Social Casework in Great Britain. Edited by Cherry Morris. Faber. 12s. 6d.

This book has been produced with the backing of the London Family Welfare Association in an attempt to fill the need for a definition and description of casework in this country. It is written in the form of a symposium by a group of specialist workers and provides a brief historical background of the development of casework in their various fields and an outline of the methods used, illustrated by case material.

The first section contains a discussion on the scope of casework, distinguishing this branch of the general field of social work from social administration, reform and research while pointing out the need for the inter-relation of social work functions.

There are six sections devoted to special fields of casework: Family Casework, Medical Social Work, Psychiatric Social Work, Probation Work, Moral Welfare and Child Care. These chapters clearly bring out the common basis of casework and the need for co-operation between workers in various fields, but at the same time the special problems and considerations involved in each sphere of work are indicated.

In conclusion, there is a discussion on the need for improved training of social workers, especially in casework methods, and a warning of the dangers of too early specialization.

This is a book which suffers inevitably from the form in which it is produced in that there are varying standards of writing and clarity of expression. It is, however, a valuable addition to the existing literature on social work and will provide students with a clear picture of the specialist fields open to them, while it is the only book giving a description of casework methods so far published in this country. To workers already in the field it should provide food for thought and an incitement to re-examine their work in the light of the standards and methods described. M.E.S.

Psychological Problems in Mental Deficiency. By Seymour B. Sarason, Associate Professor of Psychology, Yale University. Harper Bros. \$8.

Dr. Sarason has attempted to cover the whole field of mental deficiency in this book, and this has involved deliberate emphasis of certain types and a rather cursory dismissal of others.

It is not easy to write such a book for clinical and social workers, psychiatrists and psychologists, and where the whole emphasis tends to be on the psychology of mental deficiency it is questionable if primary amentia and most of the pathological types of defect fit into the form of the book except for the sake of completeness. The consequence of this is that a paragraph of only seventeen lines is devoted to Undifferentiated Types which the author himself admits "represents 31 per cent. of the institutional population".

This, however, is not a real target for criticism, because the value of the book is to draw attention to the sub-normal and moron groups with personality problems, who form the main social problem in mental deficiency. In this respect the book should be valuable in orientating those workers outside institutions who fail to recognize the use and purpose of colonies in the rehabilitation of those environmentally conditioned and socially mal-adjusted types.

As distinct from the chapters devoted entirely to testing technique, the last chapter on Psychotherapy has a simple, human approach which every institutional worker should take to heart. It is not a feature of most books on the subject.

As in most American work, there is an over-attention to the pinpoint diagnosis of defect by the assessment and interpretation of test results. This is less important than using tests to find a practical way of helping the patient, and if the Rorschach and other projective techniques described pave the way for this, then there is little justification for regarding them as a substitute for any I.Q. test in diagnosis.

The general finding of the Sarasons that patients with Koh's above Binet scores are generally more stable and susceptible to convention and discipline, is borne out clinically during institutional care, and the fact that some cases do not fit the hypothesis in no way affects its value. As they point out (p. 238), "even in etiologically similar groups, heterogeneity of behaviour pattern is marked". These will show up clinically and by other methods of personality assessment.

In our more personal approach to our patients, Dr. Sarason's statement (p. 107) that "the institutional setting seldom provides conditions of learning calculated to increase adequacy of response", warns us against complacency and much of his book will help us in this approach. J.M.C.

Psychodrama and Sociodrama in American Education. Edited by Robert Bartlett Haas, Beason House, 101 Park Avenue, New York, 17. \$6.75.

The techniques of psychodrama and sociodrama are relatively new in the sphere of psychiatric methods. There are as yet few informative works on the subject and in view of this a new book about it is particularly welcome at this time, especially as a dawning interest is now showing itself in this country.

The author distinguishes between psychodrama and sociodrama. It is a pity, however, that he fails to make this difference clear until the Glossary is reached at the end of the book, though beyond being irritating, this may in itself be immaterial, as the stress is justly laid on action drama. I have so often heard the criticism levied against Group Methods, of insufficient proof—an argument which is almost impossible at the moment to counter.

It was, therefore, with some relief that in reading the book I found the following comment:

"Is it a Science, or is it an Art? It may be neither, but merely an effective way of helping people in Groups to explore and solve the problems which face them, and as such, is worthy of encouragement and development."

