This book is essentially meant for the student or practitioner who has little or no previous experience of psychiatry and, whilst it is by no means the ideal textbook for this purpose, it can justifiably be included amongst the better books in this field. Its bibliography is an excellent one and since it is a book which may well stimulate further reading, this is a most valuable point in its favour.

T.A.R.

Psychiatry: Theory and Practice for Students and Nurses. By H. C. Beccle, M.B., M.R.C.P., D.P.M. Faber. 17s. 6d.

This book sets out to provide a concise and accessible body of knowledge about the fundamentals of psychiatry for the use of nurses and students. It certainly succeeds in this aim; it is well set out, has excellent diagrams of the nervous system and its subject matter is clear and arranged in an orderly systematic way which will make it easy to find and to understand. It is thus an excellent book of reference, as which no doubt it is primarily intended. These very qualities will, however, militate against its value as an introduction for newcomers to the subject; for the amount of material packed into its pages—which have nowadays to be printed so closely—and the author's concise style make continuous reading rather heavy. This is, perhaps, an inevitable defect. What is rather more serious is that the book pays less regard than is due to treatment, and gives little advice to the nurse or student as to the effect their own behaviour may have on the patient's well-being. Nor is there much said about the sociological aspects of mental illness, although the publisher's cover recommends it to occupational therapists and probation officers.

Nevertheless, these are small criticisms of a book which is likely to be a valuable reference work, and deserves a place in the library of all nursing and medical schools.

R.F.T.

Psychology and the Parish Priest. By Lindsay Dewar, B.D. A. R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd., London and Oxford. 5s.

Canon Dewar's book is very timely. At the International Congress on Mental Health, held in August, 1948, in London, emphasis was frequently laid on the fact that the parson was a member of the mental health team. The antipathy between the exponent of the young and growing science of human behaviour and authoritarian religion, has prevented the co-operation which would be of mutual benefit to both. The Church traditionally has resisted advances in the field of science, as witness its persecution of Galileo, Darwin, Freud and others. Very few now disagree with the findings of the earlier scientists, and it is a pity that the theologians should base their attack on psychological hypotheses that have been modified in the light of findings during the last 20 years. Similarly, the

psychologists, both medical and lay, base their attack on religion on outworn theology. This book seeks to combine the two disciplines, and points the way to a field common to both.

One large stumbling block in the co-operation between the medical psychologists and the parson, is on the question of auto-erotism. In most cases the psychiatrist looks on this as a phase in normal development. Occasionally it becomes a symptom of a deeper disharmony, and, as the author rightly points out, the treatment of this underlying disharmony is the obvious method of attack. He quite rightly says that the first thing to be done is to bring maladjustments to light. It is disappointing to find that later on in the same section he refers to the symptom as a "troublesome sin". This suggests a state of ambivalence and does not make clear that the problem may be one of sin, sickness, or a normal phase of development.

Be this as it may, this book is a great advance on the rigid denunciatory attitude of the Church as a whole who, in refusing to co-operate with this new science, is not following the steps of its predecessors who used the invention of printing for dissemination of the "Good News" by the written word. After all, the psychiatrist and the priest use the same method. To use the words of Hans Prinzhorn, the eminent continental psychiatrist, "It is the love of the physician that heals the patient."

A.T.

The Family and Democratic Society. By Joseph Kirk Folsom, Professor of Sociology, Vassar College, U.S.A., with chapters in collaboration with Marion Bassett. Routledge & Kegan Paul. 30s.

The quality of this book is very variable. Professor Folsom has sought to write a comprehensive summary of the family, a source book covering all its aspects, and has drawn his data from a wide number of fields—psychology, economics, religion, anthropology, and sociology. It follows that many of the sections are but brief summaries of the work of others, a compression of the subject matter of books into a few lines, as in the 30-page section on a world survey of family patterns. This gives to the book an air of superficiality, a breathless feeling and often a tabloid quality.

