

long period for anyone to spend in a ward with psychotic patients. On the other hand, we do not agree that it is impossible for anyone to work ten or twelve hours under the conditions that prevail in the mental hospital. We see it in practice every day. There are two peak hours for accidents in the wards, between 6-7 a.m. and between 3-5 p.m.—both times when nurses who are tired show irritability and lack of care.

The remarks on barbers' shops and beauty parlours make interesting reading, and might with advantage be applied to a considerable number of mental hospitals in this country. We wonder how many mental hospitals with 2,000 patients in this country have 350 major surgical procedures per annum? We do not agree with the "careful selection" of books for the mental hospital library. There would be very few readable books left if some selectors had their own way. Patients should be allowed to read those books which they would choose to read if they were at home. We like the suggestion that the hospital should send each patient a birthday card on his or her birthday.

We think that medical superintendents cannot but derive great benefit by reading this book, and we hope it will improve their attitude towards the assistant medical officer—which is not always what it should be—and lead them to spend time in instructing those with less experience and knowledge than themselves.

We should like to see a copy of this book presented to every medical officer on joining the staff of a mental hospital with instructions to learn it by heart and apply it—with discretion. It is very good.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

Treatment in Psychiatry. By OSCAR DIETHELM, M.D. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1936. Pp. xvi + 476. Price \$4.

This is the best book on the treatment of mental illness in the English language. This is no compliment, for there are really no others which cover the whole ground. The author, who is Professor of Psychiatry at Cornell University, is a wholehearted supporter of Adolf Meyer, so that much of the treatment indicated is based on Meyerian principles, and follows the lines used in American State hospitals.

The first six chapters are devoted to the general principles of treatment and the last eleven to details.

Psychotherapeutic methods are well covered, but rather too briefly, only sixty-seven pages being devoted to suggestion and hypnosis, psycho-analysis, individual psychology, analytical psychology, group analysis, Rank's and Stekel's modifications of psycho-analysis, persuasion, re-education, and indirect methods. A separate chapter is then devoted to distributive analysis and synthesis as outlined by A. Meyer. The analysis is "distributed" by the physician along the various lines which are indicated by the patient's complaints and symptoms.

Every analysis should then lead to synthesis, so leading to integration of the personality. It is interesting to read the author's views on prolonged narcosis: "Intravenous somnifen, which was used in the beginning, has been given up because of its dangers. Luminal subcutaneously was first substituted and then dial ciba intramuscularly. The most widely used treatment now is the administration of dial by rectum." We wonder how these views would be received in this country!

We would have liked to see some mention of the use of acetylcholine and of ephedrine in manic states, particularly from a prophylactic point of view. Insulin treatment is considered to be "by no means ready for therapeutic utilization". This is a strangely conservative point of view to hear from America, but this is not the first time we have heard it.

The account of the various methods of electropexia is much too brief to be of any value. The index might, with advantage, have been made fuller.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

Research in Dementia Præcox. By NOLAN D. C. LEWIS, M.D. The National Committee for Mental Hygiene, U.S.A. Pp. xi + 320.

The author, in surveying the ground for this book, visited about 200 laboratory, hospital and other scientific centres in America.

The author first gives a chapter on the clinical features of dementia præcox and so clears the ground of a good deal of confusion. He favours the time-honoured division into simple, hebephrenic, catatonic and paranoid types. It is pleasing to read his favourable remarks on psychology. There is a distinct tendency, probably largely among those whose knowledge of modern psychology is very small, to say that psychology is of little practical value. Academic psychology has a great deal to teach psychiatry, and one has only to turn to the estimation of deterioration in a patient to see how hopelessly wide of the mark the older psychiatrists' views are compared with the results as obtained by modern methods of ascertainment.

The writer gives a number of questions relating to deterioration which are in urgent need of investigation on scientific lines. How little the language defects in schizophrenia have been studied! How much work remains to be done on problems of child psychology and the pre-psychotic conditions about which we are almost completely ignorant! When discussing ætiology the writer says quite candidly that we know very little. He raises a number of interesting questions about the occurrence of psychoses in primitive peoples, i.e., at what social level in development do psychoses in general and dementia præcox in particular become manifest. What do we know about the distribution of the various types of dementia præcox amongst the various races, religions, social levels, political creeds, etc.? There is a wide field for ethnology here, requiring many years of hard and difficult work.

The author points out that his own researches support to a considerable extent the views of Mott on the changes in the interstitial cells of the testis. He mentions the variously mooted relationship between tuberculosis and dementia præcox. Recent work in this country has answered this question in the negative. He points out the immensity of the task facing those who would set about investigating the neuro-histology of the areas around the third ventricles by the newer histological methods. It is interesting to read that there were in 1936 at least thirty laboratories in America working on the Berger action currents. How little we know really about the volume of research that is being carried on in the world! What do we know about the male hormone component of the urine in homosexuality? Why is theelin found in unusually large amounts in homosexual males? What of the presence of specific hydrolytic enzymes in the blood of schizophrenics? When we come to study brain chemistry we find ourselves hopelessly ignorant. Much work