Society and the Homosexual. By Gordon Westwood, 191 pp. Gollancz. 9/6

Homosexuality is one of the great social problems, if not the greatest, on which taboo still hangs heavily. Opinions on it (like those on flogging and hanging) are held with much emotional warmth and little appeal to logic, and they have not even the outlet of free and frank discussion which these others are allowed (and sometimes encouraged). It is curious that this generation's remarkable increase of freedom in discussing other forms of sexual behaviour has not extended to homosexuality.

Mr. Westwood's book is a very sincere and forceful attempt towards more instruction and more rational behaviour. He reiterates the findings of the Kinsey report that 37% of the male population of U.S.A. has had some homosexual experience and sees little reason why the problem should be less important here. This is, he feels, as much due to maladjustment in early childhood as to physiological abnormality—and due also to ignorance or prejudice of teachers and the public; this attitude itself, coupled with the terrible penalties, are very liable to set anyone who has taken the first step on the road to secrecy, misery, and moral and social ruin; prison of course is as unlikely to remove the tendency as "recommending occupational therapy in a brewery for an alcoholic."

Changes in the law and in public opinion are therefore essential, and the first step must be free and frank discussion. Mr. Westwood's very readable and logical presentation deserves to provoke this. Its small size should not disguise its importance; it should be a landmark in the subject. R.F.T.

Primer on Alcoholism. By Marty Mann. Gollancz. 8/6. Pp. 160.

Medical interest is now being focussed on alcoholism in Europe and America; and although in this country the problem is still not well enough recognised to stir the public conscience, very strongly, no one who has had any personal experience of an alcoholic can shut his eyes to the misery and tragedy caused. To the man in the street the sufferer may still be a joke. Yet a recent W.H.O. publication estimates that there are 86,000 chronic cases in England and Wales.

Mrs. Marty Mann's book is a heroic attempt to rouse public opinion and to provide helpful information for all those whose profession leads them into contact with alcoholics. The latter will find it most valuable—short, succinct, yet full of detail, it outlines the various ways in which help can be brought to the patient and his (equally tragic) relatives. There are also notes by Dr. Dent and Dr. Clenaghan on treatment by apomorphine and antabuse respectively.