BOOK REVIEWS

Out of My Life and Work. By August Forel. Translated by Bernard Miall. W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., New York. 1937. 343 pages and index. Price $3.75.

Dr. August Forel will be remembered as one of a distinguished group of psychiatrists who were invited to lecture at the jubilee celebration under the auspices of Stanley Hall at Clark University in 1909. He was born near Morges, Switzerland. Throughout his youth he was bashful and diffident. He says of himself that partly by reason of his mother's training and partly by temperament he was incredibly bashful and timid, a defect that embittered his whole youth. It made him terribly ashamed, for example, for anyone to see his bare feet. He would never make use of a toilet room unless the door could be locked from the inside.

Being a lonely child and accustomed to playing in the garden, he early became interested in studying the habits of ants and wasps. His interest in myrmecology became a life-long devotion. His collection of ants in the course of years became the most complete of any in Europe and in his old age he made journeys to other countries of Europe, South and Central America, Canada, Africa and Turkey, spending part of his time in the study of the ants of those countries and adding specimens to his collection. He published numerous articles upon this subject.

At an early age his interest turned to medicine and though attempts were made by an uncle, who was a physician, to dissuade him, he persisted in his position and matriculated at the University of Zürich. His interest having been directed into the field of neurology and psychiatry, he secured an appointment to the asylum at Burghölzli. At the time of his appointment there the asylum was in a wretchedly disorganized state. Drunkenness and dishonesty among the warders (attendants) and dishonest practices on the part of officers had created a situation which he described as a "terrible mess." The director had been removed on charges and Forel had been appointed assistant physician. He was apparently placed in a senior position and undertook the reorganization of the institution. It was necessary for him to have the rules or laws governing the institution modified so that the superintendent would be in complete authority. His account of the reorganization of the Berghölzli asylum is an interesting narrative. He found a few individuals among the employees who were honest and who had disapproved of the corruption rampant in the institution and by the aid
of this nucleus and his authority of dismissal, he gradually built up an organization of high scientific and material effectiveness. Soon appointed to the directorship he held the position for 24 years.

Becoming convinced that drunkenness was the root of the disordered condition of the asylum and the principal cause for the admission of patients to the institution, he became an advocate of total abstinence which he himself adopted at the time, and promoted the organization of a league of total abstinence which he founded in many European countries and the establishment of non-alcoholic restaurants in various cities under the auspices of the local chapter of the league, which was called the Good Templars League.

Forel's capacity for work was extraordinary. Besides his directorship of Burghölzli, he was professor of psychiatry in the University of Zürich and head of an international total abstinence society, which demanded much correspondence and attendance upon meetings which sometimes necessitated long journeys. From October 11 to November 28 on a lecture tour, he gave 35 lectures in leading cities in Germany, Austria and Bohemia on subjects which would now be classified under mental hygiene. He was equally diligent in his attendance upon psychiatric and other medical congresses and other national societies, and took a leading part in the proceedings.

In 1897 he realized that he had been for some years working at the limit of his capacity and he was beginning to realize that he was no longer able to keep up with his exacting tasks. He determined to retire from Burghölzli and his university connection for, said he, "I had a horror of those aged professors who hang on eternally, a trial to their hearers and an injury to their university. In the interest of the students, one should retire before he lapses into senile imbecility. I should have soon completed my fiftieth year." He wanted liberty, not to be idle but to work more thoroughly and effectively. He was succeeded in the directorship of the asylum by Bleuler.

Forel then settled at the village of Morges and Chigny where he established himself in practice, but appears to have spent much time as a total abstinence advocate. His interests were broad and he could have achieved distinction in any one of several fields. Though best known in America as a psychiatrist and institution reformer, he was a popular and forceful lecturer in the University of Zürich and made important contributions to the anatomy and physiology of the brain. His two absorbing avocations were social welfare and myrmecology.

The autobiography is the conscientious presentation of his life's work and he gives intimate glimpses of his inner self, his conflicts and con-
victions. It is to be regretted that in the preparation of his manuscript for publication some omissions and alterations were thought necessary. It may have been because of his sharp criticism of some of his contemporaries, in which he indulged quite freely throughout the text. He maintained his liberty of thought until his death which occurred in 1931 at the advanced age of 83 years.