But I know of no other book which seeks to cover all the varied subjects mentioned in this one. There are sections on primitive family life and on the theory of its origin, the influence of modern social change, the measurement and prediction of marital happiness, causes and treatment of marital frustrations, the comparative legal status and demography of marriage, mate selection, housing, trends in "home making" and education for family life, to mention but a few of the main ones. The bringing together of all this information, often a work of collation, is very useful and many a

university student will find his burden of reading lightened by a perusal of this book. Professor Folsom in his psychological approach to these problems uses mainly the behaviouristic one and is non-psycho-analytical. Thus, the source of mental ill-health is to be found in the conditioning of the patient to annoyances and irritations of particular situations and places. Relief depends on a "re-conditioning" of the disliked objects by placing them in other more pleasurable contexts, thus creating new habits. Hence the importance Professor Folsom places on frustration in the development of personality. In sociological and anthropological matters, the book is written under the influence of the Linton-Kardiner school. The theory is that each culture, through its primary institutions, attitudes, and patterns of behaviour, gives to the individual a basic personality structure which is characteristic of that culture. The personality is built "round the pattern of reaction to the frustration of purposes arising from several causes in the culture". The essential problem of such culture, as Folsom notes, lies in the plurality of their ethical systems which often gives rise to a conflict between these different values.

In his discussion of the stage reached by society in its development today, the Muller-Lyer analysis is accepted which finds that the values centre round the person. The essence of this analysis is that a person centred society is dualistic in nature, "it has a structure of places, which must be filled, of jobs and duties which must be carried out. Alongside of this is a network of free developing persons and personal relations which shift about with considerable independence from the formal structure". Institutional structures and the living individual are "kept distinct and the needs of the person have a chance to influence the institutional structure". It is with this in mind that the word "democracy" is included in the title.

At this point, however, Professor Folsom leaves the scientific field to become political and thus blunts the sharpness of his scientific acumen. It would appear that much of this section of the book was written in the days of Stalingrad, and the author is torn between his admiration for Russia fighting fascism and his fear of communism. There is, however, no such conflict in his abounding admiration of the American way of life seen through the tinted spectacles of a laissez-faire liberal of the nineteen hundreds.

The book was clearly written for an American audience and, judging by its many picturesque, sentimental and romantic metaphors (the Oedipus situation being described as a "family romance"), for an audience of blushing school girls, whose delicate sensibilities need protecting. A graver fault for the non-American reader is the paucity of references to the European family or to the present trends in family structure in England or on the Continent. Russia is mentioned in terms of what Soviet policy set out to do, and there is no

scientific analysis of the family there. The family in Sweden is more adequately dealt with, perhaps because Myrdal has written such an excellent book about it. On other matters in Europe the book lags behind the times; thus, Veblen's statement that on the Continent rank depends on occupation rather than upon scale of living is fully accepted. This was certainly true of 1906 Germany but it is doubtful if it holds true to-day. Or again, the French family is seen as dominated by the father which is only true at a very superficial and external level. Likewise it is inaccurate to say that the French woman does not vote.

For students of American life and for all who are curious, the information contained in these 700 pages will have many items of interest. The array of facts is considerable, the range of topics discussed wide, and both facts and topics deal with problems of vital importance to us all to-day.

P.M.T.

Marriage Counselling. The first full account of Remedial Work of the Marriage Guidance Councils. By David R. Mace, M.A., B.Sc., Ph.D. With a foreword by The Rt. Hon. Henry Willink, M.C., K.C. J. & A. Churchill Ltd.: London. 8s.

Whether psychiatrists like it or not, those who are in distress will seek counsel from all and sundry who are in a position of father or mother confessors, even if they do not call themselves by that name. This book, which is very readably written, gives a description of the evolution of the marriage guidance movement and describes the functions, scope, working and techniques of marriage guidance centres. It discusses, very wisely, the qualifications required for counselling, and describes statistically the results of the workings of the largest centre, that in London, based on 1,000 cases—the first 1,000 who sought advice. The research was the result of reports from 17 different counsellors who, no doubt, varied in ability.

The point is made, wisely, that many of the cases came when the condition reached the chronic phase and was not so readily amenable to benefit. The best results were achieved from those who came in "under their own steam". This emphasizes the need for a knowledge by the lay public of the principles of mental health and the facilities for mental health needs. It demands a fuller use of education facilities for health, and there is still little evidence that the National Health Service is doing anything under the section of the Act that provides for this.

One or two interesting facts come out of this service. Elderly bachelors marrying late have a particularly poor adjustment record, while elderly spinsters were average in this respect. That statement opens a whole field of speculation, especially when coupled with the fact that divorced women achieve average happiness in second marriages, but the record of divorced men was