

The comparison of public health work in both the United States and in the U.S.S.R. with that developed in this country is most interesting. The author regards Soviet progress in state medicine as having been made at great speed. The unification of public health and general medical work attained in Russia at one stride is now, the author points out, only slowly and incompletely being reached in Western countries, although as far as environmental and sanitary reform is concerned the U.S.S.R. is struggling to emerge from what was the English position some seventy years ago.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

Understanding Our Children. By E. E. MUMFORD, M.A. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1937. Pp. xi + 233. Price 3s. 6d.

Though in recent years the literary output on the psychological aspects of child study has been somewhat prolific, we can, in all truth, regard these pages as a unique contribution to a subject which is rightly being considered as of supreme importance. The penetrating and profound insight shown here into the workings of the child's mind is astounding, and it is evident that such has been gained not only by a deep study of children's behaviour, but through an intense love of young humanity and a capacity to enter into the child's point of view; the motivating forces at play have become recognized in their true perspective.

This is no ordinary academic study, but a highly instructive and homely review of child conduct which has a very practical aim. Though scientifically accurate, Mrs. Mumford, who is well oriented in all the modern theories of mental development, steers clear of psychological jargon and presents her subject in non-technical language and in such an attractive way that the contents cannot help but make a wide appeal. The light that can be thrown upon the misbehaviour and difficulties of the little members of the family is well illustrated in the many stories of home life.

The beginning chapters treat of the need for understanding children, the child mind and how it grows and works, and the creative power of imagination. Subsequently, right conduct and learning conventional behaviour and self-control as well as the child's right to inquire and its right to freedom, are discussed. The problem of punishment is dealt with in a more masterly way than we have seen anywhere else. The topic of the child's approach to God, rationally and beautifully handled, concludes the volume.

We cannot speak too highly of this book, which is a worthy successor to the author's *Dawn of Character*, which had an issue of over 21,000 copies. Though it is written for all those concerned in the education and care of children, many a medical psychologist can learn from its contents.

C. STANFORD READ.

Differential Psychology. By A. ANASTASI. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1937. Pp. xvii + 615. Price 12s.

Though familiar chapter headings, such as learning, remembering, perceiving, thinking, feeling and so on, do not make their appearance, a text-book on individual and group differences in behaviour, as Dr. Hollingworth says in the introduction, "comes near to representing the whole field of psychology".

It is an approach that is particularly appropriate to the American *Weltanschauung*, for facts can be stated with a minimal degree of philosophizing, especially when the emphasis is laid on quantitative rather than, as in the Teutonic approach, on qualitative variations of behaviour.

We are taken on a long and fascinating journey, starting, after a historical introduction, with a discussion of the normal and other types of curve which represent individual differences. Then follow four chapters on the heredity-environment problem, including, among other things, a discussion of wolf children, of the families of eminent and degenerate men, of twinning, and of the effects of training. A chapter on mental growth in learning and intelligence is followed by one on the relationship between mental and physical traits. Then comes a chapter on constitutional types and then one on variation within the individual, including mention of the *idiot savant*. To complete Part I there is a discussion of theories of mental organization. In Part II an analysis is made of important group differences. The treatment is methodological rather than empirical, and we are given a discussion of the subnormal, the genius, sex-differences, racial comparisons, and urban and rural groups.

A critic's task is always difficult. He has to compress into a short space a suggestion or two about material that is developed in full in the book he criticizes, and he thereby lays himself open to the risk of unintentional misrepresentation. In this case, however, no critic could fail to overlook the scholarly, authoritative and at the same time interesting way in which Dr. Anastasi has coped with her subject. The book is a book to read; it is also one that it is well to have at hand when one wants a rapid summary of important work, or references to original papers.

It is a pity that the book of Newman, Freeman and Holzinger was not available when Dr. Anastasi wrote the chapter on twins. It would have strengthened her view about the general under-estimation of the influence of environment if she had been able to refer to it, particularly to the part on the psychological differences between nineteen pairs of identical twins reared apart since infancy, instead of merely to Newman's preliminary reports on a few of the cases. But that was not her fault.

