

President of the East German Academy of Arts and awarded the Lenin Peace Prize from the Soviet Union for his series of anti-war novels. He died in East Berlin, almost totally blind, in 1968.

Since 1927 he had corresponded with Freud, and what started with 'Dear Professor Freud' and 'Your faithful admirer' had become by 1932 'Dear Father Freud' and 'Ever yours'. Similarly, Freud, who started off with 'Dear Mr. Zweig' had by 1932 changed to 'Dear Meister Arnold', and though it was Zweig who initiated the correspondence it was Freud who first used the familiar form of address.

The correspondence had initially been offered in 1955 to Ernest Jones for his biography of Freud, and a fair representation was in fact included, but Zweig always hoped that the whole would appear in book form. The German edition appeared in 1968 only a few months before Zweig's death.

Zweig, throughout his letters, plays the role of a Boswell who is entirely captivated by Freud. This could in part have been due to his neurotic illness, for which from time to time he was given psychoanalytic treatment, though not by Freud. Throughout the correspondence Freud maintains a dignity and a resistance to Zweig's sycophancy which is most creditable and which also contributes to the greater interest of the letters.

There are many aspects discussed, including personal details of both Freud and Zweig, and students will find in them essential material. There are also topics of historical interest, including the impact of National Socialism and anti-Semitism on the Jewish intellectual in Germany and Austria, and in particular on the two important and articulate correspondents. Literary topics abound, and Freud puts forward his arguments for the theory that the Earl of Oxford was the author of the Shakespearean plays and sonnets. Zweig's residence in Palestine encourages Freud to air his views on *Moses and Monotheism*, and in spite of his failing health his letters remain lucid and wise to the end. It was not Arnold Zweig but Stefan Zweig who gave Freud's funeral oration; as far as I can ascertain they were not related though both were closely associated with Freud.

Psychiatrists who may have found the biography of Freud by Jones too detailed will enjoy these letters, which are well-edited and well translated and read easily. The stature of Freud is enhanced, and he comes through as a very wise and cultured person who, though capable of deep feelings, knew that his greatest service to mankind lay in his contribution to psychoanalysis from which he would not be diverted.

The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis are to be congratulated on this publication.

MYRE SIM.

#### A WORK OF SCHOLARSHIP

#### The Prognosis of Patients with Epilepsy.

By ERNST A. RODIN. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1969. Pp. 445. Price \$19.50.

For the clinician engaged in the management of patients with seizure disorders this book is among the most important to have been written in English for at least a decade. In a market dominated by conference reports, broad treatises on narrow problems, and trite *vade mecum*s on therapeutics, this is a work of scholarship in an area of great concern to the physician, that of prognosis. The theme is pursued with rigour, both in the review of the literature which forms part 1 and in the research dossier which makes up the second part.

In his review of the literature on prognosis Professor Rodin's general theme is to depress the doctor who takes an over-optimistic view either of his therapeutic prowess or of the natural history of these disorders. This review covers most of the useful sub-classifications of the epilepsies, as well as having sections on surgery, intelligence and mortality. Each section is well summarized; in particular the exposé of Sauer's paper on pyknolepsy (where 3 of 7 cases suffered psychomotor seizures), and Adie's comment in discussion after his 1924 paper that major attacks had occurred in some of his cases where '... in fact there seemed to be every gradation from pyknolepsy to ordinary epilepsy', tend to disturb attitudes derived from too slight an acquaintance with original papers. The whole review is perhaps a severe test of the intellectual climate in the field still dominated by a point of view, laudable enough for a while in the education of prejudiced public, that epilepsy does not do much harm while it lasts and usually goes away. Whilst the value of therapeutic optimism is indisputable in the individual case and in public education, therapeutic zeal might be better encouraged by the section on Mortality, which, taken with the results of the Danish study to which it refers and which are now available, confirm the risk to life from the variety of hazards attendant upon the epileptic state.

