

**The Mentally Ill in America.** By ALBERT DEUTSCH. Doubleday Doran.

Mr. Deutsch has the advantage of writing sympathetically about a subject designed to elicit sympathy. Nevertheless he has achieved a very useful piece of work. The book is written with a restraint peculiarly valuable and, though essentially a non-technical work, it ought to have a profound effect on physicians dealing with mental administration. I think it should be a tremendous corrective to self-satisfaction that, as Mr. Deutsch's book shows, some of the enormities meted out to mental patients occurred within living memory.

The different phases in the reform of mental treatment are skilfully outlined, and though Mr. Deutsch does not appear to be a doctor, he has certainly a useful grasp of the main modern tendencies in the medical treatment of mental cases, and a very considerable insight into the general requirements of mental patients.

The early chapters, in particular, show a pleasing erudition, and the author implies, and with by no means negligible evidence, that Anglo-Saxon civilization has not shone conspicuously in the alleviation of conditions for these sufferers.

In saying that the book would be of great value to physicians one does not wish to imply that its general appeal is limited. It is essentially readable and clearly expounded. It is fervently to be hoped that lay persons reading Mr. Deutsch's book will not be satisfied in deploring the horrible conditions prevailing in mental institutions until far too recently in social history. It is greatly to be desired that they will realize that their own keeping alive of the stigma on mental disorder is, psychologically speaking, a condoning of the brutalities of previous generations.

A. GUIRDHAM.

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**American Medicine: Expert Testimony out of Court.** Vols. I and II.  
The American Foundation Inc., 1937.

In reading the recommendations on medical education in the above work it becomes obvious that the infiltration of psychiatry into all branches of medicine is more recognized in the United States of America than here. Features of the discussion are firstly the catholicity of the specialities which recognize the importance of psychiatry in their own vocation, and secondly the general emphasis on the psychoneurotic nature of most symptoms. From the point of view of the psychiatrist the situation in America seems more hopeful than here. By a curious anomaly the attitude is less bureaucratic and institutionalized. They insist on the importance of the general practitioner being trained in psychiatry; they are concerned with the toning of the disease reaction by the personality of the victim. It is evident, too, that considerable attention is being paid to diathesis, that viewpoint in medicine which most emphasizes the inseparable nature of body and mind within the patient's psyche. One has always believed that the number of diseases in which psychoneurotic conditions are precipitating factors is larger than is customarily allowed. It is interesting to read that an American professor of medicine noted "what was almost an epidemic of peptic ulcers following the introduction of the point system". It is most cheering, too, to read the recommendations that "the nucleus of psychiatry should be a psychiatric department, in connection with an in-patient and out-patient clinic affiliated with a medical school. In such