In the chapter on the effects of training Dr. Anastasi bravely tackles the question of the effect of practice on individual differences. The question is an exceedingly complicated one, raising points such as whether it is better to judge improvement in absolute or in relative terms, by time scores or by performance scores, by increments or by deviations, and so on. The whole basis of the trouble is that objective units and psychological units may be different. Although in physical measurements 2 in. minus 1 in. is the same thing as 201 in. minus 200 in., yet in mental measurements, as Thorndike long ago pointed out, "a four often is not twice a two and a 90 minus 80 is often not equal to a 60 minus 50". The use of absolute measurements, which Dr. Anastasi favours, is not immediately self-evident. The problem, to my mind, needs a complete re-orientation from the orthodox approach which Dr. Anastasi summarizes. Someone needs to tackle the relationship between psychological and objective units. The point is of fundamental importance, because an adequate answer underlies the whole of differential psychology, and if it involves the introduction of qualitative measurements, it may mean that the emphasis on quantitative scores is leading us away from results that will be of value to the clinician. In a different field, it is a point that arises very forcibly in the contrast between the statistical and the behavioural approaches to intelligence testing. The former leads to a lot of exact figures, which have no *immediate*

psychological—as distinct from statistical—interpretation, the latter to qualitative behavioural differences in a standardized situation, which is often of greater practical use in assessing an individual's intellectual adjustment.

Half the chapter on the relationship between mental and physical traits was missing from my copy of the book, but from the index there appears to be an omission I should like to see remedied in a future edition, namely, a study of handwriting and other expressive movements, such as has been developed by Allport and Vernon, and by Saudek and his followers. It would, of course, involve again a fuller consideration of the qualitative approach to the study of individual differences, and might demand an expansion of the part of the book that deals with psychological types. But that would, in my view, be an improvement.

In the second part of the book methodology rather than results are stressed. Dr. Anastasi defends her position on the grounds that a discussion of methodology is essential before results can be critically evaluated. The real reason for the change of front is, I suspect, because of the paucity of experimental results. At the same time a collection and evaluation of results needs to be attempted some time and by somebody, and I hope that in the future Dr. Anastasi will undertake the task herself. J. M. BLACKBURN.

Psychology for Everyone. By W. J. H. SPROTT, M.A. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1937. Pp. xi + 446. Price 8s. 6d.

Although Mr. Sprott has given his book a popular title, its contents are hardly likely to appeal to all the thirty million morons. The book is written in non-technical language, it is true, but it demands from the reader a more sustained effort of attention than one who is looking for a psychology without tears might be prepared to give. "Psychology for the Intelligent Layman" might be a more appropriate title. Such criticism is of the title, which I think is misleading, it is not a criticism of the book itself. Its treatment of psychology is original, and diverges from the well-marked facultative chapter headings that one is accustomed to meet in most text-books. The first half is concerned with psychological dynamics, action, the springs of action, constitutional differences, and so on; the last half with sensation, perceiving and the thinking processes. Familiar ground is covered in an unusual way. At the same time one is left with a slight feeling of vagueness at the end, and some re-reading is necessary if the contents are to be appreciated to the full. I think this might have been avoided if the summaries had been presented in a more positive and factual form. It is, however, encouraging that Mr. Sprott, like Dr. Thouless, has attempted to combine the best features of the different schools of psychology in their appropriate place rather than to pin his faith to all-embracing principles put forward by a single school. J. M. BLACKBURN.

Animals and Men. By Prof. DAVID KATZ. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1937. Pp. xi + 263. Price 12s. 6d.

Prof. Katz has made important and original contributions to our knowledge of animal psychology, and he is one of the foremost authorities on the subject at the present day. In addition to his qualifications he possesses the gift