Reviews.*

Psychology. A Study of Mental Life.
By R. S. Woodworth, Ph.D. Pp. 580. Methuen & Co., Ltd., London. 8s. 6d.

In this comparatively short volume Dr. Woodworth, who is the Professor of Psychology in Columbia University, has collected his experience of the teaching of his subject in a convenient form for presentation to both the student and the general reader, the keynote throughout being the treatment of mental life by the methods of scientific investigation, which is to say that the author gives the facts regarding the mind so far as they are known and established, while with theories he is relatively little concerned.

His method of delimiting his subject is characteristic of the practical aspect of the book as a whole, and is as follows:—

"Psychology is a part of the scientific study of life, being the study of mental life. Life consisting in process or action, psychology is the scientific study of mental processes or activities. A mental activity is typically, though not universally, conscious; and we can roughly designate as mental those activities of a living creature that are either conscious themselves or closely related to those that are conscious. Further, any mental activity can also be regarded as a physiological activity in which case it is analysed into the action of bodily organs, whereas as "mental" it simply comes from the organism or individual as a whole. Psychology, in a word, is the science of the conscious and near-conscious activities of living individuals.

Psychology is not interested either in dead bodies or in disembodied spirits, but in living and acting individuals."

From the foregoing it will be seen that technicalities, though necessary in a textbook such as this is, can be made as easy to read and as intelligible when they have to do with Psychology as with any department of knowledge, and there is no more fascinating subject than the study of mind. Life becomes much more interesting the more we know of the world around us, and in no instance is this more true than in regard to that part of our life which has to do with our social contacts. To be sure, the scientific interest in the mental activities of ourselves and our fellows involves an attitude which demands the sinking of our personal feelings, for to science there is no question of right or wrong, of praise or blame, but in Dr. Woodworth's words: "... some experience with the psychological attitude is of practical value to anyone, in giving clearer insight, more toleration, better control, and even saner standards of living."

The physiological basis of the mind, as revealed in the functioning of the Nervous System, always a difficult matter for the general reader to grasp, is dealt with simply but adequately, and by various considerations the reader is led gently from the conception of activity as a pure reflex reaction to a stimulus, to that of a complicated series of responses dominated by a purpose as a foreshadowing of an end or aim. These earlier chapters emphasise the fact that the mind is a part of life's activity, that it itself is a form of activity and that all the components which go to make up the total mind are so too. By arranging his material in this way the author avoids the building up of the mind as a compound structure from elemental conceptions which have no life in them, and as he develops his subject through the succeeding chapters on Instinct, Emotions, Feeling, Sensation, Attention, Intelligence, etc., the reader can never lose sight of the fact that the matters treated upon are living reactions which, in themselves, are different aspects of that grand total which we call mental life, and which, by their fine elaboration in the highest creation of the process of evolution, the human being, render possible and effective that complicated life we lead at the present day. Memory, for in-

* All the books reviewed in these pages are now in the Mental Welfare Library.
stance, is not a thing but a function whose purpose is to introduce useful experiences of the past into the present reaction so that we may re-act the more effectively to the situation we are now facing.

In the emphasis on the factual basis of knowledge, in the constant correlation between the two aspects of mental life—the internal or subjective, and the external or objective—and in the clear exposition of all mental processes as subservient to the conscious purpose of the organism and the necessity for making that purpose effective, this book is a welcome corrective to the prevalence of a certain type of psychological writing which would lead the unsuspecting and therefore easily led initiate into a belief that disorder and disruption were the dominating forces operating in the darkness of the unconsciousness among a mob of conflicting mental entities which would obey no higher law than that of their own being.

Following each chapter the author sets a series of questions which, by making the reader think over the subject matter and re-arrange it in his own mind, ensures that the knowledge contained shall be stored properly and usefully in relation to real practical life, and the book can be confidently recommended to all workers in the many provinces of Psychology, as a lucid, interesting and adequate survey of the subject which gives a sane and acceptable account of the modern knowledge of the 'Mind.'

THOMAS BEATON.

