

Book Reviews

Modern Trends in Psychological Medicine 1948, edited by Noel G. Harris, Butterworth & Co., London, 1948. (In the United States: Paul B. Hoeber, Inc., New York.)

These nineteen papers by leading British psychotherapists treat the various aspects of both mental illness and mental hygiene in an expert manner and constitute a most valuable handbook. The following excerpts will be of particular interest to Individual Psychologists:

H. R. Hamley, in "Character Formation in Relation to Education," *Inferiority*, Burt (1931), has given a vivid description of children who labour under a "sense of inferiority" because they have not been successful in mastering the essentials of school knowledge. "The dim, half-realized sense of their inborn inferiority which they cannot help, but for which they are incessantly blamed, may act as a rankling grudge against the world in general, or against their luckier relatives or schoolmates."

R. G. McInnes writes in "The Causative Factors in Mental Disturbances":

"Psychiatry will no doubt widen the scope of its conception of the cause of mental disorder so as to include consideration of deviations and injuries in the realm of values. Whether this change will come by the assimilation of Jungian theory into the main body of psychiatric thought, or vice versa, is doubtful, but at the present time it appears that the position held by the Jungian school offers one way out of the cramping rationalism of Freudian psychology.

"The theories of Adler, centered round the conceptions of striving for power, and compensation for inferiority, do not at present engage the attention of psychiatrists to the same extent as do those of Freud and Jung. The comment is frequently heard that the Adlerian views lack range and depth. Nevertheless, every-day psychiatric practice owes a great deal to Adler for the explanation of comparatively simple mechanisms which are readily observable in the behavior of neurotics and which are not infrequently susceptible of being made conscious to the patient with gratifying therapeutic effect." (p. 96)

Dr. Joshua Bierer, in "Modern Social and Group Therapy," writes:

"Two men, Alfred Adler and Joseph H. Pratt, can be considered the fathers of social and group psychotherapy. They started as early as the beginning of the present century to lay the foundations of a form of treatment that emphasized the group as the basic principle in treatment, not the patient-centric relationship between psychotherapist and patient.

"Adler believed that the *Gemeinschaft* (community) is the most important and most unavoidable factor in everybody's life. He refused to be drawn into the theoretical conflict as to whether people were born social, asocial, or antisocial. . . . He thought it more important to emphasize the things he believed he could prove than to dwell on theories that were of little practical consequence.

"Adler believed that he could prove no man could isolate himself for long from the community or stand up against the community without there being some form of repercussion. . . .

"Adler did not publish anything on group psychotherapy. The reason for this may be that he was aiming at the readjustment of the individual to the community. *Gemeinschaft* means to him any group—not one specific one. Adler saw the psychotherapist as the exponent or spearhead of society. More often than not he sought to enlarge that spearhead by having therapeutic sessions with the patients and some of their relatives or some of his pupils. In treating children this became the rule and not the exception. In his *Beratungsstellen* (counselling centers) the neurotic child, the parents, the social workers, Adler and his pupils formed one group. He wanted the child to realize that he and his problem were part of the community and not just an isolated entity. The whole group took part in the discussion of the problems or difficulties which the child or parents presented. This could be considered the first experiment in group therapy for children.

"Although Alfred Adler called his treatment Individual Psychotherapy, it was not the relationship between the individual and the psychiatrist he was emphasizing, but that between the individual and the group. This relationship to the *Gemeinschaft* he considered to be the basic problem of everybody's life and the basic principle of his treatment. . . ." (p. 289-290)

PAUL PLOTKE, Kent, England

Life with Family—A Perspective on Parenthood, Jean Schick Grossman, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York (1948).

Life with Family is written in the warm, direct, personal style of one talking over the fence with other parents about what is dearest to them, their children. The author, a professional psychologist, takes the reader into the heart of her own family with a neighborliness and a wealth of homey anecdote which should be reassuring to those who find the current welter of literature on the subject frightening and confusing. There is a warm and contagious appreciation of the delights of family living as well as a keen perception of its enduring values. The importance of opportunities for work, play, cooperation, self-expression, resolution of conflicts, living richly beyond the family circle, are all stressed in a way to stimulate the reader to try constructive experiments within his own family.

This reviewer could wish that Mrs. Grossman had made more explicit the ultimate whys and wherefores, the rationale, of her excellent values and insights. Insofar as her book stresses the importance of that human interest, that social feeling, that dedicated cooperativeness which is a leading theme in Adlerian psychology, it will be most useful to the happier, better adjusted parents—those who need it least. Other parents less fortunate in their emotional adjustment, however, need more help; they need the kind of guidance that will enable them to evaluate themselves as well as their children within a definite philosophical frame of reference, and this the present book does not supply. Notwithstanding this limitation, *Life with Family* should prove of value to all parents concerned with meeting the challenges of family life constructively.

JAMES ERBSTEIN

The Challenge of Marriage, Rudolf Dreikurs, M.D., Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946.
The Challenge of Parenthood, Rudolf Dreikurs, M.D., Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1948.

It seems to me that Dr. Dreikurs' books could be best evaluated by the lay public to whom they are addressed. The following report on *The Challenge of Marriage* was written by Sophia Steinboch: *

"Dr. Dreikurs' book is a find for every sincere, searching person. Its major premise—that marriage is not an end but a beginning, not a solution but a challenge—is to many a new concept. The book deals with marriage within the context of today's socio-economic conditions and against the cultural background of our time. Psychological analysis of marriage problems is kept within this familiar frame throughout.

"It is not coincidence or good or bad luck that governs our choice of a mate, Dr. Dreikurs says. It is not what happens to us or how our mate behaves that decides whether our marriage will be peaceful or stormy. These things are decided by our total personality—our life style. Our marriage simply reflects, in one more facet, the degree for which we are prepared for the major tasks of life defined by Adler as love, work and social interest.

"Dr. Dreikurs brings home vividly the 'scorched earth' havoc which partners cause when they battle for superiority. Jealousy, its diverse causes and manifestations, is given a penetrating analysis. The ingredients fundamental to a good and lasting marriage are set forth; and the prevailing misconception (so tragic in its effects today) that sexuality is the sovereign power, is discarded.

"Looking toward the future of marriage, Dr. Dreikurs is hopeful. As a psychiatrist and psychologist he is convinced that there is a continuing, conscious drive for the maintenance of the institution of marriage by improving social relations in general.

"A short but stimulating chapter is devoted to the impact of inharmonious marriage upon parent-child relationships and its maiming effect on the child's psyche. This chapter, to my mind the best in this valuable volume, receives full-length treatment in Dr. Dreikurs' book, *The Challenge of Parenthood*."

DANICA DEUTSCH

*Sophia Steinboch, who passed away a few months ago, had worked with me for two years on the organization of the Consultation Center and other activities of our Association. I find myself still using her ideas and suggestions, and feel that in her we have lost a devoted friend.