

Magda Kelber's, using it for leadership training in Germany, it is rather less so. No doubt it serves its purpose equally well for both.

I feel sure that many copies of this booklet will be sold and that, as a result of those sales, group discussion will be more in evidence in the future.

STANLEY LEIGH.

Women of the Streets. A Sociological Study of the Common Prostitute. Edited by C. H. Rolfe. Secker & Warburg. 21/-.

This book is sponsored by the British Social Biology Council and the bulk of it is a restrained and detached account by a research worker, who remains anonymous, of her personal contacts with prostitutes.

The initial project for the research which was planned after the War was much more ambitious than it proved possible to carry out, and in the end it had to be drastically curtailed. For the purpose of this book one can only think this was an advantage, as the smaller numbers with a single investigator, probably enabled the author to keep her account so readable and fresh.

An interim report was made in 1951 and covered the first stage of the research :—

- (a) A comparative study of the statistics relating to prostitution, compiled from the Metropolitan Police records for the two years 1946 and 1949.
- (b) A statistical analysis of the files from the Criminal Record Office of 150 prostitutes who were convicted in 1949.

These appear in the book as Appendices ii and iii, and for them the co-operation of the London School of Economics was available.

Later, the actual field research was started and this was such an untried field that the research worker was obliged to spend time in perfecting her technique for making initial contacts with the prostitutes. Her frank descriptions of her numerous interviews, often with verbatim phrases, are what make the book so readable and vivid.

In the course of the work, almost accidentally, it became possible to make a more intimate study of a group of girls in Stepney which provided much of the more detailed information of the fifty selected case histories which form Appendix i. Compared with say, clinical practice, the histories are so meagre that at a first reading one is perhaps inclined to undervalue them, but gradually a sort of picture does emerge. The last two chapters, "The State of Not Belonging" and "The Men They Live With" begin to show

the outlines, if not of some of the causes, at least of some of the psychological pre-conditions of prostitution and perhaps of the ties the women form, which tend to hold them to this kind of life.

S. A. TOYNBEE.

The Homosexual Outlook. By Donald Webster Cory. London: Peter Neville Ltd. 326 pp. 18/-

The Verdict of You All. By Rupert Croft-Cooke. Secker and Warburg, 1955. 254 pp. 15/-

The publication of these two very different books, indicates the increasing frankness with which the subject of homosexuality can nowadays be discussed; it is not many years since the word was practically unusable in newspaper or novel. Not unnaturally such past repression, even of discussion, has led now to some highly emotional pronouncements and illogical attitudes of our present society, which is only the latest chapter in the story of homosexuality's varying place in various civilisations and cultures through the ages.

Few would deny that the subject needs more objective research but ostensibly neither of the writers of these books sets out to give it. Mr. Webster Cory's approach is entitled "a subjective approach" and is "the result of a quarter of a century of participation in American life as a homosexual". Mr. Croft-Cooke's book is a passionate outpouring after his conviction and prison sentence on a charge of a homosexual offence: and while the blurb on the dust cover is correct in saying "his views are likely to arouse controversy", it is perhaps optimistic to think that "they are certain to command respect", for his criticisms of the police and prison system will be bitterly resented by some. His effusion is of course very understandable, not least as an abreaction to his sufferings, but it is questionable if his book will go far towards remedying the ills which he attacks, as he makes little effort to indicate constructive solutions of the shocking conditions he describes. But perhaps it is unfair to expect as much.

From the scientific viewpoint, Mr. Cory's book deserves much more serious consideration, though it is as racily written. He studies the history of society's reactions to homosexuality in real life, and in literature (of which he gives an exhaustive list, omitting however, Shakespeare). The problems of emotional satisfaction, the anomalies of the law (and the variations in different American states), the possibility of treatment and the responsibilities of society are all explored, and the result is a stimulating constructive book which should be read by all.

R. F. TREGOLD.