

of material. On page 205 the author derives the word 'suffocation' from the non-existent Greek word 'αυκω', a mistake that should be remedied in a subsequent edition.

The book is furnished with a glossary and an index.

O. B. H.

NATURE AND TREATMENT OF AMENTIA.—By **Pierce Clark. 1933. Baillière, Tindall and Cox, London. Pp. xvi plus 306. Price, 12s. 6d.**

THE name of Dr. Pierce Clark is well known to many psychotherapists, hence this psycho-analytic approach to the complicated problem of mental deficiency should attract the attention of all who take an interest in the subject. The book is the product of an intensive study of mental defectives during more than thirty years. In summarizing his observations Dr. Pierce Clark is unduly modest in considering that his work has established no new truths, nor determined new methods of approach. He considers his goal to have been the interpretation of the observed facts of amentia and the submission of possibilities for future advance in helping the ament. He begins by a short account of the historical work of Itard and Seguin in France, who were the first to attempt to open up the mind of an idiot. He observes how surprising it is that since Seguin published his famous work on amentia in 1864, hardly any further progress has taken place in the advancement of either the theoretical or the practical aspects of the subject. He then proceeds to a detailed dissection of a selected number of his own cases. From this he passes on to the consideration of some of the practical problems which aments provide. He shows very clearly that the principal object in the treatment and handling of aments is the determination of the direction in which their potentialities can achieve their greatest and most effective expression. This matter leads the author to a very interesting discussion of the part played in the adjustment to reality by the ego and super-ego of the individual, respectively, in which he touches on another problem of great practical interest, that is, a comparison between the so-called moral defective and the actual criminal. Lastly, Dr. Clark discusses the therapeutic problem as it appears to him. He condemns any form of surgical treatment to the skull or cranial contents, and emphasizes the futility of glandular therapy in primary aments where no deficiency of gland function can be found. Dr. Clark is dubious as to the utility of specific treatment in cases of inherited or even early syphilitic involvement. He quotes Seguin's own words in respect to training treatment, namely, that it 'consists in the adaptation of the principles of physiology through physiological means and instruments to the development of the dynamic, perceptive reflections and spontaneous function of youth'. He points out how mental ability depends so fundamentally upon proper sensation as well as upon the special senses and their adequate functioning, hence the importance of utilizing all means possible to place these functions at their highest potential service. Dr. Clark has something to say in the way of criticism of, and advice to, those who undertake to devote their lives to the care of the mentally-enfeebled. He supports Anna Freud's view that the quick stamping out of crude traits of character, *e.g.*, oral sadism, only drives them into deeper grooves so as to block the child's later development. He believes that the feeble-minded are very often handicapped by elements within the teacher's own personality. Thus, not only is the attitude towards the mentally-retarded frequently too protective and too soft, but sometimes too cold and too hard. He urges persons bent on work of this description to submit to psycho-analysis before taking it up and to be careful to ascertain in advance that nature has endowed them with a normal libidinal life. The book is furnished with a good glossary and is well indexed.

O. B. H.

HANDBOOK OF PHYSIOLOGY.—By the late **W. D. Halliburton, M.D., LL.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S.,** and **R. J. S. McDowall, M.B., D.Sc., F.R.C.P. (Edin.).** Thirty-third Edition. **John Murray, London.** Obtainable from **Messrs. Thacker, Spink and Co. (1933), Ltd., Calcutta. Pp. 971. Illustrated. Price, Rs. 13-8**

In an interesting note by the publishers in this edition it is learnt that this ever-popular students' physiology first appeared in 1848 and was written by Kirkes of St. Bartholomew's; it was known as 'Kirkes' Physiology' during its first thirteen editions, notwithstanding that several different editors were in turn concerned in their publication and that the present publishers had taken it over from its original publishers in 1869, when the seventh edition appeared. Professor Halliburton took up the editing of this book in 1896 when its name was changed, its association with St. Bartholomew's ceased, and it became identified with University College. During the thirty-two years that Professor Halliburton edited this book he guided it through seventeen editions. In the preparation of the thirty-second edition he was assisted by Professor McDowall who has succeeded him as Professor of Physiology at University College. The result is that now, since Professor Halliburton's death, Professor McDowall has been entirely responsible for the appearance of the thirty-third edition, and on account of his close association with his senior colleague, both in his teaching and in the editing of this book, complete continuity has been achieved in the style of publication, and the clarity and the simplicity of language has been fully maintained, although some sections of the book have been completely re-written.

It can therefore still be recommended to medical students as a book that will give them an excellent grounding in the subject of physiology. Two changes which are aids to memory have been introduced, one is the printing in thick type of any names and figures that the student should commit to memory, and the other is the inclusion of one or two blank pages for notes, at the end of each chapter; both the innovations enhance the practical value of this always practical book.

It should also be mentioned that the price (eighteen shillings) is very reasonable for such a well produced volume.

AIDS TO PATHOLOGICAL TECHNIQUE.—By **D. H. Haler, M.B., B.S. 1933. Baillière, Tindall and Cox, London. Pp. x plus 183, with 18 figures. Price, 3s. 6d.**

THIS small book of the Students' Aid Series is designed to give the student and other laboratory workers some ideas as to methods which have been found to work best in actual practice. The book is divided into six sections, bacteriology, hæmatology, cytology and parasitology, biochemical methods, preparation of media and stains, and other formulæ. It must have been very difficult for the author to decide what to include in a small book dealing with so vast a subject, and it seems to us a pity that such a subject as 'technique', which is essentially a personal acquisition of the student, should be dealt with in the form of a condensed summary. There are statements with which many pathologists will not be in agreement, and although we grant that in a small book of this type the author cannot hope to please everybody we would draw particular attention to the last paragraph on page 36 where the author in discussing the results of stool examination states:—'If there be no organisms grown on culture, again the stool is abnormal; but remember that if the stool in question be allowed to stand untouched at room temperature for twenty-four hours and then re-planted, a growth of organisms may be obtained. The explanation of this lies in the fact that such stools are usually produced by the too rapid emptying of the gut and the mass has not had time to become thoroughly impregnated with