

the coat has been placed there automatically, as the expression of a concealed feeling that the professor's society is no longer welcome. That is possible, but it is also true that, in the absence of any kind of feeling, conscious or unconscious, the husband, with thoughts centred on his newly-arrived wife, might still fling his coat on the one available chair. I go to a locked drawer and automatically select from the bunch the wrong key. There is a reason for that wrong selection. But the reason is not, as Freud might be inclined to suppose, any secret emotion or desire, sexual or other; the wrong key I have automatically selected simply happens to be the key that I have lately most frequently required,—that is to say, my action has been determined by the general tendency of nervous action to flow in the direction of least resistance, in the channel formed by habit.

Thus automatic actions are not always due to latent specific causes, but often to latent general causes. And in every particular case we have the problem of deciding between the possible specific cause and the perhaps more probable general cause.

Such criticism, however, by no means destroys the interest and value of Freud's work, which cannot fail to be attractive to those whose business it is to search beneath the surface of human speech and human conduct for underlying causes.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

Premiers Memoires de Séguin sur l'Idiotie (1838—1843). Publiés par BOURNEVILLE, Paris, 1897. 8vo. pp. 182.

Traitement moral Hygiène et Education des Idiots et des autres Enfants arriérés. Par ÉDOUARD SÉGUIN. Préface par BOURNEVILLE. Paris, 1906. 8vo. pp. 530.

In the first of these books we have the earliest writings of Dr. Edward Seguin explaining the methods of teaching which he employed for the training of idiots in the Bicêtre. A suggestive paper is entitled "Advice to A.M.O. on the Education of his Son," and also a larger one on "The Education of Backward Children and Idiots."

In the second and larger volume we have a reprint of Dr. Seguin's French work on *The Hygiene and Education of Idiots*, first published in 1846.

Dr. Bourneville announces that he will bring out a volume containing reports and memoirs by Seguin from 1846 to his death in 1880, and a translation into French of his book *On Idiocy and its Treatment by the Physiological Method*, New York, 1866. It is by this book that Seguin is known to readers in the English language, and it includes the best ideas of the preceding ones.

Leaving France in 1850 for the United States, with his great talent and marvellous enthusiasm, Dr. Seguin gave a powerful impetus to the establishment of training institutions for idiots in the New World. This was the main object of his life. He practised for some time as a physician, and wrote a good book on *Medical Thermometry*, but his last years were spent in establishing, along with his second wife, in New York City, a training school for feeble-minded children.

Since the publication of his last work there have been advances in the pathology of idiocy, but his writings still deserve study for his able clinical observations and his acute analysis of mental symptoms.

The principles of education laid down by him in different treatises are still the basis of all teaching of the feeble-minded, and, indeed, are useful in ordinary pedagogy. The ingenuity of his methods, his skill in teaching, and his indomitable perseverance are beyond all praise. Like most enthusiasts, Seguin advanced beyond the strain of ordinary endeavour; he was willing to bestow his efforts to arouse the most torpid mental faculties. Utterly unselfish, he would not have sought a fitter memorial than this republication of his labours which will still carry on his life-work. These writings will be read with much profit by all who are engaged in the teaching of the feeble-minded.

Much praise is due to Dr. Bourneville for including these works in his *Bibliothèque d'éducation spéciale*. This distinguished physician has done a great work for the benefit of idiots and imbeciles by his vigorous revival of the training at the Bicêtre, and by his numerous and valuable contributions to the pathology of idiocy.

WILLIAM W. IRELAND.

Epitome of Current Literature.

1. Physiological Psychology.

The Theory of Hysteria [*Hystérie et Sommeil*]. (*Arch. de Neurol.*, May and June, 1907.) Sollier, P.

Sollier here presents a new statement of his theory of hysteria as a form of sleep (first brought forward in 1897, and now based on a study of 200 cases), at the same time answering various objections. As before, he maintains the need of a physiological explanation of hysteria as against Janet's psychological theory. But he admits that (as Binet and Ingegnieros have pointed out) his and Janet's theories complete each other rather than stand in opposition, Sollier maintaining that the evolution of a symptom, in however masterly a manner it may be unravelled, by no means constitutes a pathogenic explanation of the disease presenting that symptom. Sollier's definition of hysteria now is "a functional physical trouble of brain, consisting in a localised or generalised torpor or sleep, temporary or permanent, of the cerebral centres, and translated according to the centre affected by manifestations of a vaso-motor, trophic, visceral, sensorial or motor-psychic nature, and also, according to its variations, its degree and its duration, by transitory crises, permanent stigmata or paroxystic accidents." Confirmed hysterical subjects are thus simply persons in a state of vigil-ambulism, whose sleep is more or less deep, more or less extended; but Sollier now adds that whatever part of the cortex is affected, sensibility, objective and subjective, is immediately and necessarily