Treatment in Psychiatry. By Oskar Diethelm, M. D. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1936. 476 pages. Price $4.00.

This volume covers the subject of psychiatric therapy in fewer than 500 pages, yet it succeeds in giving the reader a clear orientation in this field; a field which covers a wealth of material and is complicated by diverse schools of thought and dissenting views among disciples of the same school. The book is written with the emphasis on the school of psychobiology, a fact of which the author warns in his preface by stating ‘... this whole book is based on the teaching and methods of treatment of Dr. Adolf Meyer.’ Fortunately he is in an unassailable position to expound the theory and practical applications of psychobiology because of his close association with Dr. Meyer at Johns Hopkins over a period of 10 years. In any branch of psychotherapeutic thought such an attitude and association might be detrimental to the scope of the type of work but in this particular work we find the teachings and practices of other schools expounded clearly and fairly even though in an elementary way. Among the methods which are described are those of formal psychoanalysis, individual psychology, analytical psychology, group analysis, will therapy, persuasion and reeducation with, of course, special emphasis on the psychobiological distributive analysis and synthesis. With the main elements of these methods presented, the reader is given the opportunity to delve further into the various schools through a list of highly selected references at the end of each chapter.

Having disposed of the theoretical aspects of psychiatric treatment in the first quarter of the book, the author proceeds to describe general therapeutic methods, discussing them as applied not to rigid diagnostic entities but rather to more elastic classifications according to symptom-complexes and presenting symptoms. In this portion of the work a neat balance is struck between optimism and pessimism, between enthusiasm and nihilism and between procedures and precautions. Scattered freely throughout these chapters are cases illustrative of the recommended treatment under the various headings. These cases appear to be particularly well chosen from the point of view of therapeutic achievement and fortunately for the narcissism of the prospective reader do not stress perfect end-results. In general, the
author's expressions are clear although some statements are ambiguous and
difficult of interpretation, a fault which may be explained by the necessary
condensation.

As an attempt to provide the student and practitioner with a working out-
line of modern psychiatric theory, a compendium of the treatment of mental
illness and a starting point for further study of the questions involved,
this book is a success and can be unreservedly recommended. From one
viewpoint it furnishes a rapid review of the enormous strides which have
been made in psychiatric treatment in the last 50 years and from the other
it leaves the reader with a distinct impression that further enormous strides
must be made before entirely adequate therapy will be available for the so-
lution of psychiatric problems. Both points are necessary, the one for en-
thusiasm and the other for resolve.

Practical Examination of Personality and Behavior Disorders.
Adults and children. By Kenneth E. Appel, M. D., Ph.D., Sc.D.,
and Edward A. Strecker, M. D., A. M., Sc.D. The Macmillan Com-
pany, New York, 1936. 219 pages. Price $2.00.

This is a practical and helpful book for the young psychiatrist and others
not so young may read it with profit. As the title implies, the authors pre-
sent suggestions for obtaining information for the complete understanding
of psychiatric patients and problem children, including cases seen in in-
stitutions and in mental hygiene clinics. In addition to the outlines for
making psychiatric records, there are useful suggestions for obtaining the
required information by utilizing the history of the patient and the proper
conduct of personal interviews.

Particularly to be commended is the chapter on the art and practice of
psychiatric examinations. The importance of establishing a satisfactory
rapport between the psychiatrist and the patient is dwelt upon. Perhaps
the commonest fault of less skillful and practised psychiatrists is disclosed
when they attempt to obtain information from patients by questioning
them. In no other situation can one distinguish so readily the well-trained
psychiatrist from the tyro. In this situation, blunt and untactful questions
result, in the case of sensitive patients, in defeating the very purpose for
which the examination is undertaken. Opposition is aroused and the patient
becomes apprehensive and puts himself on the defensive. One gets no-
where if he disturbs the patient by touching upon intimate topics before the
latter has been prepared for the question. It is better to lead up to the
wanted information and give the patient an opening to volunteer whatever
revelations he is prepared to make. If nothing is volunteered, it is better to
pass on to other topics and return to the point, even again and again. For if the patient once makes a denial, the subject is practically sealed from further investigation and with it associated and collateral material which is often of greater importance than that which is encompassed by the question.