Since in the first part the book follows the best traditions of theses, purists may be dismayed to find that the investigations in part 2 are not a diligent proof of hypothesis but record a variety of attempts to find meaningful predictors whereby prognosis in a number of areas can be improved. At present in the epilepsies we should be grateful for anything which generates hypotheses. These investigations are also very well summarized and are in agreement with the results from other centres. The finding that in terms of seizure prognosis the EEG behaves

as an independent variable for the most part, despite complex breakdown coding, may reassure both those who feel deprived by want of facilities of the secrets locked away in electroencephalography and those well placed in terms of hardware who feel wanting in their powers of interpretation. Perhaps the late prognosis is not the right question to ask the EEG.

Last but not least, the Appendices to this book should save other researchers hours of hard work in their coding procedures.

DAVID C. TAYLOR.

### ONE HAND CLAPPING

**Black Suicide.** By HERBERT HENDIN. London: Allen Lane. The Penguin Press. 1970. Pp. 147 + 29. Price 36s.

The central thesis advanced here is that suicide among blacks in the United States differs qualitatively—i.e. 'in meanings and significance'—from suicide among whites. Negro suicidal behaviour is said to be characterized by 'murderous rage and self-hatred' which stem from maternal rejection and paternal abandonment in childhood. 'The rage and self-hatred that are an integral part of the black family situation are inseparable from the rage and self-hatred that are the out-growth of racial discrimination; . . . in the black's attempt to cope with frustration and rage, his feelings of impotence and self-hatred often cause his anger to turn against himself.'

The thesis is an attractive one. Dr. Hendin's sympathies are obvious and admirable. Moreover, it is refreshing to find a psychoanalyst who stresses that current environmental influences—no less than supposed happenings in infancy—are important determinants of human behaviour. Unfortunately, the author's social concern is not matched, apparently, by any regard for the scientific method. In the first place, his basic proposition is so vaguely formulated as to preclude verification. Does the hypothesis refer to actual suicide or to a very different phenomenon, namely so-called attempted suicide? Then again, if the suicidal acts of blacks and whites differ 'qualitatively', is it postulated that rage and self-hatred (and, for that matter, parental deprivation in childhood) precede suicide invariably among negroes but never among whites? These and similar questions which will occur to critical readers are not clarified. But if Dr. Hendin is too reticent about the precise implications of his thesis, he is unduly forthcoming in his conclusions. On the basis, essentially, of a few private uncontrolled observations, the author presents what is at best an unverified hypothesis as the revealed truth.

Dr. Hendin begins by citing some homicide and suicide statistics for New York City. The figures purport to show that both homicide and suicide rates reach their peak among negroes between the ages of twenty and thirty-five. Since, however, the homicide figures refer not to murderers but to the victims of murder, the relevance of these data to the present hypothesis is doubtful. But the main burden of his proof consists of brief, selected extracts from psychoanalytic interviews with twenty-five negroes who made suicidal attempts. These patients were seen for seven or eight sessions; a number of projective tests, the W.A.I.S., and a hostility inventory were also administered. High scores on the hostility inventory were taken to support the hypothesis; but so were low scores, because it is argued that the low scorers were simply denying their unconscious hostility. Such *ex post facto* explanations are, of course, unacceptable in a scientific sense since they make the hypothesis irrefutable. It will come as no surprise that the author's psychoanalytic findings similarly confirm his hypothesis in every case.

The final and most serious criticism of this study concerns the absence of any white controls. To investigate postulated differences with regard to suicide between whites and blacks by examining negroes only seems not unlike listening for the proverbial sound of one hand clapping. Dr. Hendin does scant justice to his thesis. His study, I regret to say, proves nothing, except, perhaps, the boundless capacity of investigators, when unfettered by the restraints of the scientific method, to find what they seek.

S. GREER.

### QUITE BARREN

**Family Dynamics and Female Sexual Delinquency.** Edited by OTTO POLLAK and ALFRED S. FRIEDMAN. Science and Behaviour Books, California. Pp. 210. Price \$6.95.

This paperback is based on a series of lectures which formed part of the training programme in family counselling for sexual behaviour problems of adolescent girls, run jointly by the Philadelphia Psychiatric Centre and the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development. The contributors are mainly psychiatrists or psychologists.

The idea of the book apparently came after the lectures had been given, and in order to provide a more comprehensive coverage of the subject some additional unpublished papers were included.

The quality of these various essays is variable.