

quality yet to be added, and that as life was added to some forms only of matter, and as mind was added to some forms only of living matter, so some new quality, of which we may have even now the unrecognised rudiment, may yet be added to some forms only of animal life? Then perhaps we shall be as gods, knowing good and evil, and able to recognise the true relations of mind and body; but till then we must be content to accept provisionally that form of monism, parallelism, or dualism, which most appeals to our prejudices, and be thankful to writers like Dr. McDougall, who can show us plausible reasons for adopting the faith that we desire to believe.

The book is a handsome volume of 379 pages, and the argument throughout is clear and easy to understand. It would be still clearer and easier if more attention had been paid to the punctuation, which is, however, better than that of most writers on Science and Philosophy; and a protest must be entered against the profusion of footnotes. The reader is perpetually interrupted in his pursuit of the argument, and in his following of the train of reasoning, by reference to footnotes, the matter of which, in such a work, should be either embodied in the text, relegated to an appendix, or omitted altogether.

The proof reading is, on the whole, careful, but Dr. Priestley's name is persistently misspelt. CHAS. MERCIER.

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*Conduct and its Disorders Biologically Considered.* By CHARLES ARTHUR MERCIER, M.D., F.R.C.P. London: Macmillan & Co., 1911. Pp. 377. Price 10s. net.

We greatly regret that we are obliged to postpone our review of Dr. Mercier's book on this subject until our next issue. Those who remember Dr. Mercier's paper on "Insanity as Disorder of Conduct," read before the Association and published in this Journal in July, 1910, will be prepared for his point of view. His position did not commend itself to the meeting, and this book is presumably intended as an enforcement of Dr. Mercier's argument. He declares in his preface that while isolated departments of conduct have been studied for long enough, yet "of conduct as a whole; of what it is; of its nature; its varieties and kinds; of their relations to each other; of its vagaries and disorders; no book treats: no study exists." It is to remedy this defect that the book has been written, and it may be said to constitute a new science, which Dr. Mercier calls Praxiology. We insert this preliminary notice to draw the attention of our readers to a treatise which is written in Dr. Mercier's characteristically lucid style.

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*Die Wassermannsche Reaktion (The Wassermann Reaction).* By HAROLD BOAS. Berlin: Karger, 1911.

In a volume of 186 pages, 45 of which consist of references to current literature, the author gives a description of the method of carrying out the Wassermann reaction, and a detailed account of his own observa-

tions as Director of the Serum Institute associated with the Hospital for Venereal Diseases in Copenhagen. The method which he used is essentially that originated by Wassermann, and he controls his experiments by repeated titration of the amboceptor of the hæmolytic system he uses. The hæmolytic system is that in which sheep's corpuscles are employed with sheep *v.* rabbit immune-body, the fresh serum of the guinea-pig being used as complement. He does not titrate the complement in the manner advised by Browning and Mackenzie, suggesting that in the sheep-rabbit hæmolytic system the complement does not show the variations which according to these authors it manifests in the ox-rabbit system. He used an alcoholic extract of heart muscle as antigen. The various modifications of the original Wassermann test are described and criticised, the author coming to the conclusion that they are all unreliable compared with the original method. With regard to the specificity of the test, he found only one positive result in 1,064 control cases examined. These controls included cases of acute fever, tubercle, tumour, skin diseases, and other various diseased conditions. With regard to the presence of the reaction in syphilis, he found 56 positive results in 76 cases in the primary stage. In the secondary stage 456 out of 468 cases gave a positive reaction. In the tertiary stage he divides the cases into those which had been treated and those which had not been treated. Out of 20 cases of the first class 16 gave a positive reaction, and out of 63 cases of the second class every one gave a positive reaction. He further examined 243 cases of latent syphilis within three years of the occurrence of infection; of these 89 gave a positive reaction and 154 gave a negative reaction. In general paralysis 139 cases were examined; the blood in every case was positive, and in 67 cases in which the spinal fluid was examined a positive result was obtained in 61. An important chapter is devoted to the examination of cases of congenital syphilis. In a very large proportion of these the blood-reaction was positive. The author in this chapter describes very fully the relation of congenital syphilis to maternal syphilis, and the presence of suppressed syphilis in the mother. The relation of treatment to the reaction is also discussed, and the importance of controlling treatment by regular examinations of the blood is emphasised. The volume is a valuable addition to the literature on the subject. It comes out of an institute which has a high standing in the world of scientific medicine, and the enormous experience of the author gives a great practical value to the conclusions and observations detailed.

J. H. MACDONALD.