Fruitful psychiatric examinations cannot be made in a routine manner or done hurriedly. The psychoanalysts have taught us the importance of establishing a satisfactory relationship between the patient and the physician which is emotional in its nature and based upon feelings of confidence and dependence upon the latter, which other doctors have not been able to accomplish. Direct questions, when they concern the intimate life of the patient, his relations to his family and his religious doubts and conflicts, should be postponed until the occasion is appropriate. It is for the patient, at this point, to take the lead, encouraged by the attitude of the examiner and his manifest interest in what is being said rather than by questions addressed to him. The examiner should scrupulously avoid the attitude of authority or of inherent right to know what he is seeking. His attitude should be that of a friend eager to give assistance but particularly he must avoid giving advice or making suggestions; rather should he encourage the patient to seek his own solutions to his conflicts by rehearsing the situations to the physician. These and other useful suggestions are included which cannot fail to be of value to the young psychiatrist whose attention has not been called to the importance of a refined technique. Though the point is touched upon, the authors might well have given greater emphasis to the warning against questions which are so phrased as to suggest what reply is expected. Some individuals are so sensitive to suggestion and so ill at ease and anxious to put themselves in the best light, while others are so much inclined to follow along the lines of least resistance, that they will answer what the doctor apparently expects to hear and the real truth often is not disclosed. Nearly always there are modifying circumstances, partial convictions and doubts which are entirely missed if the answer is called for in terms of yes and no.

The book is recommended as a useful addition to psychiatric literature.

The Psychology of Abnormal People. With educational applications. By John J. B. Morgan, Ph.D. Second edition. Longmans, Green and Company, New York, 1936. 592 pages and index. Illustrated. Price $3.25.

If there were only one basic observation that a student could gain from a course in "abnormal" psychology, it should be the complete revision of any faulty concepts he may have held concerning normality and abnormal-
ity. To quote from the preface of Morgan's second edition: "When the abnormalities in human mental life are discussed as aberrations of normal traits, the study of abnormal psychology becomes an excellent way to give the students an indelible knowledge of the laws of mental health." Lacking such a starting point, the student is prey to the old tendency to regard normal and abnormal as strict dichotomies, with no shading off from one level to the other. It is indeed difficult if not futile, to seek the benefits that would derive from a course restricted to "normal" psychology.

Thus, when Morgan opens his text with the statement that life is a process of adjustment, that adjustment is relative, and then takes pains to explain the criteria of normality, he is establishing in the student's search for knowledge an unbiased point of view and a proper sense of direction for the further examination of human nature.

Later in the first chapter the author offers a "condensed grouping of mental disorders," whose arrangement is based on ease of diagnosis. Feeblemindedness heads the list, while psychopathic personality (ostensibly most difficult of diagnosis) appears at the end. Had Morgan assembled the subsequent text on the plan of this condensed classification, one would admit in part the plausibility of the revision, but since this is not the case, such rearrangement of the classified nomenclature adopted by the American Psychiatric Association seems an unnecessary and possibly a misleading procedure. Ease of diagnosis, moreover, is a none too reliable standard for such revision.

Disorders of perception are especially well delineated, the illustrations here as elsewhere in the book showing care in selection. It is strange that although the gestalt point of view is presented (pages 78-80), the word "gestalt" cannot be found in either text or index. It will remain to the student to read Koffka, Kohler, or "The Science of the Living Organism" of Goldstein, to resolve his questions on the score of field and ground. The chapter on sleep and dreams is handled well, particularly the section entitled " Dreams as Personality Indicators."

Following each chapter are a glossary, projects for further study and a list of references. The glossaries are virtually free of misinterpretations, the projects for the greater part are constructive and provocative to further study, and the references impartially chosen. The Psychology of Abnormal People is a fundamental text, lucidly written and unhampered by a doctrinaire attitude. It is of especial worth to teachers, general students of psychology, social workers and parents.
Frigidity in Women. Its characteristics and treatment. By Edward Hirschmann, M. D., and Edmund Bergler, M. D. Authorized translation by Polly Leeds Weil of New York. Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Company, Washington and New York, 1936. 76 pages. Price $2.00.

