

**Year-Book of Neurology, Psychiatry and Endocrinology, 1934.** Edited by H. H. REESE, H. A. PASKIND and E. L. SEVRINGHAUS. Chicago: Year-Book Publishers, Inc., 1935. Pp. 782. Price 12s. 6d.

This well-known compendium of selected abstracts from the literature appears this year in enlarged form and under new editorship. The pages on the endocrine glands which formerly formed part of the neurological section have been expanded into an independent section of over 250 pages. This does not include purely physiological research, for from considerations of space the editors have omitted all articles without a definite clinical bearing. Work on the syndromes associated with disorder of the parathyroids and of the adrenal cortex occupies the largest amount of space; but the recognition of the pituitary as the "master gland" of the body leads to the inclusion of all but the pineal and thymus under subsections of a chapter on the anterior lobe. The only paper of direct psychiatric application in this section is one on cases of involuntional depression treated by theelin with good results.

In neurology the editors single out for special mention the study of the central vegetative centres and pathways, further experiments on the paths of infection in poliomyelitis, and W. F. Petersen's monumental work on meteorological influences in the causation of disease. Much of psychiatric interest is included in this section; there are studies on constitutional types, exhaustive neuroses, treatment of general paralysis by electropyraxia and results of treatment by other methods, and a variety of papers on epilepsy and migraine.

The psychiatric section proper is the shortest, but a wide range of topics is covered. Among these are: Improved methods in the prolonged narcosis treatment, mental states following head injuries and new conceptions of "traumatic neurosis", cardio-vascular efficiency and metabolism in schizophrenia, and reports of several cases of Pick's disease and Alzheimer's disease, including a familial type of the latter.

The articles selected appear to be taken from a wider field than formerly. We are glad to see this Journal well represented. However, the number of European journals quoted is so small that it is difficult to believe that the editors can really have satisfied themselves that they have included what is most significant in the year's literature. Some of the papers seem to be of trivial importance, and the chapters on the psychoneuroses, mental deficiency and criminology are obviously much too scanty. The year-book cannot therefore be recommended to the research worker as a trustworthy guide to the literature, but the ordinary psychiatrist will find in it information throwing much light on practical problems and many useful suggestions as to prognosis and treatment.

A. WALK.

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**Diet in the Modern Hospital.** By JULIET DE K. WHITSED. London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 1934. Pp. 220. Price 5s.

The author of this useful little volume is Dietician to the Johannesburg General Hospital, and it may be said at once that the publication of a work such as this provides ample justification for the creation of such posts on the staffs of hospitals and institutions. The first thirty pages are given up to a series of outlined lectures on dietetics suitable for nurses or lay persons who may be called on to perform nursing duties; they may be studied directly, or will serve even better as a basis for actual lectures to be delivered by the physician. The remainder of the book contains a large number of special diets, arranged in sections in alphabetical order of conditions treated; these

latter range from pernicious anæmia to a swallowed foreign body. In each case the principles of treatment are given first, and it is clearly stated whether the diet forms the essential element in the treatment or is merely a desirable adjuvant. Next, specimen menus are given, often with tables of caloric values, and finally, where indicated, recipes for the preparation of suitable dishes. For the student it might perhaps have been better if the subjects had been grouped in a more systematic way; but for ready reference the alphabetical arrangement has obvious advantages.

The actual information given appears to be correct and up to date. It is surprising, however, to find no more than a few lines given to diet in rickets and in pellagra, though scurvy is given its due proportion of space. The elimination of certain proteins is mentioned rather casually in the sections on asthma and on skin diseases; but the importance of diet in allergic conditions generally is hardly sufficiently emphasized, and no detailed elimination diets are given. Under the heading of "Ketogenic Ratio" the use of this form of diet in pyelitis is mentioned, but there is no cross-reference to it in the section on urological disease.

A diet—high fat and increased vitamin B—is recommended for neurasthenia. No other psychiatric condition is directly dealt with, but the book contains much that will prove helpful in mental hospital practice, and its use for reference will lighten the task of the medical officer called upon to arrange detailed dietaries without the skilled assistance available in general hospitals.

A. WALK.

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**Play in Childhood.** By MARGARET LOWENFELD, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. London; Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 1935.

Dr. Lowenfeld has made a notable contribution to the literature on children's behaviour. She describes clearly the source of her material and the means of its collection, and taking play as her subject, she devotes the 350 odd pages of this book to a painstaking examination of the way in which children play.

In an introduction, in which the work of other observers is classified, she selects nine aspects from which a more detailed study is made. Play is, in succeeding chapters, described as a manifestation of "Bodily Activity" (Ch. 3), "Repetition of Experience" (Ch. 4), "Demonstration of Phantasy" (Ch. 5), "Realization of Environment" (Ch. 6), "Preparation for Life" (Ch. 7), while the remaining two descriptive chapters deal respectively with group games and the comic element in play. An all too brief chapter follows on "Children who Cannot Play". This is clearly an ambitious survey, but it may be objected that classification in itself, based on descriptions, need not necessarily afford clarification in what is admittedly an obscure subject. In her attempt to see and describe play from the child's angle, and to avoid interpretation based on a *priori* theory, Dr. Lowenfeld leaves the student somewhat in the dark as to the significance of her division of the subject.

The plan of using unedited reports made at the time of observation aims, and largely succeeds in avoiding a biased selection, but it tends to make the book tedious and lengthy to no purpose. In the same way an over-scrupulousness in acknowledging material, so that the lightest mention of, for instance, a contemporary novel in a passing allusion, leads to a footnote and an entry in the bibliography, tends to confuse the reader. Profusion of detail surely requires more rigorous selection in order that it may not obtrude too extensively on the text. Occasionally a somewhat obscure form of expression creeps