

## Reviews

### MENTAL DEFICIENCY

One of the most important, as well as one of the most hopeful, books that have yet been published on mental deficiency is *Social Control of the Mentally Deficient*,<sup>1</sup> by Dr. STANLEY POWELL DAVIES of New York. Dr. Davies is primarily a sociologist, and this is well; for though mental deficiency in some of its technical aspects—especially as regards its diagnosis and causation—presents obscure and difficult problems to the anatomist, the geneticist, the psychologist, and the physician, the actual methods of dealing with mentally defective persons are in the main the province of the teacher and of the sociologist. In this book the pedagogic problems presented by the mentally deficient child are not considered, except on the very broad lines in which they must necessarily be related to the sociological picture; but as a well-balanced, judicial, and authoritative summary of existing knowledge on the social aspects of mental deficiency it will not easily be surpassed. The most practical physician must also of necessity be a social worker, and therefore cannot be excluded from this field: correspondingly, Dr. Davies by no means ignores the clinical and the purely scientific aspects of his subject; but, as he says:

“the volume endeavours to present mental deficiency in its social rather than its clinical aspects. It aims to show how the various phases of public opinion and action with reference to the social control of this problem have followed the evolution of scientific thought and knowledge concerning mental deficiency. The more recent trends of thought and measures of control are particularly dealt with as indicating what a modern mental deficiency programme might comprise.”

The special point of view of the author, and the peculiar value of his work, may perhaps best be indicated by some quotations from the “Foreword” of Dr. FRANKWOOD E. WILLIAMS, medical director of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene:

“We have come a long way from the period of ‘the menace of the feeble-minded’ and the Kallikak family, . . . and yet this period was an important one. The data available at that time were correct, but too limited; the hypotheses and social programmes developed as a result of those data were inaccurate theoretically and inadequate socially. . . . Hypotheses, theories, and social procedure have been changed. . . . We have come by a zigzag course to our present views. . . . It is just as easy to-day to be deceived by too little knowledge and to find an easy and obvious solution for a problem too little understood as it was in 1909 or 1912 or 1916; witness the earnest citizens who appear every year before legislatures with programmes that might have looked well in 1909, but that do not incorporate the knowledge accumulated during the past twenty years; the programmes look well, and often impress legislators, if one disregards these twenty years. . . . Davies did not set out to write an account of the development of thought in the field of mental deficiency, but the method he has chosen in presenting his material fortunately accomplishes this without detracting from—in fact, it enriches—the thing he did set out to do; that is, the giving of a clear account of the status of thought and investigation in the field of mental deficiency at the present time. The result is a book from which the new student may learn how not to make the same mistakes that have already been made.”

By this admirable method and with this effective purpose Dr. Davies reviews the questions of intelligence tests, of social criteria, of eugenic alarms, of the relation of mental defect to crime and immorality and pauperism. In chapters on the changing concepts of heredity and the newer aspects of behaviour he shows how, as the result of recent experiment and experience, earlier views have to be completely reconsidered and former conclusions

profoundly modified. His consideration of the three remedies of sterilization, segregation, and socialization, and their relationship to each other, emerges from this review. He demonstrates the extremely limited sphere of usefulness of the first of these, and some of the administrative difficulties attaching thereto. He shows that segregation by itself produces results that are in many cases disappointing; and a large part of his book is devoted to an exposition of the proper use of the institution and colony as a socializing force, and to the experience acquired by utilizing the school, vocational adjustment, selective environment, and community supervision in securing for mentally deficient persons their safe and proper place in the social order. His conclusions, both as to the success of these methods and generally as to the social and sexual conduct of the feeble-minded in the community when compared with that of other classes of persons, are very hopeful, and appear to be well founded.

### HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY

The student of physiology has had a new volume by Drs. WINTON and BAYLISS, entitled *Human Physiology*,<sup>2</sup> added to the relatively wide list from which he may choose a textbook. A good book for the medical student dealing with human physiology in a way which will bring conviction to the duller intellect that physiology is the foundation on which real clinical medicine rests has long been needed. The textbook under review, good though it is in parts, cannot be held to fill the niche. The authors in their preface state that the medical student of to-day is expected to know too much and to think too little. It is true that too much is expected of him in the way of detailed information, but the curriculum as arranged is to blame for allowing him no time for reflection. The authors then go on to suggest that better results would be obtained if the medical student confined his attention to human physiology, “eliminating from his curriculum those parts of physiology which have no immediate bearing on the happenings in the body of man.” We have the utmost respect for their ideal, and believe that some genius will eventually achieve (a most difficult task) a volume on the principles of physiology as applied to medicine. The present authors—and we sympathize with them—have fallen frequently from their own high ideal. Admittedly the personal equation plays a large part in determining what has or has not an “immediate bearing on the happenings in the body of man,” but it seems to us that much of the long opening chapter on muscle might have been eliminated without loss, as might the long, rather technical, account of the isolated heart-lung preparation. The same criticism may also be directed to the chapter on reproduction. As a chapter it is interesting, but out of proportion. Why devote a full-page illustration of the vaginal smears of the mouse, and several pages of print to the reproductive cycle in the lower mammals, when, for example, spermatogenesis and oögenesis are barely referred to, and the effects of castration on the human male and female are to all intents ignored? Why devote eleven pages to the conditioned reflexes of the dog, when the sensations of taste and smell are not considered, when the electrocardiogram is dismissed in a few words, and when temperature regulation is scantily treated? All these subjects are of human interest and importance.

We have deliberately stressed some of the weak points so that in a subsequent edition they may be improved. The reader must not presume that *Human Physiology*, as a whole, is poor or second-rate. It is not. The groundwork of the book is excellent; it is well written and nearly always clearly written; it is a promising production.

<sup>1</sup> *Social Control of the Mentally Deficient*. By Stanley Powell Davies, Ph.D. With foreword by Frankwood E. Williams, M.D. London: Constable and Co., Ltd. 1930. (Pp. xix + 389. 13s. net.)

<sup>2</sup> *Human Physiology*. By F. R. Winton, M.D., and L. E. Bayliss, Ph.D. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1930. (Pp. xiv + 583; 227 figures. 15s.)

## ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL REPORTS

In his "In Memoriam" notice of Sir Anthony Bowlby, with which the sixty-third volume of *St. Bartholomew's Hospital Reports*<sup>3</sup> opens, Mr. Girling Ball shows that the medical school and students never had a more devoted friend, and that Sir Anthony did much in popularizing the study of pathology in the school; for, in addition to his own demonstrations and book on *Surgical Pathology*, he was largely responsible, in the face of much opposition, for the appointment of the late A. A. Kanthack as a whole-time lecturer on pathology at a time when no other medical school in London had taken this step. An account of the new surgical and operation blocks of the hospital, by Mr. T. A. Lodge, F.R.I.B.A., rightly finds a place in the volume. Of the twelve more professional articles, none of which appear to have been published previously, some record single interesting cases, such as Dr. Langdon Brown and Mr. Girling Ball's report on suprarenal carcinoma and virilism in women, Mr. R. Foster Moore and Dr. Geoffrey Evans's case of metastatic carcinoma of the choroid, and Sir Thomas Horder's unusual case of tuberculous meningitis. Other contributors deal with treatment; in cardiac oedema Professor F. R. Fraser recommends digitalis and rest, and then in order diuretin, theophylline, urea, and novasurol, which, however, is more toxic than the others. Drs. R. Armstrong and Johnson make out a good case for the use of Felton's concentrated antipneumococcal serum (Types I and II) in pneumonia, and Mr. R. W. Raven analyses cases of perforated gastric and duodenal ulcers with the object of comparing the results of suture alone and of suture combined with gastro-jejunostomy. Dr. H. V. Dicks deals with the diagnostic and therapeutic value of transduodenal drainage. The diagnosis of bronchial carcinoma is dealt with by Drs. James Maxwell and Nicholson, and Mr. R. Corbett writes on the period of disability in ambulatory fractures. Two articles of special interest are Dr. Mervyn Gordon's philosophical discussion of the problem of the etiology of Hodgkin's disease, and Dr. Wilfred Shaw's essay on the application of ovarian physiology to clinical gynaecology.

