

domination, but merely in a suppression which sows the seeds of neurotic disorder for future germination. It is only by a gradual sublimation that the asocial tendencies of childhood can be transformed into finer shapes. "Our highest virtues have arisen as reactionary formations and sublimations on the basis of our worst dispositions."

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

*Psychiatry as an Aid to Historical Investigation* [*Die Psychiatrie als Hilfswissenschaft, auch der Historik*]. (*Neurolog. Ctbltt*, Sept. 1st, 1913.) Näcke.

This posthumously published paper—the last which came from Näcke's pen—had its starting-point in a discussion at a recent Congress of German alienists at Strassburg, on the application of psychiatry to the life of Jesus, a question which has in recent years attracted considerable attention. At the Strassburg meeting Nissl had declared that psychiatry has no concern with history. That dictum Näcke proceeds to investigate.

No science can exist in isolation, and it is inevitable that (as has occurred especially since the work of Moebius in this field) psychiatry should be applied to historical, literary, and artistic personalities and their works, in the construction of so-called "pathographies." No degradation is involved either to medicine or to art, but, on the contrary, a great advantage to both.

We know that every event, whether individual or social, is both endogenously and exogenously determined. To describe the exogenous factors, as displayed in the environment, is the special business of the historian and the economist. But the important, and often even predominant, endogenous factor can only be dealt with by the psychologist and the psychiatrist; here the unaided historian will stumble. When the historian has set forth all that he knows, the psychiatrist alone can decide whether we are concerned with a normal or an abnormal person, although in many cases the evidence may be too defective to enable the decision to be made with certainty, and it has always to be remembered that the insane are often guided by normal motives, and that many morbid motives play their part in the sane. It is only when due weight is given alike to the exogenous and endogenous factors that history becomes truly scientific, and that we can see it in its causal relationships. It is even a matter of justice that we should be able to recognise that supposed exhibitions of wickedness and vice are really the product of a morbid psychic state. Moreover, all sorts of great social movements, such as revolutions and religious outbursts, can only be rightly understood when the psychiatrist has explained those elements and personal agencies in them which are of a morbid character, though we must always be on our guard to avoid the too generous application of pathological nomenclature to complex social movements. The more reckless invasions of psychiatry into these fields must be held in check, not by denouncing them, but by exercising that science in a thoroughly serious and cautious manner. We have to recognise the difficulties in the way, and that most pathographies so far produced must be regarded as tentative, although encouraging.

Returning to the discussion at the Strassburg Congress, Näcke

proceeds to justify the application of psychiatry to Christianity as not only in itself altogether legitimate, but even in the best interests of true religion, which can have nothing to fear from the truth. He protests against the description of Binet-Sanglé's great work, *La Folie de Jesus*, as "unscientific," although he is not prepared to accept offhand Binet-Sanglé's diagnosis. He discusses the matter at some length, and is inclined to lean towards the affirmative conclusion, but cautiously concludes that the data do not permit of a decisive answer, more especially on account of the late date of the gospels. Even in regard to Napoleon and Goethe, of whom we have very extensive and quite contemporary records, there is room for wide difference of opinion in the estimation of the mental state. A great hindrance to the construction of sound pathographies, Näcke points out, is our usual extreme ignorance concerning the subject's sexual life. "In future," he concludes, "all psychological-psychiatric investigation into the great men of the past must devote special attention to the *vita sexualis*. This demands, further, that the psychiatrist should possess a sound knowledge of sexology."

It will be seen that this weighty discussion of the wider outlook of psychiatry fittingly brought to a conclusion Näcke's long and strenuous labours in the cause of truth.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

*Some New Conceptions in the Psychology of Thought* [*Di alcuni concetti nuovi nella psicologia del pensiero*]. (*Riv. di Psychol.*, anno ix, No. 3, May-June, 1913.) Westphal (of Bonn).

In this paper, which was communicated to the recent Congress of the Italian Society of Psychology, the author reports the results of an experimental research which he has carried out by Külpe's method of provoked introspection. Some preliminary remarks are devoted to explaining the importance in this method of the *Aufgabe*, i.e., the special order given to the subject of the experiment to determine the direction of his interest, as, for instance, that he is to attend mainly or exclusively to some one aspect of the stimulus. The experiments, of which only a general outline is given, lead the author to put forward the hypothesis of the existence of different degrees of consciousness, the mental content determined by the *Aufgabe* having different ways of being present to the subject's consciousness. These different modes or degrees are:

(1) The content is merely *given*; it exists only as an impression (in a lower degree the content is not even given, but only certain facts from which its existence may be inferred).

(2) The content is *observed* under the special point of view required by the *Aufgabe*.

(3) In the degree of *potential knowing* the result of the special direction is known, without, however, being formulated.

(4) In the degree of actual knowing the subject affirms what he has perceived.

These degrees of consciousness are not degrees of clearness; the higher grades have a more limited content; the different grades can be produced experimentally by directing the subject to adopt the appropriate attitude towards a determined fact, e.g., to perceive it fully, to