This monograph aims to elucidate the psychological origin of frigidity in women. It depicts sexual frigidity as a pathological inhibition. It stresses the frequency of faulty libido evolution in women and points to Freudian psychoanalysis as the cure in many instances.

The authors discuss libido development in the female as compared to that of the male and point out characteristics of female sex life. An attempt is made to clarify the symptom complex through a classification based on symptomatology, degrees and etiology of frigidity. Numerous examples from actual practice illustrate the authors' viewpoint. Two detailed histories and cures through analysis are instructive.

The authors are quite optimistic and postulate that they can mobilize the forces and the capacity for libidinal satisfaction through psychoanalytical treatment in the majority of cases.

The last chapter stresses prophylactic aspects and suggests that frigidity should be prevented by enlightenment of the girl, by an adequate parent-child relation and by proper preparation for marriage. Good mental hygiene should do away with "psychisms" which interfere with psychosexual adequacy and successful marriage.

The monograph "Frigidity in Women" is a valuable contribution to psychoanalytical literature and is a good clinic study of an important symptom. The book is of interest and assistance to the physician who tries to understand and treat sexual maladjustment in women.

A Mind Mislaid. By Henry Collins Brown. E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., New York, 1937. 219 pages. Price $2.00.

A Mind Restored. The story of Jim Curran. By Miss Kauch. Introduction by William Seabrook. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1937. 242 pages. Price $2.50.

Evidently a vogue is upon us, inspired by Beers' "A Mind That Found Itself" and Hillyer's "Reluctantly Told," and given impetus by the rating last year of Seabrook's "Asylum" among the best selling nonfiction. Certain of this "true story" writing is bound to achieve some benefit in public enlightenment on modern psychiatric treatment. Perhaps no planned program of mental hygiene propaganda could have so vivid an effect as that
of these personal accounts. A former patient who has an interesting tale to relate and can in the course of its narration dissipate antiquated notions and gruesome myths that still prevail concerning such institutions, does service to the mental hygiene movement, and consequently to his fellow man.

A Mind Mislaid offers something of a problem in criticism. One chafes at the all too obvious effort of the author to be amusing. Brown is full of quips and epigrams about all phases of mental hospital life. Throughout the book one encounters a curious mélange of worthwhile information and unadulterated burlesque. For example, a chapter entitled "Our Suicide Club" strikes the reviewer as being too far on the satirical side to merit unqualified approval; yet in this chapter Brown assures the relatives and friends of the mentally disordered that in these institutions every possible precaution is taken to safeguard against self-destruction. The general tone of the book is decidedly light, often vernacular, and Brown's humor is not always infectious; several of the anecdotes are threadbare, only clever re-statement warranting their inclusion.

This author was already a writer of moderate accomplishments before the present undertaking and he seems to be fairly well informed. However, one gains the impression that he is grinding an axe. He devotes his first chapter to what might be termed either an apologia or a sardonic comment on his cruel fate, in which he belies his later admonition to others to put the past behind them. Brown is given to moralizing, for in a chapter entitled "Fearful Causes of Mental Breakdowns" he turns his guns on "love nests" and the "curse of alcohol." Perhaps one should not have expected a layman to discern whether such "fearful causes" are really causes or consequences of mental disorder. He also clings to the term "nervous breakdown," which is wisely rejected in the other book herewith reviewed. A doleful picture is painted of the "incurables" in which he intimates that chronic cases are closed books to the staff of an institution (he refers to a "life sentence"). This may, however, be charged off to dramatization, a dangerous trap for writers of this type of book.

Brown seems to believe that the "hospital exchange," where patients may purchase moderate luxuries, is a most recent development, and that it is to be found only in "some of the newer institutions." Further investigation is recommended to him, on this score as well as in his unbounded enthusiasm for sterilization. That they may not swallow his program before masticating thoroughly, general readers are referred to the report of the committee on sterilization of the American Neurological Association, published last year in book form.
Despite the above criticisms, Brown's account is a fair and at times engaging picture of the modern psychiatric institution; there is some confusion in his frequent reference to State hospitals, while he clearly indicates that he was a patient in a private institution. Yet this can be overlooked in the light of whatever educational benefit may derive from the story.