## PHYSIOTHERAPY

In the preface to their book on physiotherapy,<sup>4</sup> Drs. HOWARD HUMPHRIS and STUART-WEBB point out that comparatively few books exist that attempt to deal with the subject of physiotherapeutics in its entirety, on account of the extent of the ground. They state quite correctly: "To do so, or to attempt to do so, is no easy matter." When a science grows with the development of knowledge there are only two ways of tackling it fully—namely, by a large volume or a series of volumes, to which acknowledged leaders in the subdivisions of the subject contribute full sections; or by a somewhat expanded précis. The authors have chosen the second of these methods, and have been assisted by Mr. Hayward Pinch on radium, Mr. Frank Romer on massage and manipulation, and Dr. Gordon Watson on hydrotherapy and spa treatment. They frankly state that all they attempt to do is to "condense the subject in a simple manner and present it so that it may be readily understood. In doing so, much detail has had to be omitted; but it is hoped that enough has been retained to enable the general practitioner, or consultant, to realize the class of case suitable for physiotherapeutic treatment, and enable the practitioner who has made physiotherapy his specialty

<sup>3</sup> *St. Bartholomew's Hospital Reports*, vol. lxiii. London: J. Murray, 1930. (Pp. xxv + 277; 19 illustrations. Price to subscribers 15s., to non-subscribers 21s.)

<sup>4</sup> *Physiotherapy, its Principles and Practice*. By F. Howard Humphris, M.D., F.R.C.P.Ed., and Ralph E. Stuart-Webb, M.B., B.S. London: J. Cape. 1930. (Pp. 384; 74 figures. 15s. net.)

to realize the measure appropriate to the malady and to use it with skill and success." It is in the light, therefore, of this position that this book must be read, and consequently the index is of prime importance. Making haphazard selection among conditions about which the general practitioner might want to know whether physiotherapeutic measures were of value, or the specialist whether added information with regard to technique could be secured, the index was consulted as to fractures, gout, hypertrichosis, tennis elbow, radium and keloid, and telangiectasis. To the first and last of these the index gave no reference; for the remainder, one or more page references could be found where interesting accounts were obtainable. The paragraphs on hypertrichosis were particularly practical in the instructions given, including the authors' specific warning against the use of x rays in this condition. If the book suffers somewhat from the very restrictions the authors have placed upon themselves, they should be given full credit for their attempt on an extremely difficult task. The pages on the static current make interesting reading, as it is clear that they are "spoken from the heart" of an expert technician.

## BACTERIOLOGICAL TECHNIQUE

The third edition of Professor J. W. H. EYRE'S *Bacteriological Technique*<sup>5</sup> is very similar to the last edition published seventeen years ago. A certain number of new methods are described, and since the majority of the old ones have been retained, there is a slight increase in the size of the book. One chapter has been added, entitled "Methods of testing pathogenesis and establishing active immunity." Technique is so essentially a personal acquisition that it must be very difficult for an author to decide what to include in a book dealing with this subject. He cannot hope to please everybody, and he is liable to sin as much by omission as commission. In the present volume we can find no description of the various methods of performing a microscopical count of bacteria, of preparing vaccines, or of examining faeces, urine, or cerebro-spinal fluid. Comparatively little space is provided for describing the agglutination of bacteria; Dreyer's method, which in its original or slightly modified form is used in most large laboratories in this country, is not mentioned; and nothing is said of the mode of preparation of the various partial antigens which are so valuable in the diagnosis of enteric fever and food poisoning. Similarly the recent methods of estimating the amount of precipitin and precipitinogen in a mixture receive no notice. The bacteriophage is considered briefly, but there is nothing to help the unskilled in the management of the filterable viruses; a chapter on this subject would have been of value. The book contains a considerable amount of useful technical information, and will doubtless prove helpful to certain workers.

## NOTES ON BOOKS.

In four lectures collected under the title *Individual Psychology and General Medicine*,<sup>6</sup> Dr. F. G. CROOKSHANK seeks to present the essential features of the psychological teaching associated with the name of Adler, and to show how this teaching may be applied effectively in the arts of medical diagnosis and medical treatment. While his space is limited he makes successful use of it, and he presents his argument in an emphatic fashion and illustrates it by individual experiences. He has some words of scorn for the medical outlook which finds a full explanation of disease in the post-mortem room, or of symptoms in the laboratory, yet his real purpose is not to throw aside either one or the other, but to add to

<sup>5</sup> *Bacteriological Technique*. By J. W. H. Eyre, M.D., M.S., F.R.S.Ed. Third edition. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox. 1930. (Pp. xii + 619; 238 figures. 21s. net.)

<sup>6</sup> Cambridge: *Psyche*. 1930. (1s. post free.)