

The concept of dirt is found to be the outcome of an emotional judgment which is imposed by the environment upon the ego of the developing child. Within this concept there is a nucleus of pragmatic reality, but as a result of distortions and elaborations, the imaginary components play a far more significant role. Following an objective examination of the concept of dirt, which is found to be replete with paradoxes, the writer arrives at the following definition: Dirt is anything which either symbolically or in reality emerges from the body, or has been sullied by contact with one of its apertures. This definition reveals the underlying fantasy that the body creates dirt. The writer then discusses the taboo on the apertures, showing that at one time and another all the openings of the body have been subjected to rituals.

These fantasies and compensatory rituals are traced back to that stage of the child's life when the pot replaces the diaper. In the earlier phase there had been the double pleasure of free sphincter activity and also of the cleansing rituals. It is this deprivation which causes the excretory processes and the genitals to become invested with ambivalent feelings. Later stages of training towards cleanliness enhance the conflict. In a final section an anthropological explanation of the formation of the dirt fantasy is put forward.

STANLEY M. COLEMAN.

Disorders of the Social Personality [*Les troubles de la personnalité sociale*]. (*Ann. Méd. Psych.*, vol. *xcv* [ii], pp. 149 and 421, July and Oct., 1937.) Janet, P.

Hitherto psychology has tended to be too individualistic, describing all psychological phenomena as if they concerned only the subject himself. With the object of more fully understanding disorders of social conduct in this paper a full study is made of the social personality—that is, the personality of the subject in its relation to that of others. Janet finds that delusions which concern the relationship between the subject and society are founded upon egocentricity and affectively conditioned beliefs. These two factors indicate a general regression of the social personality; the psychotic is no longer capable of displacing his centre of reference outside the ego. The majority of disorders of the social personality are of this nature, and are considered to be due ultimately to a social asthenia, producing a regression to more primitive levels of the social personality.

Observations upon primitives and infants indicate that a vague nebulous social personality, that is, consciousness of the group, is the earliest form of subjective experience. Out of this, self-consciousness and the formation of the individual personality are gradually evolved. "Pari passu" the social personality becomes clearer and more defined. An analysis of states of jealousy and sympathy, language formation, investigations on psychotics, primitives and infants demonstrate that in prelogical thinking there is a confusion of subject and society very different from the precise distinction made by the adult civilized man. However, even in the normal adult, feelings of effort, fatigue, interest, etc., when joined to a social act, tend to increase the feeling of the subjective importance of the individual's own part in that action.

STANLEY M. COLEMAN.

Special Intellectual Aptitudes in the Unstable [*Les aptitudes intellectuelles spéciales chez les instables*]. (*Ann. Méd. Psych.*, vol. *xcv* [ii], p. 603, Nov., 1937.) Abramson, J.

At the Juvenile Neuro-Psychiatric Clinic, tests for reasoning, attention, memory, imagination and observation were carried out on 2,212 children, of whom 1,115 showed some degree of instability. Among the latter, diminished power of attention was found to be the most universal feature, only 2% being up to average. Deficient reasoning power was evident in 53% of cases, and 42% showed impaired imagination. On the other hand, tests for pure memory not dependent upon attention and reasoning were well carried out. Observation powers were above the average in 63% of the unstable.

From his statistics the writer is able to isolate a classical type of purely psychomotor instability (24%). In this type all the faculties are up to or above average

except attention. A second group, the gifted unstable (14%), shows average reasoning and impaired attention, but the other three faculties, all or individually, are markedly superior to normal. This type is frequently met with in paranoid types, sometimes in cases of perversion, and less frequently in pure psychomotor instability. The remaining 62% show a large variety of irregular intellectual curves, the only common factor being diminished attention.

STANLEY M. COLEMAN.

Brilliant Children: With Special Reference to their Particular Difficulties. (Brit. Journ. Educ. Psychol., vol. vii, p. 247, Nov., 1937.) Nevill, E. M.

Seventy-eight children whose I.Q. varied from 140-180 were studied. Thirty-five of them were considered difficult. Many were reported to be too quick to be accurate, awkward and clumsy with handwork and unpractical. They were said to spend too much time reading, and had become too self-centred and "bossy". Amongst the difficult children many of their difficulties were due to mishandling at home or at school. Eighteen of the thirty-five were highly nervous, sensitive and over-anxious, and at least ten were either refusing to go to school or were unhappy there. Eight showed scholastic backwardness and many disliked writing. Social maladjustments existed in fifteen. Brilliance does not lessen the occurrence of jealousy and other personal difficulties of adjustment. In certain circumstances brilliant children may come to feel inferior and react accordingly. Difficulty often arises through the unevenness of their development, the physical and emotional not keeping pace with the intellectual. They may become ultra-critical, self-sufficient and mentally lazy.

Highly intelligent children are easier to help than others, and if appealed to through their reason, treated as older than they are, given suitable types of education, they should fulfil their early promise. Brilliance should be recognized early, and dealt with both at home and at school.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

The Neural Basis of Innate Behaviour. I: Effects of Cortical Lesions upon the Maternal Behaviour Pattern in the Rat. (Journ. Comp. Psychol., vol. xxiv, p. 393, Dec., 1937.) Beach, F. A.

The writer studied maternal behaviour in the virgin rat after lesions involving from 1-57% of the cerebral cortex. The amount of interference with the normal pattern of behaviour was roughly proportional to the amount of tissue destroyed. Those operated on do not clean their new-born pups as thoroughly nor gather them into a nest at the time of parturition as well as do the control animals. The mortality in control litters is markedly lower than in the operated groups. Unilateral cortical lesions are less detrimental to the performance of the maternal behaviour pattern than are bilateral operations. Injury to the posterior half of the cerebrum is followed by more serious deficiencies than operations involving only the anterior cortical areas.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

3. Psychiatry.

The Condition of the Nearest Relatives of 30 Cases of Climacteric or Involutional Melancholia [Die Erblage in der nächsten Verwandtschaft von 30 Fällen klimakterischer bzw. involutiver Melancholie]. (Zeitschr. f. d. ges. Neur. u. Psychiat., vol. clix, p. 11, 1937.) Schnitzenberger, H.

In order to gain some knowledge as to the relationship of involutional melancholia to other psychoses the author investigated the families of 30 cases of involutional melancholia. 1.77% of the parents suffered from involutional melancholia, 5.31% from "affect psychoses", but none of them were cases of mania