

ego-trends, and emphasizes that psycho-analysis has not only insisted on the importance of the crude instincts, but also on that of their sublimation into all forms of social and artistic products. He gives due appreciation to the fact that psychology is not an exact science, and that Freud and his school claim only to have put forward tentative theories to be proved by experience.

Finally he discusses the value of the method from the point of view of treatment, pointing out that it does not claim to be a universal panacea, but only a method, possibly lengthy and uncertain, like the sanatorium treatment of tuberculosis, which can claim some good results in suitable cases, but which will not necessarily cure every case, which can help some cases where other methods fail, but may in others even cause an exacerbation of the disorder, and for which generally it may be said, as of most other methods of treatment, that on the whole it is of value if properly applied to suitable cases, and that in some cases it can help where other methods fail.

The pamphlet is well suited to give the general practitioner or the lay reader an idea of what psycho-analysis is, and a sane evaluation of its place as a scientific method and doctrine.

M. R. BARKAS.

Northumberland Standardized Tests. Prepared by CYRIL BURT, M.A., D.Sc. Test I, Arithmetic; Test II, English. London: University of London Press. Specimen set, 1s.

Probably examinations are as old as formal instruction, and the preacher of old merely voiced an archaic instinctive feeling. The discussion as to whether examination questions should be few and long or many and short is also one of long standing, and the question may for many determine the source from which they shall seek their qualifications. The author of these tests clearly is of the opinion that for selecting children for scholarships at the ages of 10 to 12 the advantage lies with a multiplicity of brief problems. Also so far as English is concerned, he adopts the method of giving in print three alternative answers to each question or part of a question, leaving the pupil to underline the selected answer. This, he points out, has two advantages: it eliminates differences in the speed of writing—a very variable factor in children—and also ensures that all examiners will “allot exactly the same marks to equivalent answers—an utter impossibility with answers of the essay type.” It may be thought to have the further advantage of handicapping the verbalist type, who is unduly favoured under the more traditional system. In this system a book is given to each candidate, who is given seven minutes exactly to tackle each question and must stop to the second. The type of question may be indicated:—In geography, “Draw a line under the right words, wherever two or more words are printed in thin type between brackets. ‘London is the capital of (*France, America, England*).’” Or in spelling, “Read this story and underline every word that is wrongly spelt: ‘Their is fur on a cat, butt none on a fish,’ etc., or ‘To-morrow is

Wensday, an a grate numbre of diferrent artikles are two be soled hear—pianoes, sowing machines,' etc." In arithmetic the tests cover the mechanical application of processes, mental arithmetic, selection of rules and powers of reasoning. In English they show the powers of understanding the meaning of words, spelling, the construction of sentences, history and geography. Tests of this type are very helpful alternatives and may have a clinical value for the estimation of backwardness in individual children, since exact norms are given, but for this purpose the user of the tests must be careful to adhere exactly to the full instructions for their application if he is to utilize the results in a comparative manner.

E. SHRUBSALL.

Sex Hygiene. By OLIVER WALDO LINCOLN. London: John Bale, Sons & Danielsson, Ltd., 1925. Pp. vi + 33. 1s. net.

From the scientific point of view this little book does not merit the slightest attention. But productions of this kind are of importance, for the harm which they do is only too well known to every practising psychiatrist. The book is mainly concerned with the alleged evil results of masturbation. All kinds of ill-effects are stated to follow this practice, and descriptions are given (including one of "neurasthenia") which would terrify a boy or girl who had indulged even occasionally in masturbation. For the author draws no distinction between the occasional and the excessive practice of that habit. It is talk of this kind which has done so much harm. The book asserts that masturbation is practised to a far less extent by females than by males. All the available scientific evidence directly contradicts this view. The author appears to have an obsession on the subject, and he attributes the alleged deterioration of the British race chiefly to this cause. If a hundredth part of what he asserts about masturbation were true, the whole human race would have ceased to exist. The book is written in the style of fifty years ago. Even a "lady medical practitioner" is not to be trusted to give sex instruction to school girls, unless accompanied by the school nurse, or by "another suitable lady of high character." Parents are advised to impart sex teaching to their children by means of illustrations drawn from botany. In this connection the author actually suggests that the terms "lady flower" and "gentleman flower" are to be preferred to those of "female" and "male." It is difficult to write with patience of such absurdities as these.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

The Women Characters in Richard Wagner. By LOUISE BRINK, Ph.D. New York and Washington: Nervous and Mental Diseases Publishing Co., 1924. (Monograph Series No. 37.) Med. 8vo. Pp. xv + 125. Price \$2.00.

When religious apologists, unable to stomach the sensuality of the "Song of Songs," gave this love poem a spiritual interpretation in terms of their own orthodoxy, they were doing what all critics of