

The chapters on insulin treatment, E.C.T. and prefrontal leucotomy have all been extended. In discussing the use of E.C.T. in schizophrenia, the authors wisely point out that it is of little use "hammering away at the patient with repeated convulsions" if obvious benefit has not been derived from the first few fits. In involuntal depression it is emphasized that high blood pressure or advanced age are not contra-indications if the treatment is justified on other grounds. We do not altogether agree with the remarks about outpatient E.C.T.—we have found patients going back home and undoing all the good done, by overwork at home. Rest in hospital is a useful adjunct, especially in these trying times, when the housewife's lot is far harder than it has ever been.

Work on prefrontal leucotomy and its various modifications is proceeding at such a pace that it is almost impossible to keep up with it. From our experience, we thoroughly endorse the authors' statement that "the better preserved the personality and the more reluctant the doctor is to use such a drastic treatment, the better the end-result will be."

The chapter on the treatment of the epilepsies is very well done.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

Chronic Invalid. By PHYLLIS A. BAXTER. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1949. Pp. 117. Price 6s. 6d.

It is difficult for a serious scientific journal to review a book of this type. It is a vague, diffuse and semi-mystical sort of appeal to the sick to heal themselves, based on the spiritual and emotional experiences of a chronic invalid who claims to have cured herself of her—unspecified—illness by thinking and striving in a particular way. The importance of the emotional attitude of the patient is recognized, and the book may be a help and comfort to some patients.

E. S. STERN.

Man's Quest for Significance. By LEWIS WAY. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1948. Pp. 211. Price 12s. 6d.

This is an attempt to view social and economic questions psychologically. Like many amateurs, the author is strongly attracted by Adler's theories. The first part of the book purports to describe past and present conditions. On page 16 there is the extraordinary statement that before the industrial age the yield from the soil scarcely varied from year to year. Has the author really never heard of the disastrous harvests of 1315, 1316, 1438 and 1527, when the price of wheat rose to nearly three to five times the average? Thus prepared, the reader will not be surprised at finding a succession of unwarranted and unsupported assertions.

The latter part of the book, dealing with social, political and economic conditions, is less unsatisfactory; partly because it is concerned with the present, with which the author is more at home, and the future, where we are all equally at sea.

E. S. STERN.

Religion and Psychotherapy. By A. GRAHAM IKIN. Pp. 112.

The Value of Neurosis. By C. WILFRID WALL. Birmingham: Rylee, 1948. The Thesis Library. Pp. 116. Price 5s. 6d. each.

The religious attitude to mental disease has altered a great deal since the medieval Church, with its belief in demoniacal possession, and its classification of sloth or "acedia" as a deadly sin, inaugurated the cruel treatment of the insane. Now such bodies as the Guild of St. Raphael concern themselves with spiritual healing. But the conflict between religion and science lingers, and some psychiatrists may believe that the antithesis is so great