with him, he continues a current and topical controversy, with a firm theoretical argument.

James Anthony's paper illustrates 'Non-verbal and Verbal Systems of Communication' and the difficulties and richness involved with non-verbal communications.

In the applied section, an enjoyable paper was that by Frederick Meisel, giving a psychoanalytic understanding of the well known *Myth of Peter Pan*. It reminded me of Bruno Bettelheim's recently published book—*The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (reviewed in this Journal, July 1977, 131, 101).

Though this book is probably most appreciated by those interested in a psychoanalytic model of human functioning, it is well worth inspection on a library shelf for those unfamiliar with it. Its cost would put the book beyond the reach of many individuals who would like to own it.

FELICITY DIRMEIK, *Consultant Psychotherapist,
The London Hospital*

Can't Your Child See? By EILEEN P. SCOTT, JAMES E. JAN and ROGER D. FREEMAN. Lancaster: MTP Press. 1978. £5.50.

Did you know that you should not hand a cup to a young blind child, you should always guide his hand to the table top where the cup is? The reason for this is simple: handing a cup carries with it the message that it came from mid air and so can be put back in mid air and thus dropped and broken.

That kind of point runs through this book. Its aim is to help parents, and incidentally many professionals, and it is a very good example of its kind. Starting with a rather sketchy chapter on diagnosis and what can go wrong with vision, it goes on to excellent sections on day to day care and finally to education. The last section, written from within a framework accepting the concept of the integration of blind children with ordinary peers, makes fascinating reading for those anticipating the Warnock Report.

Two small further comments: the style in which it is written is bland, as though the three authors had ironed out each others' idiosyncratic contributions; and really this is a book about the blind, the partially sighted receive much less attention.

RICHARD LANSDOWN, *Principal Psychologist,
The Hospital for Sick Children, London*

Prisons and the Prisoner: The work of the Prison Service in England and Wales. London: Home Office 1977. Pp 182. £5.25.

This well produced publication (with 28 pages of photographs) 'presents a comprehensive account of the work of penal institutions', as the Home Secretary states in the Foreword. It attempts to provide 'a balanced and not uncritical picture' to further 'informed public interest', and, within the severe restrictions imposed by having to pack such wide ranging material into so few pages, it succeeds. For those who know little of life 'inside', the glossary of technical expressions is useful, as is the description of the operational work of the Prison Service. There is 'a condensed report of what has been done recently to improve the quality of medical and psychiatric treatment . . .' though the specialist readers of this journal will feel that the report is *very* condensed.

Nevertheless, in a literal sense, it gives us the 'bricks and mortar' of the Prison Service (the numbers and categories of institutions, staff and inmates). In a symbolic sense it provides basic information about the history of penal philosophy and policy, together with an outline of current trends in these areas.

I found it interesting and provocative, though slightly indigestible. The many complex issues discussed call for something other than dogmatic brevity, except in an almost skeletal survey.

The psychotherapist currently engaged in conducting groups in custodial settings will be stimulated by the reminder that in 1895 the Gladstone Committee made the cautious recommendation 'That the privilege of talking might be given after a certain period as a reward for good conduct on certain days for a limited time'!

This book supersedes the Command Paper of 1969 entitled *People in Prison England and Wales* (Cmnd. 4214) and should be 'command' reading, whether or not the reader is directly engaged professionally with the offender-patient. This is a must for all.

MURRAY COX, *Consultant Psychotherapist,
Broadmoor Hospital, Berkshire*

Epileptics in Prison. Edited by JOHN GUNN.
London: Academic Press. 1977. Pp 107. £6.50.

This monograph is precisely named, *Epileptics in Prison*, which the author points out is by no means the same as epileptics and crime, since the men whom he is reporting have been through the courts and received sentences. Without a survey of those seen at court it would be impossible to know how many epileptics commit crimes but go to alternative institutions, such as hospitals, or are dealt with in other ways (e.g. probation).

His careful study is mainly based on comparisons between three groups: epileptic prisoners, non-epileptic prisoners, and epileptics without prison record from psychiatric hospital clinics. The clinical work-up is extensive and includes EEGs on almost all subjects so that a clear idea can be obtained of the types of epilepsy and other psychiatric neurological data. Amongst many facts of interest are the importance of alcoholism, and the relative unimportance of crimes committed in a state of epileptic automatism or in any direct temporal relation to any form of attack. As Gunn points out, however, this could simply be an effect of court procedures. The social factors are rather more skimpily studied, but more extensive information would have been hard to come by. The author points out that epileptic prisoners more closely resemble the non-epileptic prisoners than

the epileptic non-prisoners, mainly from the way the control group was chosen.

In addition to providing this valuable scientific survey, Dr. Gunn also allows his passionate concern for epileptic prisoners as human beings to emerge very clearly through the statistics. One does indeed wonder what a medically and socially handicapped group like epileptics is doing in prison in such numbers. Gunn, himself, would be the first to admit that as a psychiatrist he has no clear alternative solution in many cases. However, he has at least made a start on closing one gap in the existing service which is the absence of post-prison community care, as he is helping to set up hostels especially for this purpose.

The book can be strongly recommended as a valuable authoritative survey.

D. A. POND, *Professor of Psychiatry,
The London Hospital*

Left Behind. By W. ALAN HEATON-WARD. Plymouth: Macdonald & Evans. 1977. Pp 277. £3.25.

Dr. Heaton-Ward's book on *Mental Subnormality* is well known as the standard introductory text book on the subject. He has now produced an equally valuable book concerned with the social aspects of mental handicap, which promises to be as valuable as his other text. The early chapters are introductory: in the first he outlines the concepts of mental subnormality; in the next discusses aetiology. He deals with clinical manifestations, and their causes at a level which would probably need a medical training to appreciate fully, but which, by the same token, is a useful and succinct treatment for the non-specialist physician. Then follow short chapters on the abilities and behaviour of the subnormal, on epilepsy, and on mental illness. These chapters combine to convey a multi-dimensional picture of the nature of the problems posed by mental handicap.

The substance of the book, is devoted to the care of the mentally handicapped. This begins with a review of the history of attitudes towards mental handicap and the development of care, and is a tour de force of clear presentation of a complex subject. The author provides historical information which is not generally well known, and not even to be found in Kanner's classical history. Using the historical approach to introduce present problems, discussions, and polemics, he gives a balanced and very detailed description of the modern English scene, and the influences at work in shaping it, and also examines likely future developments. For a man who has been in the thick of the discussions and disputations, he shows an admirable