The Kingdom of Evils. Psychiatric Social Work presented in One Hundred Case Histories together with a classification of Social Divisions of Evil. By E. J. Southard, M.D., late Bullard Professor of Neuropathology, Harvard Medical School, and Mary C. Jarrett, Associate Director, Smith College Training School for Social Work. Allen & Unwin. 24/-

This is, especially from the Social Student's point of view, one of the best—if not the best—text-book I have come across. The case material is clear, ample, and adequately illustrates the special sections under which it is grouped. The book itself covers a wide field of necessary social and medical work with a breadth of outlook and an absence of dogmatism that is very unusual, stimulating to thought and making for progressive work.

The cases described and discussed range from those of simple family nuisances to those of incipient or Borderland mental disease. Emphasis is laid on the need of the "individualisation of diagnosis and treatment of Psychiatric cases." In other words each case must be treated by the methods best suited to itself—there is no one treatment applicable to all cases, a fact that opponents of particular psychological systems would do well to remember. Another point which this work clearly establishes—a point which I have appreciated for some time, as a personal difficulty, in out-patient psychological work—is the need for, value and scope of, a Social Service in Psychopathic work. We in Britain have a slight attempt at such a service in our greatly overworked Probationary Officers at Juvenile Courts and in a very few other directions, but the immense therapeutic value of a Social Service on the lines indicated in this book has not yet had even the glimmerings of recognition, although it clearly must be an essential factor in the success of any form of Psycho-therapeutic Clinic Work.

Those engaged in Mental Welfare work will find this book of great practical value, for it can contribute to the solution of many problems. Those interested in the national problem of Mental Hygiene, in its broadest sense, will find many new avenues of thought opened up, and many new lines of approach indicated. The book deserves the widest publicity.

E. A. HAMILTON-Pearson.

Addresses to Mental Nurses. A series of fifteen lectures delivered to the Nursing Staff of the Retreat, York, by various Authorities. Edited by Bedford Pierce, M.D., F.R.C.P. Baillière, Tyndall & Cox., 1924. Pp. 288. 7/6.
The appearance of this book is specially welcome at a time when there is a particular need for public enlightenment on the problems which are the daily task of the Medical and Nursing Staff of mental hospitals.

These lectures, delivered at the Retreat during a period of years by many distinguished Psychiatrists, deal with mental nursing from divers points of view. They throw a broad light upon the advance made in this branch of nursing and render justice to the spirit of devotion with which this work is being undertaken. The editor himself contributes two of the lectures, the first of which is an admirable historical summary dealing with the lives and work of William Tuke and Philippe Pinel, those great reformers to whose enlightened initiative and courage the world owes so large a debt of gratitude, and to the former of whom the Retreat owes its origin.

Among the lecturers will be found such names as Bevan-Lewis, Clouston, Mercier and Savage. The philosophical as well as the ethical and scientific aspect of nursing is dealt with, and an excellent description of what a modern mental hospital is, and aims at, is given by Dr. C. Hubert Bond.

Every training school for nurses should possess this volume. The addresses which contain much general information are excellent reading and several of them are written with a charming humour and are punctuated with anecdotes. On many subjects, as for example, occupation therapy, treated by Dr. Henry Devine, there is matter for much reflection, as well as instruction which will be found but scantily dealt with in text books, and the whole series provides a stimulating lesson which others besides nurses may profit by, and thereby rise to higher things.

A short biography of the contributor precedes each address.

Dr. Bedford Pierce, who has recently vacated the directorship of the Retreat, is to be congratulated upon the publication of this volume, and it is not too much to say that it cannot fail materially to disseminate the highest ideals of mental nursing and attract to it educated men and women who are actuated by some of that love and charity which distinguished Florence Nightingale.

G.F.B.

**The Physical Education of Dull and Backward Children.** By Miss M. I. Fernyhough and Mr. E. Major, Organising Inspectors of Physical Training, Nottingham Education Committee.

This little pamphlet describes the scheme of Physical Training in force in the Special Schools and Classes of Nottingham, and should be of great value to Special School teachers and teachers of Dull and Backward children throughout the country.

The pamphlet sets out the principles upon which successful physical training of subnormal children must be based and gives outlines of "typical lessons" and lists of classified exercises specially suited for the purpose. It also contains twenty illustrations.

Copies of the pamphlet can be obtained from Mr. Ernest Major, Instructor of Physical Education, South Parade, Nottingham. Price 1/- post free.