

## Part II.—Reviews.

**From my African Notebook.** By ALBERT SCHWEITZER (trans. Mrs. C. E. B. RUSSELL). London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. Pp. 132. Price 5s.

An attractive little book, by a well-known author, telling of his experiences as a hospital physician in Gabon. The book is anecdotic and is written with a keen sense of humour. Interesting side-lights are cast on Trader Horn, the site of whose home is now occupied by the hospital at Lambaréné. The author also tells us something of the indigent population, their character traits, folklore and customs. Dr. Schweitzer's notebook has not the remotest bearing upon psychiatric problems.

S. M. COLEMAN.

**Outline of Psychiatric Case-study.** By PAUL W. PREU, M.D. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1939. Pp. xiv + 140. Price \$1.85.

The student anxious to perfect his psychiatric history-taking and case-study should find this book a most useful guide. The general lay-out differs little from that of Cheney's *Psychiatric Examination*, but is worked out in much more detail. On the other hand, there are no separate chapters on the method of investigation for unco-operative patients or children; what advice the author has to give must be searched for in the text. The physical examination apart, the form is largely that of a questionnaire. There are many valuable hints as to how to put questions to evasive paraphrenics or sensitive relations. In fact if the questionnaire has been followed out conscientiously, it can be said with conviction that it is not for want of asking if the physician is still unable to say why his patient has fallen ill. No stone is left unturned; even the malevolent effect of possible lodgers is gone into in some detail! The advocate of analysis might suggest that, as a routine, the turning of stones over such a wide area is both time-consuming and irrelevant. He might advise that time would be better spent if the field were narrowed and the digging deeper. Such methods of psychiatric investigation as word and free association, dream analysis and play interpretation are not so much as mentioned.

S. M. COLEMAN.

**Compendium of Infantile Neuro-Psychiatry [Précis de neuro-psychiatrie Infantile].** By G. ROBIN. Paris: G. Doin & Co., 1939. Pp. 311. Price 60 frs.

This broad survey, covering the whole range of mental disorder as it occurs in children, is of exceptional merit. There are comparatively few psychiatric treatises devoted solely to children; for this reason alone such a work is especially welcome. The author's power of description and delineation of clinical types is of a very high order. There are, besides, verbatim quotations from leading psychiatric opinion in France upon the many problems raised. The references are rather unsystematically arranged; they may be found incorporated within the text, as a footnote or listed at the end of a chapter or section.

The first section deals with abnormal child types, their clinical characteristics and the lines upon which they should be treated. Here are included the emotionally unstable, the inattentive and distractible, the cyclothymic,

the emotionally retarded and asthenic, the psychasthenic and neurasthenic, the mythomaniac, the hysteric, the schizoid, the paranoid, the epileptoid and the perverted. The second section is concerned with psychological anomalies determined by organic nervous disease. Here there is an interesting chapter on the character disturbances following epidemic encephalitis. In the third section there are chapters on the intellectual development of the child and on mental testing, on mental deficiency, its degrees and subtypes, and a chapter on the differential diagnosis between true oligophrenia and mental retardation from other causes. The fourth section is devoted to juvenile dementia. The fifth is semiological. Here the ætiology, psycho-pathology and therapy of such phenomena as mutism, tantrums, fugues, stealing, suicidal impulse, stubbornness and sulking, psychological disorders of alimentation, nail-biting, masturbation, enuresis and night-terrors are studied. The final section is concerned with methods of treatment, re-education and disposal.

From the ætiological point of view, Dr. Robin holds that the mental disorders of children can be divided into two main groups: those that are constitutionally and/or organically determined and those due to psychological factors. The latter will respond to psycho-therapy along Freudian or Adlerian lines; the former, unless it is a case for some specific treatment, endocrine, anti-syphilitic, etc., can at best be alleviated by removal from the home and re-education at special centres.

S. M. COLEMAN.

**Clinical Studies in Psychopathology.** By H. V. DICKS, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P. London: E. Arnold & Co., 1939. Pp. 248. Price 12s. 6d.

This book, intended for the advanced student, presupposes a fairly intimate acquaintance with the various schools of psychopathology. Detailed analyses of cases are presented, each followed by a critical discussion. Essentially Freudian in his outlook, Dr. Dicks holds that the fundamental aim of the ego is to avoid anxiety. The psycho-neuroses, drug-addictions, character and sexual anomalies are some of the abnormal methods the ego uses to avoid this state. Frequently Freudian, Jungian and Adlerian interpretations are given, thereby considerably enriching the meaning of the total situation. Following Adler, the author consistently keeps the essential aim of the neurosis in view. In this way he strikes a happy mean between deep analysis, far removed from the immediate conflict, and superficial investigation, heedless of the ætiological importance of childhood difficulties.

When it comes to the more theoretical side and fundamental issues Dr. Dicks is less convincing. No two psychological schools agree on the subject of instincts, their number or qualities; hotly disputed, this has much in common with theological controversy. The Immortal Gods, thrown from Olympus, have found a new resting-place in the unconscious mind. Stripped of their anthropomorphic qualities, they have otherwise suffered little change in the transit. The initiate to instinct theory has a wide choice of creeds. There is the mono-theism of Jung, a primary life-force or libido; the Freudian dualistic conception, a creative or sexual deity and an aggressive or destructive devil; the Adlerian Jehovah, a typically semitic power-deity, and the polytheism of McDougall, where the instincts are almost as numerous as the Gods of the Greek mythology. As a general rule, however, English psychologists prefer a trinity of instincts. Rivers postulates a sexual, self-preservative and herd instinct; in accordance with Protestant tradition he only gives lip-service to the first of the three.