

The rest of the book is not very inspiring either ; which is strange, for the author undoubtedly thinks clearly, has assimilated what he quotes of the work of others, and writes, with a pleasing balance of words, in reasonably short sentences.

This book gives a level-headed introduction to general psychopathology, but is not likely " to stimulate the student to see the problems of this science." The difficulty is that Dr. Fischer has written " An Interpretation of the Theoretical Foundations of Psychopathological Concepts " without the necessary inspiration for such an ambitious work.

C. E. H. TURNER.

**More about Psychiatry.** By CARL BINGER, M.D. London : George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1951. Pp. 201. Price 10s. 6d.

In this book are delightful essays, collected into sections on psychosomatic medicine, psychiatry and the world situation. The essays on psychosomatic medicine are excellent, those on the world situation slightly less so ; but to write sensibly on the world situation is even more difficult than to write sensibly on psychosomatic medicine.

Information, wisdom and humour are in these essays, which are written in good English ; Dr. Binger's book is so rich in content, easily set forth, that one wishes to re-read it.

It is a book for a psychiatrist to give to a medical or lay friend whom he wishes to please and interest in psychiatry. Or, perhaps the psychiatrist would be lucky enough to have a wife who thought to make him a present of this little book.

C. E. H. TURNER.

**Psychosomatics and Suggestion Therapy in Dentistry.** By JACOB STOLZENBERG, D.D.S. New York : Philosophical Library, 1950. Pp. 152. Price \$3.75.

This book is not a profound contribution to psychosomatic medicine. The author emphasizes instead, that patients do not look forward with pleasure to being in the dentist's chair. The dentist should therefore make himself presentable and use every possible device of suggestion, including, if need be, hypnosis, to set the patient at ease.

The book is simple, superficial and full of " pep." " It is almost unbelievable how simple it is for the dentist to treat the most neurotic patient if handled properly." The author's writing is sometimes stilted—" In a superficial way, I have touched upon the various segments that make up the whole cycle of integrate phases which will lead to successful practice with resulting contentment."

C. E. H. TURNER.

**New Outlook on Mental Diseases.** By F. A. PICKWORTH. Bristol : John Wright & Sons, 1952. Pp. 296, with 9 plates and 41 illustrations. Price 60s.

Dr. Pickworth has long been known as the initiator of a new conception of capillary function in the cerebral cortex, which he has studied for twenty-five years. A clear account of what he has found would therefore be sure of a welcome. His main thesis is that the cerebral capillary is not just a way for metabolites to and from the neuron but is an active agent in the cerebral dynamics, reacting to the patterns of incoming impulses and, by its active changes, affecting the patterns that develop.

The possibility has received little attention from other workers, but it should not be dismissed off-hand. Until recently we have not appreciated in the brain the truly amazing degree it achieves in what the electronic engineer calls " miniaturization." To the anatomist, the fact that the human brain can go into a half-gallon jar is a commonplace—to the designer of calculating machines it is a miracle. The brain works, in fact, on a scale of volume that is about a thousand-millionth part of that of the engineer. This tremendous compression suggests that the brain works with great efficiency, making every possible use of what it already has rather than adding a new part for every new requirement.

Now a fact on which Dr. Pickworth rightly lays emphasis is that while the times taken by the actions of neuron and fibre are measured in milliseconds, the times taken by the subsequent actions of the whole organism are measured in seconds, or even in minutes. To change the time-unit from millisecond to minute there must exist some slowing or delaying mechanism. What could be more suitable than the cortical capillary ? It lies in intimate contact with the neurons, it is sensitive to many influences, it affects, or can be made to affect, the neuron's