

## Reviews

**The Geometry of Mental Measurement.** By SIR GODFREY H. THOMSON. University of London Press Ltd., 1954. Pp. 60. 6s. 6d.

Factor analysis and the general theory of multiple correlation is apt to be found difficult by the beginner, who must learn to manipulate a somewhat intricate system of algebraic and psychological concepts. This little book attempts to lessen the beginner's difficulties by giving a simply written and more detailed account of some of the difficulties.

It is not suitable as a complete account, but will prove a valuable supplement to the larger treatises. It is freely illustrated with clear and simple diagrams.

W. ROSS ASHBY.

**Psychical Research Today.** By D. J. WEST, M.B., D.P.M. Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., London, 1954. Pp. 144. 12s. 6d.

The author has excellently fulfilled his intention of giving a survey of the present position, written for those who have some familiarity with psychology and scientific method but who are not specialists in psychical phenomena. He writes with authority; not only does he give a thorough survey of what others have done but he has spent many years in investigation personally. His account shows a well balanced combination of enthusiasm and criticism; throughout, the tone is fair and judicial. It is beautifully written, clear, factual, and well documented, so that the reader who is interested can easily extend his reading. Seldom does a book succeed in giving so much matter at so little cost. It can be strongly recommended.

W. ROSS ASHBY.

**The Origins of Psycho-analysis. Letters to Wilhelm Fliess, Drafts and Notes: 1887–1902.** By SIGMUND FREUD. Edited by MARIE BONAPARTE, ANNA FREUD, ERNST KRIS. Authorised translation by ERIC MOSBACHER and JAMES STRACHEY. Imago Publishing Co. Ltd., London, 1954. Pp. 486. Price 30s.

It is reassuring that the editors have not divulged any "secrets" of Freud's personal life. The hesitation, therefore, which one feels about praising the publication of these private letters from Freud to his friend Fliess is overcome by the historical interest and value they have for the reader, who is enabled to appreciate a little of what lay behind the official façade with which Freud faced life.

"They regard me rather as a monomaniac, while I have the distinct feeling that I have touched on one of the great secrets of nature." "I do not count on recognition, at any rate in my life time."

Both his mood and his private practice varied considerably. Sometimes he would have no new patients or new ideas. "I am not working, and it is quiet inside me. If the sexual theory comes up, I shall listen to it." And after a spell of hard work he wrote to his friend, "This psychology is really an incubus—skittles and mushroom-hunting are certainly much healthier pastimes." When he believes he really has found a correct solution to a problem he is elated, "—the whole thing held together, and still does. I can naturally hardly contain myself with delight."

There are references of course to the letters of Fliess whose original mind pleased Freud. "Your letter arrived today, and gave me great pleasure. It breathes health, work and progress. I am naturally most eager to hear everything new . . ." "My best wishes for your wife and child and all your hopes."

The book also contains drafts by Freud of projected work, and there is an admirable introduction by Ernst Kris.

C. E. H. TURNER.