

cold, it is beneficial after such exposure when the surface is chilled. The effects of alcohol as a drug and a poison are clearly set forth at some length; the part of alcoholic excess in the causation of most forms of insanity is regarded as of secondary importance, rather a symptom than its cause. The Committee accept the direct and indirect evidence indicating that the chronic alcoholism of the parents reacts injuriously on the vitality and development of the offspring; but continuity of action as well as excess of dose is necessary to constitute chronic alcoholism, and the habit-forming tendency of alcohol is relatively slight. Finally, the relation of alcohol to longevity is considered; it is pointed out that the evidence presented by insurance companies and friendly societies as bearing on this matter is highly complicated and difficult to interpret, so that while it would appear that the death-rate is lower and the expectation of life longer in total abstainers, it is so difficult to isolate the issue from disturbing personal and racial factors that this cannot be regarded as a scientifically-established conclusion.

Most of these conclusions are simple and elementary; but they are fundamental propositions in regard to the action of a substance which is economically and socially of the greatest importance since the inhabitants of the British Islands deem it of such value that they spend more on it than on meat and twice as much as on bread. They are, moreover, propositions that are still often ignored or denied in quarters where better knowledge might well be expected. It is, therefore, satisfactory to learn that this authoritative little volume has already attained an extremely large circulation.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

Religion and Realities. By HENRY MAUDSLEY, M.D. John Bale, Sons & Danielsson, Ltd. Price 3s. 6d. net.

There is a pathetic interest attaching to this book. It is the last product of the author's pen. To some extent such a recollection disarms criticism, or would do so were one inclined to severity or dispraise. Again, the advanced age at which he wrote, and adverse conditions in regard to health, might have been justly adduced in mitigation of sentence for errors, solecisms, lapses of memory, or failing judgment. It is unnecessary to urge such pleas, for here, as in the case of "Organic to Human," there is the same clearness of thought and lucidity of expression. Nor is there any sign of weakening in regard to principle, no temporising, as of one who "feared hell rather than annihilation." For this we may be grateful, though, as no one would have admitted more readily than Dr. Maudsley himself, death-bed "repentances," and the utterances of those in the "dreary decline" of life, may be fairly discounted when they are at variance with principles enunciated by the same persons in their prime, or with the whole tenor of their lives.

As the title implies, this volume is chiefly concerned with the antithesis of reality as opposed to religion, or rather to the misty abstractions in which theological systems have obscured the plain facts of life and of experience. This has come about because "the persons who think—hardly one in many thousands—are rare and exceptional." It is more easy to give free play to the emotions in "rapturous exultation"

than to give time and close attention to observation and experiment. The same criticism is applicable in other spheres of thought; people "have never taken the least pains to make themselves acquainted with what is known of physical and chemical forces, their modes of action, and their effects. They choose rather to cherish the miraculous than to observe the natural, and to pay with words instead of with valid coin." So we find that in the study of mental disorders there is, too, the same besetting sin—theory outruns experience to an extent that would be incredible had we not all been trained to believe a thing because it is impossible! On the other hand, "though it would be wrong no doubt to deny the possibility of what seems impossible, there is not the least need to manufacture fictitious possibilities and then teach them as verities." For century on century we continue along the same lines, absurdly self-satisfied with our beliefs and our theories, and unwilling even to make trial of methods which are based upon something which does not square with our pre-conceived notions. It is still fashionable to decry the materialistic conception of the universe, even though no honest attempt has been made to disprove the assertions of those who, like Dr. Maudsley, have pleaded in season and out of season for a fair trial for investigations conducted upon that basis. When they shall be proved of no avail it will be time enough for opponents to scoff.

It has been said that Dr. Maudsley was a destructive critic, and that he suggested no constructive system of philosophy. Even were this true—and it is not—it would be no slight achievement to have cleared away the accumulated rubbish which has been gathered together by years of misdirected energy. But we have, as a rule, little gratitude for him who points out the error of our ways; we prefer him who flatters our vanity. It is unlikely, then, that anyone who disavows belief in human perfectibility, who even criticises our much-vaunted civilisation, can gain popular acceptance. Nevertheless, his words may yet prove to be nearer the truth than are the honeyed phrases with which so frequently the ears of the groundlings are tickled.

It will have been inferred from what has already been said that Dr. Maudsley had no panacea for human ills to proclaim, no easy path to the attainment of knowledge to point out, no fervid optimism in regard to our future prospects here or hereafter. Nor can we be surprised that, looking out upon the chaos into which social conditions had passed, he inclined to pessimism. And pessimism is "alike the stern conclusion of thinking reason, and the pious confession of reverent religion." Nor is it a conclusion which is reached gladly, but one which is forced upon the thinker by the stern logic of events. "Man that is born of woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery. He cometh up and is cut down like a flower."

The essays collected in this volume cover a wide range of thought: "Old Age," "Death," "Life," "Truth," "Virtue," "Vanity," "Style," "Optimism and Pessimism"—the titles serve to show the diversity of subjects. But whatever the subject under discussion, the same clear light of practical reason is brought to bear upon it. There is no shirking of the issues, no faltering, even though he realised that he was soon to pass through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, when the process of Nature should "complete its particular cycle, and the individual return

to the dust from which he was created." The insistent push of vitality, derived from the sun and providing in its upward wave the basis of optimism, was dying down and giving place to old age, with its realisation of how much in life is mere vanity and vexation of spirit, illusion, and figments of faith. This, in its turn, must pass into that phase which we dread, "as children fear to go in the dark," and yet which is but a sleep, a rest longed for by the wearied flesh, a "welcome port to which, after a long and rough voyage, the weary traveller arrives at last."

It is well in these days, when the tendency is to give too free play to the emotions, and to let reason be hindered in its work, that there should be some who can look as from a tower upon the contest and dispassionately survey the scene. From the comments of such spectators we may derive, if not consolation, at least help in our distresses. Such a wise onlooker was Dr. Maudsley, and in this last book we are given the ripe reflections of his maturity. It is for others to carry on the lamp of true doctrine.

The Unmarried Mother. By PERCY GAMBLE KAMMERER. With an Introduction by WILLIAM HEALY, M.D. (Criminal Science Monographs). Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1918. Pp. 342. Price \$3.

The most valuable part of this important work for the psychologist is that which concerns the 500 histories (not all of them here reproduced) on which it is statistically based. The great difficulty in dealing scientifically with the unmarried mother has been, indeed, precisely this lack of an adequate basis of carefully detailed data. It is true this study comes from America, but the conditions dealt with are not substantially different: the illegitimacy rate in the United States (differing widely from that of some European countries) is almost the same as that of England, and, moreover, among the 500 cases here dealt with there are nearly as many women of British as of American birth—more if we include the French Canadians.

The form the author's investigation has taken, and the careful attempt to distinguish and estimate the numerous factors involved, are largely due to the inspiration and guidance of Dr. Healy. As we might expect, environmental conditions (notably, absence from home, bad home conditions, uncongenial surroundings, recreational disadvantages, contaminating industrial conditions) are the most prominent factors, though low wages are not amongst them, and it is in flourishing and prosperous communities that the illegitimate rate is highest, in poor and backward communities that what we call "virtue" most flourishes. Heredity as a factor was not easy to estimate, partly because we cannot regard the tendency to produce an illegitimate child as a directly transmissible character, and partly because the data under this head were too scanty; its importance is recognised, but it was not possible to regard it as a major factor in a single case. Some importance is attached to abnormal physical conditions, especially those which cause weakness or irritation; this was found to be a factor in nearly 100 cases. Not only are under-development, premature birth, congenital syphilis, epilepsy, etc., thus influential,