Abnormalities in Normal Children, by C. W. Valentine, M.A.,
D. Phil. Obtainable from National Children's Home, High-
bury Park, London, N. 4/6.

Professor Valentine's book is a reprint of the Convocation Lecture 1951 given at the National Children's Home. In it he deplores the "over readiness to attribute unconscious motives" to the ordinary behaviour of children. He is an exponent of common sense psychology and believes that "lax discipline and over-indulgence are the most important factors in the production of genuine problem children." There is certainly truth in his statement that much of the so-called problem behaviour of children is in fact normal behaviour at certain stages in development, but it is not clear where he would draw the line between the normal and the abnormal nor how the abnormal can best be treated except by taking the children away from their mothers and placing them with someone whose influence is kindly but firm.

Professor Valentine does not appear to believe in the possibility of modifying parental attitudes nor in the value of real parents however imperfect as against foster parents however good. "There is nothing" he says "in the mother relationship that ensures that the mother shall know how best to bring a child up." Granted, but is there nothing in the relationship itself which is worth preserving? Surely it is only by understanding unconscious motives in the behaviour not only of children but of parents, that we are able to help parents to deal with their children and thus preserve family life.

C.H.S.

Disabled Citizens, by Joan Simeon Clarke, with Foreword by Lord Beveridge. Allen & Unwin. 16/.

The disabilities discussed in this book do not include those due to psychiatric illness or mental retardation—omitted, it is stated, for lack of space and time. But throughout its informative chapters the mental health aspect of disability receives due attention.

Cerebral Palsy, T.B., Epilepsy, deafness, and the physical handicaps of school children, are amongst the subjects dealt with; the present position in regard to them is reviewed and the "gaps" pointed out. Prevention rather than treatment is stressed, and how far we have to travel to attain the objective of a really adequate and comprehensive service which makes provision for both these things, is all too clearly demonstrated.

In the chapter on Epileptics, there is an account of the Filadelfia Colony in Denmark which includes a "medically

progressive atmosphere," a diagnostic centre, provision for short stay patients with a view to discharge after observation and therapy, research facilities and provision for deteriorated patients in decentralised small villas with married couples in charge. There is in addition a successful system of boarding out in private families under the Colony's medical supervision, an account of which is reminiscent of Gheel except that the patients are scattered in various villages.

"Successful boarding-out calls for a sort of genius in human relations. How else could a deteriorated and suicidal epileptic be successfully planted on an elderly widow? But if it can be done, how is it that we in Britain do not do the same?"

the writer asks. And why not, indeed?

The chapter on "Children" stresses the vital importance of the time factor in connection with treatment and rehabilitation whether by means of Hospitals Residential Schools or Home Teaching. In cerebral palsy the value of early treatment has recently been strikingly demonstrated, but there are other needs less obvious, which the writer movingly pleads :

"All over the country, handicapped children are *waiting*. They are waiting for treatment—for club feet, cleft palate, hare lip, and a score of other non-urgent conditions which, if neglected, will leave physical and psychological marks; they are waiting for places in special schools, both day and residential; they are waiting for home teachers. Meanwhile their childhood is slipping past and keen minds are growing dull within the prison of a handicap. When adults wait, they suffer hardship and frustration, but when children wait they consume the years of their childhood which can never be replaced."

Chapters dealing with the handicapped adults discuss how far their needs are being met by the machinery of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, and a plea is made for a systematic social service for the house-bound, for residential accommodation for both long-stay and short-stay patients and for holiday facilities.

In the final chapter there is outlined the need for a central voluntary organisation, backed by substantial Government grants, to act as a clearing house of information on all types of facilities for the disabled with mobile consultants and a network of local voluntary organisations throughout the country (recalling in the mind of the reviewer the set-up of the Central Association for Mental Welfare in initiating a similar form of community service for the mentally defective).

There are several Appendices—one describing a Survey in Croydon, undertaken in order to find out the approximate number of the physically handicapped in the area—and a useful Bibliography.

With the beginnings of activity now being inaugurated by Local Authorities under Sec. 29 of the National Assistance Act, this book is published at a timely moment and no one concerned with the new "Welfare Services" should fail to read its most informative pages.

A.L.H.

The Unconscious Significance of Hair, by Charles Berg, M.D., D.P.M. George Allen & Unwin. 15/-.

In this book Dr. Berg sets out to show how "uncritically accepted human behaviour" can be an expression of instinct-driven tension and conflict. In order to do this, he has assembled a mass of interesting data concerning hair. Starting with examples of so-called normal "hair-behaviour," he goes on to give us clinical data and some extremely interesting anthropological evidence and folklore. The last half of the book is given over to a discussion on the unconscious meaning of hair-behaviour, and there are chapters dealing with fetichism and with the anal, pre-genital and genital aspects of the meaning of hair.

In his final chapter "The Sources and Mechanisms of Normal Hair-Behaviour," Dr. Berg marshalls together his material to show that hair activities are but a substitute for the expression of sexual conflict, and that hair-behaviour is a way of dealing with this conflict as a symptom rather than by a character change.

Although he gives evidence that hair has an anal significance, he lays most stress on the genital and pre-genital aspects of this subject. He says ". . . our hair activities are but another substitute expression of our sexual conflict—conspicuously at a genital level of conflict, but with the usual contribution from the pre-genital component instincts." And throughout the entire book the accent is on castration.

With the exception of one or two passing references, he seems to ignore altogether the possibility of any oral significance in hair-behaviour. It would, however, seem that there are indications that the manipulating of hair can refer back to early breast experiences, and may be linked with anxieties connected with oral sadistic attacks on the breast, and the wish for reparation. Dr. Berg has given us so much fascinating material in his book that one is stimulated to ask for more, and I think that it would have been of added interest if he had enlarged on the oral significance of hair.

This book is essentially a work for those who already have a good understanding of psycho-analytic concepts and not for the uninitiated in whom it would, I think, arouse considerable anxiety and resistance.

The glossary at the end of the book is a welcome feature which might with advantage be copied by other scientific writers.

B.S.