A Mind Restored presents an entirely different character. It is strictly a chronicle. Some recollections of childhood in the second chapter (“These Things I Remember”) indicate strong guilt feelings linked with an Oedipus situation. Failure in a love affair seemed to be a precipitating factor in the mental collapse described, but as one doctor told the patient, the condition had been incipient long before the crisis presented itself.

Jim Curran had the misfortune to be sent to a private institution belonging to an almost extinct era. His experience left him somewhat resentful, but he does not now express bitterness toward modern psychiatric treatment. The institution, he states, no longer exists. The bulk of the narrative records the subject’s impressions while in a state hospital in New England. Throughout there is a tone of deep appreciation of the kind attentions of the personnel, particularly the subtle manner in which one physician develops his self-confidence. One meets with innumerable instances of tact and kindliness, wherein the patient discovered, perhaps to his surprise, that the hospital officers and employees did not strive to coerce him, but rather asked for this cooperation in maintaining regulations.

The stamp of sincerity is plain in this book. It is a sober account, written, as is A Mind Mislaid, in the first person. The continuity of the narrative is maintained throughout. While the writer does not plumb the depths of his psychic experiences, he gives to the public a readable and commendable bit of comment on modern treatment of mental disorder.

**Sex Life in Marriage.** By Oliver M. Butterfield, M. A. Emerson Books, Inc., New York, 1937. 192 pages. Price $2.00.

There is a rational viewpoint and a fulfillment of the need for fact-facing in this brief, instructive manual for the married and the to-be-married. The psychodynamics of sex occupies but little space, and is superficially treated, probably with an eye to the incapacity of the general reader for proper interpretation of depth psychology. However, in a practical sense the chapter devoted to Overcoming Sexual Maladjustment should reap profit among newlyweds and seasoned spouses alike.

Unquestionably a layman’s book, this work presents a logical sequence of material, even to the inclusion, at the proper point, of a chapter entitled
Planning the Honeymoon. This section struck the reviewer as being a bit naïve, particularly the paragraphs on "comfortable beds."

The author has credentials that qualify him in his subject, for he served as assistant in child development and parent education at Teachers College, Columbia University. Medical journals have favorably received his earlier work, a pamphlet called Marriage and Sexual Harmony, which enjoyed a wide circulation. His doctorate in philosophy pends the completion of a dissertation on Love Problems of the Adolescent. It is to be hoped that he will publish his findings thereupon in a work as clear and concise as the book under review.

The New City. By NATHAN FIALKO. Translated from the Russian and revised by the author. Margent Press, 1937. 153 pages. Price $2.00.

There is a story of life under regimentation. The hypothetical state herein described recognizes two classifications of individuals—Regular People and Irregular People. There is no element in the life of the citizen that is not charted for him in advance: "When the district whistle blew time, the inhabitants of the district, all perfect human beings, with the agreeably melodious beats of the house-clock ringing in their ears, went to their bedrooms, and without delay enveloped their strong and wholesome bodies in nightgowns; then they placed themselves in the right positions in bed and fell asleep." This is the conclusion of a day in which Regular People have eaten prescribed meals, read prescribed books, done prescribed labor and witnessed prescribed entertainments.

Manifestations of crime such as were known in the Calamitous Age (our own era) are so rare as to be subjects for profound clinical discussion by the psychological commission. More readily recognized as a "criminal tendency" is any deviation from established routine; this too is referred to the psychological commission. Preparation for marriage involves a long lecture course following which classified couples are assigned to classified homes where they will undoubtedly raise classified children. Despite the ghastly picture of monotony that is presented, one cannot remain blind to the value of some modification of the "training course" which, properly administered, could appreciably lower our divorce rate and obviate much of the grief that follows in the wake of psychosexual maladjustment.

For those who enjoy fencing in social theory, this work should prove absorbing. Specific characters, preserved throughout the book, help to give the reader a sustained narrative and lend a personal color to what would otherwise be pretty dull reading.