

*Practical Psycho-analysis.* By H. SOMERVILLE, B.Sc., L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S. London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 1922. Demy 8vo. Pp. x + 142. Price 6s.

What would be thought of a writer who published a small book therein describing some theoretical considerations of surgery with some slight details of technical procedure, and telling his readers that they should then be prepared to perform major operations? Such a conception is unfortunately analogous to this volume under review. Any medical man who has not "the time to read the larger works on the subject," and study such an intricate subject widely, should not presume to meddle with the mal-functioning of the human mind. Naïvely, however, Dr. Somerville suggests that those of his readers who wish to pursue the subject further may consult the works of Freud and others, and that a useful account of normal psychology may be found in a recent psychiatric text-book! In the face of such an attitude towards the study of the theory and practice of any form of psychotherapy, but especially so with regard to psycho-analysis, it must be pointed out that a long and painstaking acquisition of knowledge concerning the normal and morbid mind in all its allied spheres must precede any attempt to deal with human material. The main content of these pages is devoted to a brief survey of Freudian principles, and it is shown how these should be applied to elucidate and alleviate cases of war neurosis. The practical application, however, is that of a psychological analysis, and not psycho-analysis, which is a definite method very different from what the author describes. The book title is thus very misleading, and it is to be hoped that no reader who has read this little work will consider himself in a position to psycho-analyse or to know adequately anything of its practice, for the mode of procedure given in Chapter X may be a guide to some sort of analysis, but not to the special method named in the title. We can see a distinct sphere of usefulness in this volume for those who treat certain types of neuroses and who require added insight into the mechanisms involved, but since it deals mainly with war cases, it is a pity that for this purpose it was not published earlier.

C. STANFORD READ.

---

*Suggestion and Mental Analysis: An Outline of the Theory and Practice of Mind Cure.* By WILLIAM BROWN, M.A., M.D.Oxon., D.Sc., M.R.C.P.Lond. London: University of London Press, Ltd., 1922. Crown 8vo. Pp. 165. Price 3s. 6d. net.

The aim in this book is to develop the view that a sound system of psychotherapy is possible which combines suggestion and auto-suggestion on the one hand and mental analysis (including the Freudian system of psycho-analysis) on the other. Dr. Brown is of the opinion that "mental conflict" and "bad auto-suggestion" are the two general factors which operate in the production of neurotic symptoms, and it is upon the existence of these two factors that he bases his psychotherapeutic system. He finds that the mental conflict results in "a weakening of mental synthesis," which manifests

itself in the form of increased emotivity and suggestibility and favours the development of bad habits of mind and body. Thus, while the mental conflict can be elicited by mental analysis or "auto-gnosis," a procedure which enables the patient to acquire a knowledge of his hidden desires and motives, there still remain pathological reactions which have become habitual (stammering, drug habits, enuresis, etc.), and which require suggestion and auto-suggestion to effect their cure.

In the opening chapter the author indicates the necessity for assuming the existence of a subconscious or unconscious mind to account for the phenomena of suggestion. Few psychologists would be disposed to deny that processes occur apart from consciousness, to which the term "mental" is properly applied, but exception might reasonably be taken to the anthropomorphic terms in which the subconscious is here described. Thus the statement that "the subconscious goes on to realise an idea at its own leisure" might surely have been expressed otherwise. A brief outline is given of psycho-analysis and dreams. The author does not wholly accept Freud's theories, and he suggests an alternative theory of dreams, the merits of which cannot be estimated, as it is here described in a few paragraphs.

An account is given of the phenomena and nature of hypnotism, and its uses and limitations as a mode of treatment are indicated. Dr. Brown confines its use to cases of hysterical dissociation, and then not for the heightened suggestibility of the condition, but to facilitate the revival of repressed memories. He considers that repeated hypnosis has a harmful effect, and has found that patients who are treated in this way tend to become more weakly and less able to manage their affairs. Suggestion in a state of relaxation, without artificial dissociation, he regards as a greatly superior mode of treatment, and an account is given of his technique in dealing with his cases. The subject is discussed more especially in relation to M. Coué's claims and methods. The author finds occasion to criticise the "psychological background" of M. Coué's work, but records his appreciation of what he characterises as "his extraordinarily clear and penetrating insight into the *facts* of suggestion, his transparent sincerity, and his untiring zeal." On the whole, we are inclined to feel that Dr. Brown takes M. Coué's "Law of Reversed Effort" rather more seriously than it deserves.

It cannot be said that this volume provides any notable addition to our theoretical knowledge of suggestion. Dr. Brown endows the subconscious with attributes which tend to invest the phenomena of suggestion with an unnecessary atmosphere of mystery, and he scarcely makes it sufficiently clear that therapeutic suggestion is only one instance of the working of an innate tendency (no more and no less mysterious than any of the other characteristics peculiar to living organisms) which exerts a profound influence upon development from early childhood. If we interpret Dr. Brown's views correctly, it would seem that he does not believe in the possibility of a strictly scientific system of psychotherapy. This may be the case at present; and mental healing is perhaps an art (or a mystery) rather than a

science. Dr. Brown tends to accentuate the mysteries of "mind cure," and we suspect a strong vein of mysticism in his personal psychology. He contends that it is essential for the psychopathologist to acquire a philosophic and religious outlook in order to deal adequately with his patients; he finds an intimate connection between religion and mental healing; and he utilises mystical beliefs in his suggestive therapy. Now, though we do not question the practical value of Dr. Brown's methods of treatment, his theoretical views would seem to be fundamentally unsound and contrary to the whole spirit of modern psychology. The scientific attitude or frame of mind is totally different to the religious; the two cannot be harmonised or the functions of priest and doctor successfully combined. Science has solved many of the mysteries of life, but only when, as its history shows, metaphysical and religious assumptions have been discarded and a strictly impersonal attitude taken towards experience. If we are to acquire a knowledge of the causes of mental illness, it would seem necessary to approach our human material in a similar way, and there is no reason to suppose that our attitude will be less helpful than that which Dr. Brown regards as desirable, and it is certainly more likely to lead to a solution of the obscure problems of psychiatry. Dr. Brown is a learned person, but (we fear) a teacher of "divers and strange doctrines."

H. DEVINE.

---

*Juvenile Delinquency.* By HENRY HERBERT GODDARD, Director of the Ohio Bureau of Juvenile Research. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1922. Crown 8vo. Pp. x + 120. Price 3s. 6d.

Delinquency presents abstruse and complicated problems. And those presented by juvenile delinquency are of special importance. To deal with juvenile offenders on rational lines would go far to solve these problems for succeeding generations; for the recruits of the great army of delinquents are, in the vast majority of cases, enlisted when quite young. These things being so, we read this book with much eagerness. We were anxious to learn how Dr. Goddard, with his great experience and his opportunities, would assist us to comprehend and to elucidate our difficulties. And we must confess to a considerable degree of disappointment. The book commences with a brief but a fairly adequate statement of the problem of delinquency. The author, however, is content to make the statement about an offender that "he could not help" committing the offence, without making clear what his position is on the absolutely fundamental question of determinism. But when we come to look for guidance in making scientific investigations into the cases of individual delinquents we do not get much assistance. We have an interesting account of the administration of the Ohio Bureau of Juvenile Research. But we have little else. We have details of a number of physical defects found among Dr. Goddard's subjects, without any adequate discussion as to what influence, if any, they are supposed to have upon the causation of delinquency. We are told, for instance, that