

Part II.—Reviews.

The Psycho-analysis of Children. By MELANIE KLEIN. London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis, 1932. Demy 8vo. Pp. 395. Price 18s.

Mrs. Klein writes with full authority on the analysis of children, for it was she who first saw in their play an expression of unconscious phantasy as well as of conscious intention. Then, devising the play technique as a means of mental exploration, she was able accurately to define in children the core of unconscious phantasy which exists in the mind of every individual, and which had previously been discovered by a study of the behaviour of adult patients. Her work has led to a critical scrutiny of psycho-analytic theory, and to various advances in the technique of analysis. To the analyst, therefore, this book is of paramount importance. It remains to be asked what the psychiatrist stands to gain by reading it, if he has no chance of analysing children and little interest in the principles of psycho-analysis. In the first place he will find in it such a description of neurotic illness in childhood as has not yet been written, for it is one which relates the behaviouristic signs of neurosis to the unconscious conflict which provokes them. For while physicians and teachers have long agreed that the fears of children are related to unconscious processes, this book goes further and shows how profound and direct an effect is exerted by phantasy on the child's immediate actions. Here it is both explicit and convincing.

Mrs. Klein describes the entire gamut of phantasy. Thus in the case-history of Erna (pp. 66-74) there is a detailed presentation of sadistic and libidinal phantasies. And because they are recorded exactly as they were explored during analysis, being expressed now in play, now in the hopes and fears the child felt from day to day regarding her parents and the analyst, they create for us a vivid picture of the dangerous world in which the little girl lived, and of her anxious attempts to survive in it. Another of the reported cases (p. 27) demonstrates exactly how the component parts of an obsessional ritual combined to relieve anxiety which had been provoked by aggressive phantasy; and in another case (pp. 106-111) we learn why specific forms of play and intellectual activity came to be inhibited.

When considered in relation to such actual happenings the interaction of phantasy and conduct becomes a credible thing.

Finally, we get an idea of the close *rapproch* which exists between Mrs. Klein and her patients. It is shown, for instance, in the simplicity of approach in the doctor game (p. 113), in the interpretations which cut short Ruth's anxiety attacks (pp. 53-57), and in the detection of phantasies which underlay the most monotonous and apparently insignificant actions (pp. 132-133). Reading these descriptions of technique we can appreciate how each interpretation relieved the patient's anxiety, how also it gave access to phantasies

that had previously been repressed, and licence, therefore, to activities that had been inhibited. We can, in fact, accompany the analyst in her exploration of the unconscious mind.

There are criticisms also to be made. The form of the book makes special difficulties for the reader. In most cases a paper previously published in the *International Journal of Psycho-analysis* is the nucleus around which a chapter is written. On this account material is approached from many different angles, and one chapter recapitulates what another has already stated. Some of the chapters, too, bewilder us, for we have to pass from considerations of technique to theoretical statements, and from one short clinical abstract to another. Fortunately, the confusion entailed by such construction is mitigated by an excellent index.

The book is a long one, and it seems exacting to ask for it to be still longer. But in both text and footnotes much material is condensed which we wish had been expanded; as, for instance, that which deals with the history of various patients and with actual events of their infancy and early childhood. For whilst the relation of neurotic symptoms to phantasy is made brilliantly clear, there is not the same clarity about their relation to the experiences of the ego. It is this relative obscurity that makes interpretations of some symptoms and play during analysis seem arbitrary. The phantasy is there; and when we consider the daily life of any infant we can guess what special tactile sensations, sights or sounds stimulated and gratified his instincts in the first instance, thereby laying down the pattern of his unconscious reactions. But interpretation of play cannot well be made convincing to the reader until the phantasy underlying the play has been connected with specific experience—as must have been done for the child during analysis. To record the connection at length another volume would be required, and to this volume we look forward with the greatest possible interest.

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The Physical Mechanism of the Human Mind. By A. C. DOUGLAS.
Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone, 1932. Pp. 251. Diagrams 24.

This book is written by a surgeon, and purports to explain the whole of psychology in terms of physiology. The concepts of modern psychology are discussed as "mythical excrescences", and the psychology favoured by the author is associationism, behaviourism and gestaltism. The author claims that his book presents "a complete scientific theory of mind upon the materialistic basis which behaviourism rightly demands". He attempts to do this by an ingenious application of the phenomena of inhibition and chronaxy, with which he takes entirely unwarranted liberties. Such application of partially understood phenomena to form purely speculative hypotheses is entirely unscientific, and, while the results obtained may be interesting, they cannot be regarded as of any real value. The uncritical spirit in which the author supports his hypotheses is seen in his habit of choosing isolated hypotheses from different writers, and treating these as facts when they help to bolster up his views. Thus, a suggestion put forward in 1890 by Münsterberg that our time-duration sense is dependent on respiratory rhythm is taken as the basis of the author's suggested mechanism of our time-duration sense. Again, for his physiological explanation of the emotions he accepts the James-Lange