

of the data which have to be recorded and the tendency to omit negative findings.

This is a book which should be in the hands of all those who are planning similar studies in the future and of those who have to plan the keeping of records in the present.

C.H.R.

**Psychology of the Interview.** By R. C. Oldfield.

Pp. 144. Methuen & Co., Ltd. 5s. net.

The author has made an experimental and analytical study of the interview, and his deductions should be of considerable value to those who have to assess the personal characteristics of "candidates" after a brief encounter in an atmosphere not devoid of formality.

It is asserted that the interviewer's task is to introduce suitable topics of conversation and to evoke the candidate's "attitudes". Judgment is then based on the reactions displayed by the candidate. The formation of a first impression, the modification of this picture and the final judgment resulting in a "homunculus"-like representation of the candidate in the interviewer's mind, are all analysed and carefully recorded. Stress is also made on the "matter" and "manner" of the candidate's remarks, as shown by relevancy, vivacity, choice of words, syntax, etc.

Mr. Oldfield suggests that the "candidate in the waiting-room is the victim of violent, if temporary, conflict", and therefore an attempt should be made to create an atmosphere of humanity and kindness. There is an interesting sidelight on the "interviewing board"—a social group "well established by convention" and the subject of much heated controversy.

E.B.

**The Background of Guidance.** New Zealand Council for Educational Research. Pp. 128. 6s.

This book gives an account of studies made by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research. It describes the organization of education in New Zealand and the way this organization works out in practice and thus shows the general setting into which all educational and vocational guidance in the country must be fitted.

After a short account of the types of school available and numbers to be found in each it describes the enquiries made by the investigators. A study was made, for example, of the causes which determine whether a child leaves school finally for work at the end of the primary school course or whether he passes on to technical, secondary or other form of post-primary

education. Although in its official organization New Zealand would appear to give somewhat more "equivalence of opportunity" than this country in that free places are available for all reaching a certain standard of proficiency in primary school, it is not surprising to find that many of the same influences are at work in New Zealand as are found in the mother country in determining the choice of school or work. Among these influences are the level of intelligence of the pupil, success in primary school, and the socio-economic level of the parents.

Other enquiries concerned the average age at which children leave primary school (partly determined by their success or failure and their need to repeat a class); the distribution of good, average and poor reports from head teachers of primary school, occupational status of parents, etc. Further, a study was made of the occupational intentions of the pupils in primary schools together with the reasons for their choice; the relation between this choice and the length of stay in school, the age of leaving primary school, parental occupation, etc.; also into the relationship between the occupation originally intended and the one actually entered. Research was also carried out into the types of occupation available and the various requirements for entering them.

The investigators, in emphasizing the need for a thorough study of the individual as well as of the environmental influences and possibilities, conclude that much of the study should be done by trained teachers rather than by the professional psychologists. This is a conclusion which would be fully supported by workers in other countries, since it is obviously the teachers who have the greatest opportunity for making a thorough study of the child.

The book illustrates the necessity for a study of existing conditions by all those undertaking guidance work, but the actual results in the figures given are of value only for those working in New Zealand itself.

M.B.S.

**The Education of the Backward Child.** By Mary Stewart, with a preface by Margaret Cole. Fabian Research Series, No. 57. Gollancz. 6d.

This 24-page pamphlet is part of a general programme for post-war educational reform (eventually to appear as a book) which the Fabian Society is now publishing in sections.

It is the shortest and most lucid exposition of an involved problem which we have met for a long time, making use of both the classic and the more recent surveys and researches without

lessening its appeal to the general reader. It is one of the few expositions I have met which approaches the problem from a humanistic and educational viewpoint and yet is wholly conversant with the legal, administrative and psychological difficulties which stand in the way of implementing its recommendations.

The initial concern of the pamphlet is with our feeble-minded children, only one-eighth of whom are at present in Special Schools. The psychological problem of making teachers, parents and administrators aware of the advantages of such special education for this type of child, is a matter of instruction and propaganda and of adequate training in these matters of teachers and certifying officers, not to speak of supplementary staffing arrangements both on the medical and educational sides.

For the major administrative problem of providing special education throughout the country in the many small areas large enough to supply adequate educational facilities for the feeble-minded child, the solution may be in recognizing that "there is no hard and fast distinction between the defective and the normal

. . . and that the lines of division between the classes are arbitrary and the present ones may not be the best possible places from the educational point of view". This opens up to educators the choice of extending the facilities of special education so as to include the larger group realized by either lowering or raising the I.Q. for educational certification.

"If there was a rigorous weeding out of all elementary school children whose I.Q.s fall below 70, elementary schools would be relieved of a considerable number of children who . . . were unable to benefit by the education provided for them."

Of the second group of children—the educationally dull—Margaret Cole has much to say in respect of the organization of both their elementary and secondary education, and though she leaves the problem skilfully exposed but unsolved, her solution is implicit in her plea for a wider experimental attitude on the part of the Board of Education and of Local Authorities. "The ideal system will not be found without experiment."

R.T.

## Training of Social Workers for Mental Health Services

London School of Economics and Political Science

(UNIVERSITY OF LONDON)

Applications are invited from qualified social workers for scholarships of varying amounts up to £200 for a one-session course of training for the Mental Health Services, starting in September 1942.

Candidates must be over the age of 22, and must hold a Social Science Certificate, or a degree or other educational qualifications appropriate to social work, followed by practical training.

Preference will be given to candidates whose ages fall between 24 and 35, and who have been employed as social workers.

Candidates must be eligible for, and willing after training to take up appropriate employment in any part of the United Kingdom.

The training qualifies for psychiatric social work in Child Guidance Clinics, Mental Hospitals and Associations for Mental Welfare. The training has been adapted to special wartime services such as those connected with evacuation.

Applications for Scholarships must be received not later than April 1st, 1942.

Further particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, London School of Economics, The Hostel, Peterhouse, Cambridge. Letters should be clearly marked "Mental Health Course".