

**The Adrenal Cortex and Intersexuality.** By L. R. BROSTER, C. ALLEN, H. W. C. VINES, J. PATTERSON, A. W. GREENWOOD, G. F. MARRIAN and G. C. BUTLER. London: Chapman & Hall. Pp. xii + 245. Price 15s.

This valuable work contains an account of the clinical, surgical, pathological, biochemical and psychological aspects of the adreno-genital syndrome.

The clinical and surgical section deals with cases of virilism operated on at Charing Cross Hospital. The cases are divided into four groups—prepubertal and postpubertal virilism, the Achard Thiers syndrome and post-menopausal virilism. Thirty-three cases in all were operated on by means of unilateral adrenalectomy. There was a definite tendency towards the disappearance of the acquired male characters and a return to the feminine form and functions. In some cases homosexuality was restored to normal heterosexuality.

Cells staining with a new differential stain were found in large numbers in the cortex.

Failure of the endocrine factor in sexuality, such as occurs in adrenal virilism, may prevent the normal psychical development. Some cases of adrenal virilism show a lack of sexual interest in others and a concentration of interest on to the self; this the authors call autosexuality.

The pathological section is very well done. It is suggested that in the normal mechanism of sexual development the adrenal cortex plays the part of a bisexual accessory sex-gland which is active throughout life, and that it secretes both androgenic and oestrogenic hormones under the control of the pituitary—which control may be affected through the action of the adrenotropic hormone or of prolactin. In pituitary basophilism the pituitary is primarily at fault and the adrenal cortex secondarily.

In the biochemical section it was found that 11 out of 14 cases of adrenal virilism showed the presence of free male hormone in the urine—this substance is absent from normal female urine. Unilateral adrenalectomy caused either the disappearance of the male hormone or its reduction to small quantities.

A new substance, pregnane 3-17-20 triol ( $C_{21}H_{36}O_3$ ) has been isolated from the urine of some typical virilism cases; this substance does not occur in normal urines, and is apparently specifically related to the pathological activity of the adrenal gland. The book is a most interesting and valuable addition to the literature on the adrenal gland.

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**Oxford Survey of Social Services: The Mental Health Services.** By E. F. PINSENT, C.B.E. Oxford: The University Press. Pp. 87. Price 2s.

This small book gives a good account of the mental health services in the county and city of Oxford and in Berkshire. Both mental deficiency and mental disorders are dealt with.

In the chapter on mental health it is a pity that the following statement occurs: "it allowed the reception of temporary patients on the *certificate* of two medical practitioners . . ." Of course the word should be "recommendation". The whole aim is to avoid the word "certification". So the lay mind still does not see the medical point of view.

Amongst the general conclusions the writer supports the advisability of

appointing a medical officer of mental health, who should have direct access to the appropriate committees whenever questions in his branch of the work are under debate. We welcome this suggestion, but would like to see a Ministry of Mental Hygiene quite separate from the Ministry of Health, and having the management and control of all questions of mental health whether they be mental deficiency or disorder, delinquency, child guidance, etc.

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**Alcohol: One Man's Meat**——. By EDWARD A. STRECKER, M.D., and F. T. CHAMBERS. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938. Pp. xvi + 230.

The joint authors take a very tolerant view of the alcoholic and his problems. The lay author has himself been an alcoholic, and speaks from his personal experience.

The abnormal drinker is one who cannot face reality without alcohol, and whose adequate adjustment to reality is impossible as long as alcohol is used. "Life is not faced because a pattern of emotional immaturity has been laid down in childhood." We wonder whether a large proportion of people who do not drink abnormally are not emotionally immature. The writers find that at least 90% of all abnormal drinkers are predominantly of the introverted type.

It is surely rather a sweeping statement to say "mere sexual intercourse is only a fractional component of human love". Human love without sexual intercourse shows that the "fraction" is rather an important one.

Many alcoholics are intellectually above the average, but are lacking in the organization of personality rather than revealing a defect in personality.

The authors in their experience do not find that homosexuality has a basic relation to alcoholism.

When discussing treatment the writers point out that the therapist must be convinced in his own mind that the patient will be able to attain a state of mind in which he does not desire to drink any more.

The authors' scheme of treatment is divided into four parts. The first consists of four rules: no alcohol, frankness, willingness for treatment, admission of a relapse if such occurs.

The second or psychological section consists in conferences with the therapist, covers about one hundred hours and is the most important part.

The therapist must maintain an unemotional, impersonal and objective attitude. Then the patient freely and in detail gives his life-history, so often showing emotional immaturity. The active side of the treatment consists in the development of a conditioned reflex, both positive and negative.

The positive side consists in the patient, every time he thinks of alcohol, re-living all the unhappiness and misery which in the past he had suffered because of alcohol. Negatively he thinks of the benefits to be derived from a non-alcoholic life.

At the same time the patient is taught to attain emotional maturity. Relaxation is practised in order to minimize the effects of distracting alcoholic thoughts and resistances and to enhance the effect of direct suggestion.

The third or re-educational training consists in the development of hobbies, the adherence to a schedule of daily activities, selected reading, consideration