

REVIEWS

GERTRUDE H. HILDRETH: *Psychological Service for School Problems*. World Book Co., Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York. 1930. xiv+317 p. \$2.16.

As especially important among the significant publications of the year in the field of educational psychology is to be mentioned *Psychological Service for School Problems*, by Gertrude H. Hildreth. Dr. Hildreth, who is at present Associate in Research and Psychologist for the Lincoln School of Teachers College, Columbia University, has shown herself well able to view the status of psychology and of the psychologist in the progressive school system.

The book should be of importance to a number of people professionally and otherwise related to the school child. The trained psychologist, particularly he who concerns himself with the application of his subject matter in educational fields, will find in the volume a wealth of material dealing with his position, his equipment, both intellectually and materially, the specific nature of his duties, and the qualifications which their performance necessitates. To the clinical psychologist the book should be valuable not only as a guide to the educational phase of his work, but as an index to the specific nature of such features as the place of the clinic in the school, diagnostic and remedial work with individual cases, and clinical tests for educational use. The school administrator will find that the program for psychological service has been clearly outlined, and that matters of primary importance to him, such as pupil classification and records of psychological work have been covered in a thorough and practical way. The role of the class room teacher has been emphasized in many ways. Teachers should find the book an excellent index to many features of educational psychology which their training has not included. The Author treats of the place of psychological tests in the class room, psychological analysis of educational problems with which the teacher might profitably become familiar, and educational methods for specific school problems. The student of psychology, particularly the individual who is considering the field as a profession, should find in the book an answer to his all-too-frequent question as to the specific function of the psychologist in the practical world. In her treatment of the place of psychology in the school Dr. Hildreth has so forcefully indicated the value of the trained specialist that a certain dignity has been lent to psychology as a profession, which seems startlingly amiss, mayhap, to the dubious yet ambitious student. Not the least important appeal which the book should have is that to the parent of the school child. Parents will find here a concise explanation of psychological methods used in the public school today. Many of their questions in regard to tests and scores and classification on their basis have been covered. To the general reader the book should be important as a clear and brief explanation of the application of psychological method in every-day life, and of a specific and developing approach to children. The book is supplemented with a comprehensive bibliography of the material with which it deals throughout, and which seems relatively up to date.

This book although it contributes little factual data which cannot be found elsewhere in the literature, is a contribution to the general field of education and educational psychology in that it organizes a variety of mate-

rial in a new and important way. The comparatively recent movement of integrating the professional psychologist into the personnel of the school administration will find Dr. Hildreth's book an aid to its cause. As a reference and manual for the psychological or educational library the book merits careful consideration.

T. W. RICHARDS

EMILY HOLMES COLEMAN: *The Shutter of Snow*. New York: The Viking Press. 1930. 245 p. \$2.50.

The Shutter of Snow is a description of the impressions of the author, a graduate of a well known college for women, during a two month's confinement in a State Hospital where she was successfully treated for a toxic exhaustive psychosis following the birth of a child. It is a record of her responses to the Hospital environment and treatment. The effects of the various therapeutic measures employed to restore her mental health are cleverly woven into the account so that the reader is conscious of the gradual progress of the patient without having it pointed out to him. In the same way one is aware of the situations which aggravated the patient and resulted in setbacks to her recovery.

On entering the Hospital the patient is bewildered, resentful, suspicious, emotionally uncontrolled, confused by delusions and illusions, hallucinations. As time goes on her imaginings become less morbid; her delusions of grandeur and persecution diminish; her resistance to authority weakens; the visions and voices of her hallucinations fade; her attempts to avenge herself for some supposed wrong become less frequent; her responses to her husband and the various persons in the Hospital become more normal. With the clearing of her mental fog comes a realization that she must conform in a number of ways if she is to get free of the institution. She becomes eager to work and to assume responsibilities. From time to time there are lapses when she is unable to control herself if her wishes are interfered with, but these lapses become less and less frequent.

Mrs. Coleman has engaged in literary pursuits before and her clinical picture is drawn with skill. The human quality of her book as well as its delightful touches of humor should recommend it even to the layman. However, to those associated with the study and treatment of mental and nervous disorders it is of particular significance. It is another addition to the testimonies of mentally sick patients which have been accumulating since the phenomenally widespread interest aroused by *The Mind That Found Itself*.

Since four years have elapsed between the experience described in the book and the writing of it, one cannot be too certain that the details of the introspective and retrospective impressions are accurate. Some invention of detail is admitted. Nevertheless the book gives a convincing account of the experiences of an intelligent woman in a Mental Hospital.

MARION BRAUNGARD