Psychodrama is a Gestalt conception. I cannot help but feel, making due allowance for clarity of thought, that there is too great a tendency to map the contents rigidly into too many compartments. The author has largely repeated the same style as Moreno adopted in his original work. In description he allows each character to depict his own feelings about the matter. This certainly lends strength to the joint enthusiasm and agreement as to the value of the method by the various players and participants, but to the student of psychology it becomes difficult and rather irritating to continue reading what appears to be a repetition of the same points developed from different angles by different people. This gives me a feeling of frustration—a feeling that I am being held back from discovering the next point while the theme is reiterated. This seems the more important as it occurs in a book which is primarily concerned with learning.

The theme, as the title suggests, is educational and various techniques used are carried out on children and students. I do not think, however, that this should deter one from seeing that its principle is equally suitable for application to the problems of

adult life, even to the pathological spheres of psychosomatic medicine and the neurosis. The book, therefore, has a wider appeal than merely as an educational thesis. In essence, the problems are identical. In other words, how can we teach our neurotics and the emotionally immature to grow up?—for both are social problems. Possibly the most striking point about drama or action methods is the very great adaptability of the technique into almost all spheres of human interaction. The book itself hints at the possibility of its application to marriage and educational guidance.

Perhaps its other great merit is in the preventive sphere. Its claim in the closing chapter that sociodrama can be used for three purposes—diagnosis, therapy, and education. Diagnosis here is used not in the medical sense, but rather as a measure of the individual adequacy to function in the society. In explanation of the technique it is summed as follows:

"The therapy of psychodrama depends on the fact that while realism is approximated and therefore emotions are involved, dramatic play never reaches complete reality and therefore allows the subject freedom to be expressive without fear of actual failure and that emotional blocking can be dramatically catheterized and allow healthy integration to take place."

In conclusion, I do not like the way the book is written, but the conceptions developed are idealistically stimulating and abounding in potentialities and possibilities.

R.B.M.

Recent Publications

THE INNER EXPERIENCES OF A PSYCHOANALYST. By Theodor Reik. Allen & Unwin. 21s.

FREUD OR JUNG? By Edward Glover. Allen & Unwin. 15s.

PRE-FRONTAL LEUCOTOMY. SURVEY OF 300 CASES PERSONALLY FOLLOWED OVER 1½-3 YEARS. By Maurice Partridge, M.D., D.P.M. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford. 42s.

NEUROSES AND SACRAMENTS. By Alan Keenan, O.F.M. Sheed & Ward. 7s. 6d.

SCHIZOPHRENIC ART. ITS MEANING IN PSYCHOTHERAPY. By Margaret Naumburg. Preface by Thos. A. C. Rennie, M.D. Grune & Stratton Inc., 381 4th Avenue, New York, 16. \$10.

DUODENAL ULCER. A SOCIOPSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF NAVAL ENLISTED PERSONNEL AND CIVILIANS. By Jurgen Ruesch, M.D., and others. In co-operation with medical staff of San Leandro Naval Hospital. Cambridge University Press. 32s. 6d.

HAY FEVER. A KEY TO THE ALLERGIC DISORDERS. By John Freeman, D.M. Oxon. Wm. Heinemann Medical Books. 42s.

THE YOUNG LAG. A STUDY IN CRIME. By Sir Leo Page. Faber & Faber. 18s.

HUMAN ABILITY. By C. Spearman, Ph.D., LL.D., and Ll. Wynn Jones, M.A., Ph.D. Macmillan. 16s.

THE BACKWARD CHILD. By Sir Cyril Burt, D.Litt., D.Sc., LL.D. New and Revised Edition. University of London Press. 25s.

CHILDREN WITH MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HANDICAPS. By J. E. Wallace Wallin, Ph.D., Visiting Professor of Clinical Psychology, Upsala College, U.S.A. Staples Press. 42s.

COUNSELLING AND DISCIPLINE. By E. G. Williamson, Professor of Psychology, University of Minnesota, and J. D. Foley. McGraw Hill Book Co. 32s.

THE RHESUS DANGER. ITS MEDICAL, MORAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS. By R. N. C. McCurdy, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. Heinemann Medical Books. 5s.