

which affords the greatest psychological satisfaction, this being well illustrated by the complicated and bizarre methods sometimes adopted, even when simple procedures were easily obtainable.

Can we do anything to reduce the incidence of suicide? Improvement of economic conditions is, of course, possible. And the author praises the work done by mental hygiene agencies of various kinds. The custom of remanding for observation those who attempt suicide may be mentioned. This practice often gives opportunity for the rectification of faulty conditions in the environment of the patient; and a little good advice, even when based upon superficial investigation, works wonders in not a few cases.

The book may be commended to all who are concerned with its subject as being an able, an exhaustive, and a well-documented review.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

Prostitution: A Survey and a Challenge. By GLADYS MARY HALL, M.A. London: Williams & Norgate, Ltd., 1933. Pp. 196. Price 7s. 6d. net.

Miss Hall extends the usual definition of her subject, and includes unpaid as well as paid promiscuous sex relationships. The former ("amateur" prostitution) she considers to be increasing at the expense of the latter ("professional" prostitution). This increase she ascribes to a general laxity in sex matters, combined with a desire for adventure, and she believes it to have been accentuated by the more diffused knowledge of contraceptive procedures. She adduces a considerable volume of evidence in support of her view; but the value of this evidence is, to some extent, vitiated by its anonymity. We know, however, that both forms of sex promiscuity exist, and their relative incidence is comparatively unimportant.

In an able review of the factors leading to promiscuity, Miss Hall urges that actual poverty is an unimportant cause. In this view she has the support of other serious students of the subject, although the view is quite contrary to the popular opinion. The desire to obtain what are often described as "luxuries" may operate, but this raises the question of what luxury is. Again contrary to uninformed views, Miss Hall rejects intellectual defect as a prominent causative factor, and in this view also students of sex will agree with her. If by "mental deficiency" is meant emotional instability, the case is altered. Miss Hall believes that a condition of "over-sexed constitution", temporary or permanent, is often to be found in members of the prostitute class; and there is, no doubt, something to be said for this view, although it may be impossible to obtain precise evidence on the point. The lonely lives led by many working girls in large towns is responsible for much sex promiscuity. The nature of the varied factors which create the male demand for the services of prostitutes is treated with much insight; this side of the question has been too generally ignored.

A very useful summary of the laws relating to prostitution in various countries is provided, and the reasons for the general failure of attempts at severe repression and of official regulation are analysed. It is stated that much legislation was intended to preserve public health. It is, however, more likely that the original object of the laws was to penalize breaches of public morality.

The book shows evidence of a careful investigation of its subject. It is

temperately written, providing in this respect a happy contrast to much published work on sex matters, and it may be fully commended to all who are interested in a problem which has many momentous ramifications.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

The Nervous Child at School. By HECTOR CHARLES CAMERON, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P. London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1933. Price 6s.

This book can hardly be called a worthy successor to *The Nervous Child*, although the excellent clinical pictures which characterized the author's earlier book are to be found here too.

Only one reference is made to the Child Guidance Clinics, and that is in the introduction, where they are called "therapeutic tanks". The approach to the deeper understanding of the child's difficulties by the modern school of dynamic psychology is dismissed in one brief paragraph.

It is difficult to conjecture for whom this book was written. The general practitioner should be given more information on the subject of therapy, while the laity will find little to help them in dealing with their children's problems.

The author discusses fatigue and disorder of the liver as the common causes of most nervous disorders. It is certain that the question of fatigue is of paramount importance when dealing with children, but Dr. Cameron has failed to bring home to his readers the enormous therapeutic value of his own personal *rapproch* with his patients and their parents. D. N. HARDCASTLE.

Set the Children Free. By FRITZ WITTELS. Translated by Cedar and Eden Paul. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1932. Price 10s.

Dr. Wittels' book has been written out of his deep sympathy and understanding of children, and it can be safely recommended to all parents and educators, for they are bound to absorb from it the idea of the fundamental needs of children. Over and over again the author points out that the child's greatest need is for love and security if he is to grow up to his fullest mental and emotional stature.

Dr. Wittels is a Freudian, and his book is written from this standpoint. Without going too deeply into the mechanisms of ego formation, repression, and the dynamic aspects of unconscious mental life, he succeeds in making them clear. He may be criticized for placing the latency period as late as eight to fourteen.

The chapter upon "The Child's Ego" is particularly clear, and here again the writer specially emphasizes the necessity for love if the gulf from the primary narcissistic phase of the infant to a stable object relationship is to be securely bridged. Again in relation to education he urges the same view: "Any kind of education, even the strictest kind, is bearable if the child can remain convinced of the unshakable love of the person responsible for its upbringing".

The author deals with the problems of wrong-doing and punishment, and the inquiring minds of children, with the same sympathetic insight.

When he turns to the problems of family life and school life the author is not so much in accord with modern views in England and America. He regards the family as the most difficult place in which the child can grow