methods of treatment in psychiatry should not permit reference to a "specific response" to electrically induced convulsions or hypoglycaemic comas, even if the theories expressed in this book should prove to be fundamentally correct. It must be stressed that the first chapter of neuro-biochemistry is, as it were, now being written, and any attempt to incorporate the small body of established facts into a system of psychiatric nomenclature, is at the best a shrewd guess.

If the reader is prepared to overlook these shortcomings, he will find many interesting facets of the neuro-metabolic problem. The author rightly points out that conditions of war expose psychoses at an earlier stage, and draws an enlightening picture of the acute organic-like features which may herald in a psychosis before it crystallizes into its more classical form. This perhaps is the most convincing evidence of a neurometabolic hypothesis, and is backed up by the development at a later stage of phenomena which suggest chronic and progressive organic changes ("secondary deterioration").

The highly controversial nature of the subject matter of this book hardly renders it suitable for general consumption, but experienced psychiatrists should read it. Even its most questionable dictates may arouse something more profitable than righteous indignation!

A.J.G.

The Doctor and the Difficult Child. By William Moodie. Geoffrey Cumberlege. Oxford University Press. 11s. 6d.

Dr. Moodie's book, now in its second edition, is an excellent introduction to Child Guidance for doctors, teachers, parents and anyone interested in the behaviour and the difficulties of children. As the author states in the introduction to the first edition, "it is not a scientific treatise, but rather an informal discussion of fundamental disturbances of behaviour or personality in children". Nevertheless, even the technical experts of the Child Guidance Clinic will find it of value.

It is written in simple language, is free from technicalities and gives a clear and concise account of the nature of the problems presented to a Child Guidance Clinic, the method of investigation, the causes and the treatment.

The book falls into three parts. The first deals with the needs of the child for satisfactory emotional development and indicates the type of deprivation and environmental inadequacy that leads to behaviour disorders. Treatment, by way of providing the optimum conditions for development, is discussed, and finally, direct treatment of the child with particular reference to the use of phantasy, drawing and play in therapy, is briefly considered.

In Part II specific conditions and disorders, their causes and treatment are described and in Part III a further chapter on play therapy is given and a chapter describing the structure and staffing of a Child Guidance Clinic in this country.

If any criticism can be made of this book, having regard to its avowed object, it is that existing environmental factors and their adjustments are stressed almost to the exclusion of deep psychological causes. It is true that this is to some extent remedied in the chapters on play therapy but many readers would like to have heard more of the personal factors—again in the clear non-technical language that is the charm of this book.

R.F.R.

Child Guidance. By William Moodie, M.D., F.R.C.P., D.P.M. Cassell & Co. 4s. 6d.

In this book, Dr. Moodie presents a simple explanation of Child Guidance for the benefit of doctors, teachers and magistrates. He explains in the introduction that "Child Guidance sets out not only to help the individual child who, through handicap or dullness, unstable temperament, or unsettling environment, must bear more than his fair load of difficulty, but to relieve the community of the need to treat, manage, and partially or wholly support these individuals who have become ineffective, disturbing, and a burden because their difficulties were not realized in time"; in other words that *Child Guidance* has a preventive as well as a therapeutic value in the community.

He explains that very few of the children seen at a Child Guidance clinic are mentally disordered; most of them being "involved in complicated family situations or emotional tangles" from which they are unable to extricate themselves.

The book attempts to answer some of the more common criticisms levelled against *Child Guidance* and expresses the opinion that doctors, magistrates, teachers and parents are now more ready to seek advice and help from such clinics.

C.H.S.

Problems of Child Delinquency. By Maud A. Merrill. George Harrap & Co., London. 15s.

This book is a major contribution to the literature on delinquency. Professor Merrill surveys the resources of the clinician in the tasks of assessing social environment and understanding delinquent personalities; and she describes the use of intelligence tests and projective techniques. The behaviour of delinquent children is understandable only in terms of the basic needs of the individual child and of his opportunities, or lack of opportunities, for satisfying those needs. In almost every case there are many contributing factors, social, educational and personal.

Important and clinically tested techniques are brought together and many previous relevant studies are evaluated. The psychodynamics of delinquent children are lucidly described, and illustrated vividly from admirable case records.

The sections on the interests and attitudes of delinquent children and non-delinquent controls, and on motivations, merit careful study; but perhaps the most interesting chapter is that on the use of projective techniques, including play, in exploring the delinquent child's private worlds. Other workers will surely be encouraged to employ such methods more widely. The reader will agree that paper-and-pencil tests of personality yield little reward for the time involved.

The author's experience is that the influence exerted by teachers in personal ways is even more important in the lives of delinquent children than any needs served by curriculum adaptations, a situation worthy of further study.

The factors which influence later social adjustment after treatment are discussed in a final chapter, opening up a wide field for research which has been singularly neglected in Great Britain. The book is richly interspersed throughout with statistical tables. Indeed it is the scrupulous application of scientific principle and method throughout this work which is its principal merit, and it should find a place on the shelves of all workers in this field.

J.D.W.P.