

Neuro-syphilis, above all other forms of the disease, has its special therapeutic problems, and is certainly not to be dealt with by methods suitable in, say, the primary stage. An extended discussion of the subject would have been well worth while.

In the very clear and concise legal section the subject of certification has been left untouched since the first edition. The work went to press before the Mental Treatment Act was passed; nevertheless, its usefulness might have been enhanced if some indication had been given of the possibility of such legislation, or even if the recommendations of the Royal Commission had been included.

In the review of the first edition the book was "unreservedly recommended as a sound and reliable guide to psychiatry." Its place is now too well established for it to need any further recommendation. We have pointed out some shortcomings in the hope that they may be remedied in a future edition, and that so good a book may never suffer from being allowed to become out of date in its details.

A. WALK.

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*Impressions of a Study-Tour of English Institutions [Indrukken van een Studiereis langs Engelsche Gestichten].* By F. GREWEL. Amsterdam, 1930. Reprinted from *Psychiat. en Neurol. Bladen*. Pp. 40.

Many of the readers of the Journal retain pleasant memories of the visit of a party of Dutch psychiatrists towards the end of 1929; others will have read the vivid and racy description of the tour by Dr. A. E. Evans, which appeared in the Journal for April, 1930. A full account, from the point of view of the visitors, has been drawn up by Dr. Grewel. In forty pages he holds up the mirror to institutional psychiatry in England. First he gives some general impressions; next the tour itself is described, with copious notes of the most prominent features and idiosyncrasies of the various hospitals; there is a section on English Lunacy Law; and an appendix containing detailed facts and figures about the institutions, which could not be given in the more informal description.

The author's general impressions are given under fifteen headings, which it will be of interest to summarize:

1. Patients, on the whole, rather better behaved than in Holland, in spite of less supervision.
2. Patients allowed more freedom within the hospital.
3. Much use made of open-air treatment; increased oxygenation regarded as of special therapeutic value.
4. Sports and games generally encouraged.
5. Occupational therapy poorly developed.
6. The psychotic generally looked on as a sick person.
7. Proportion of staff to patients lower than in Holland, and probably insufficient.
8. Lower maintenance-rate; probably due to capital expenses not being included.

9. Frequent gifts from friends of the institution.
10. The visitors were convinced of the unlimited resources of English institutions; the party of British psychiatrists who visited Holland the previous year had the same impression!
11. Medical superintendents in England are anything but phlegmatic in temperament!
12. More of a military spirit in the hospitals.
13. It appeared to be the general opinion in England that the male nursing staff were more satisfactory than the female.
14. The universal recognition of the work of Sir Frederick Mott as the standard to be aimed at in psychiatric research.
15. Greater frequency of infectious diseases.

Undoubtedly the feature of our institutions which struck our visitors most was the comparatively poor development of occupational therapy. Accustomed as they are to vigorous efforts in this direction, aiming at the employment of practically every patient and at the conversion of even acute wards into busy workshops, they could not help commenting on the idleness of large numbers of our patients, and on the small scale of systematic, purposive occupational treatment. Dr. Grewel notes that much work is done as a matter of course, and that a number of hospitals stand out above others in the extent to which occupation is encouraged. The elaborate organization of patients' entertainments is much admired; a curious point is that the author mentions as a novelty a dance for patients of both sexes.

Dr. Grewel is to be congratulated on the general faithfulness and accuracy of his account, the notes for which were compiled during a strenuous fortnight. There are two points on which we are able to correct him: there are no "old-fashioned, wooden beds" at Horton; and it is not the fact that the news of German Zeppelin raids was suppressed during the war; on the contrary the raids were given full publicity—witness *Punch's* cartoon on the Zeppelin as John Bull's best recruiting officer. Only the names of the localities visited were kept secret, for obvious reasons.

A. WALK.

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*A Challenge to Neurasthenia.* By D. M. ARMITAGE. Second edition. London: Williams & Norgate, 1931. Crown 8vo. Pp. 64. Price 1s. 6d.

This little book was written as a tribute from a former patient to the memory of Dr. L. S. Barnes, a general practitioner in Hertfordshire, who died in 1927. He devoted many years of his life to the treatment of psychoneurotics; and his boundless energy, tireless patience and unflinching sympathy had their reward in the devotion and admiration of those who knew him. Miss Armitage writes enthusiastically of his psychological methods, which she invites sufferers from "neurasthenia" to apply for themselves. Two quotations will serve to show what the essentials of the method were: