

Part II.—Reviews.

Sex Problems and Youth. By THEODORE TUCKER. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. Pp. 126. Price 5s.

Mr. Tucker tells his young adult straight out that he is in for a difficult time and that there is no compromise. There is one golden rule—to control the sex-impulse. Masturbation must be subjugated, but the conflict is not made easier by the knowledge that the terrible stories of its consequences are “old wives’ tales.” On the other hand it is bad enough to indulge in erotic phantasy, but the consequences of repressing it to the unconscious are far worse, leading to neurosis or even insanity. Here again will-power and self-control must be exerted. Extra-marital intercourse, resort to prostitutes and, of course, any form of perversion are condemned. Pre-marital relations should be subjected to the severest discipline. Kissing and petting parties, if indulged in at all, should be taken in such graded doses as cannot possibly arouse the erotic instinct of either partner!

It is argued that since asocial pugnacity can be controlled, the problem of the sex instinct should present no greater difficulty. There are, however, a number of direct outlets for pugnacity which are not socially taboo, but prior to marriage the author allows no outlet for the sexual instinct save the indirect and problematic method of sublimation.

It would seem improbable that this book will succeed in converting a Valérie Marneffe into a Hortense Hulot, any more than Marxists will succeed in eradicating the fundamental acquisitiveness of a Grandet or a Huchon. It is yet to be proved that such a levelling of society is to be desired.

S. M. COLEMAN.

Anxiety and its Treatment. By JOHN YERBURY DENT. London: John Murray, 1941. Pp. 124. Price 3s. 6d.

In this semi-popular book the author provides a very readable account of the causes of the anxiety state, its physical and psychological concomitants, and the very grave danger of attempting to allay anxiety by the use of alcohol and other narcotic drugs. Since, in the author’s opinion, chronic alcoholism is nearly always an end result of the anxiety state, much space is devoted to this subject. There is a most spirited description of alcoholic types, some excellent advice on judicious drinking, a physiological explanation as to the action of alcohol and the value of vitamin B₁, and finally a detailed and technical account of the apomorphine treatment. The author explains that this treatment is much more rational than other forms of shock therapy now in vogue, because apomorphine is a “back-brain centre” stimulant. Unfortunately it is observed that one glass of sherry or even a little trifle, taken in mistake for nun’s pudding, may reactivate the craving.

S. M. COLEMAN.