

—will quickly recognize the relevance of the observations reported here. Once through the barrier of jargon, which here is relatively thin, others may begin to recognize the new dimension which this kind of thinking brings to the actual processes of treatment.

Not least in importance is the inference that psychodynamic interpretative formulations can be integrated with the day-to-day use of physical methods of treatment to enhance the latter and provide a social framework which, in itself, has significance of a scientific kind. But the Cummings themselves would probably look on this as a corollary to their main hypothesis—namely, that scientific manipulation of the environment can now be used alone to produce changes in the personality of the patients. When drugs and other methods of treatment are included they are part of a larger whole.

There is room for disagreement over specific points made, especially in the chapters which go into details of hospital life. Many generalizations are justified only in terms of the authors' personal experience; and some of the dogma in the second half of the book will certainly have to be modified. It is a sign of grace, however, that the authors can acknowledge such errors, as when they draw attention in one of their far too numerous footnotes to Sainsbury's observation in England that the suicide rate dropped with the post-war introduction of patient freedom, contradicting their assumption of the opposite. This illustrates, incidentally, the obligation that all therapists are under, painstakingly to check every belief, no matter how obvious it may appear in a particular operational setting. But, whatever the controversies of practice aroused over the application of the notions discussed, the overall thesis here is closely relevant to the modern psychiatric scene. This well-produced book by a new publisher is, in fact, something of a landmark, and should undoubtedly be read very widely.

RICHARD CROCKET.

Experiments in Mental Suggestion. By L. L. VASILIEV. Church Crookham, England: Institute for the Study of Mental Images. 1963. Pp. 178. Price 30s.

In 1921 the Russian physiologist V. M. Bechterev initiated a programme of research at Leningrad into "mental suggestion". This work continued under the direction of the author, Professor Vasiliev. The studies were of what might be called "telepathic influence" and were directed at answering the questions, "Does it exist?" and "If so, how is it

affected by distance and by metallic screening such as is used to block electro-magnetic radiation?"

The research became more and more elaborate and sophisticated in design. Finally the possible influence of one person in Sebastopol upon the behaviour of another in Leningrad (1,700 Km. distance) was studied. The great distance and elaborate precautions did not prevent phenomena which could not be attributed to chance. In 1938 the work was stopped and the findings apparently suppressed until 1959. Now they are made available in English with a critical discussion of the present state of such research throughout the world. The phenomena are not regarded as manifestations of the supernatural, but of the natural world. It is considered that they should not merit the emotionally-inspired refusal even to examine the evidence, which is so widely met with among respectable senior Western biologists (particularly those who control the giving of research grants).

Whatever may be the ultimate verdict on research into these phenomena the present book does credit to the new liberalism in Russia and may give encouragement to those who would pursue research not only to please their departmental heads but to seek the truth.

IAN OSWALD.

Clinical Psychology. By N. D. SUNDBERG and L. E. TYLER. Methuen & Co. 1963. Pp. 564. Price 50s.

This book is obviously written for the American reader. The chief interest lies in the description it gives of the development of clinical psychology as an independent profession in America. The chapters and headings give clear indications of the subject matter, and at the end of each chapter there is a brief list of recommended readings. Each of the books suggested is summarized in a way which should prove useful to students.

There are over 500 pages, and after reading them one feels that the same information could have been imparted in one-fifth of the space. Unfortunately, this wordiness does not make the subject matter any clearer. For example: "Psychotherapy constitutes an attempt to change the pattern enough so that subsequent development will turn in the direction of its strong healthy features rather than its conflicted, self-defeating, non-productive idiosyncrasies that are unadaptive and perhaps pathological." There are many comments which are pointless: "Even though we cannot predict with certainty just what clinical psychologists will be doing in 1975 or 1980, we can be certain that large numbers of them will be doing