REVIEWS

HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN RELATION TO THE STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL, AND ETHICAL PROBLEMS. By Stewart Paton, M. D., Lecturer in Neurobiology at Princeton and in Psychiatry at Columbia, ex-President, Eugenics Research Association, New York. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921. Pp. v, 465. Price \$6.

This comprehensive discussion of human personal and social affairs "is intended," so its author says in the Preface, "to serve as an introduction to the study of human behavior. * * * The importance of the subject is obvious and has been tragically emphasized by the present world crisis. Little is known about man as he is. Imagination has supplied many of the details in the picture of what he was once supposed to be, while the anxiety associated with the unrealized expectations of what he might have become has increased the difficulties of taking measure of his present stature. Parent, teacher, physician, student of social phenomena, prospective reformer, statesman, and philosopher, each has his special interest in the great human problem. * * * There can be little doubt that in the careful painstaking study of man as he is, will be found the means by which human institutions may be established upon a more rational basis and at least an intelligent effort made to lay the foundations of a durable peace." In thinking of the book as an "introduction" to human behavior the reader will promptly see that it introduces him to social rather than to personal psychology, which is undoubtedly the more correct way of orienting behaviorism.

Fourteen chapters and a good index constitute this work so far as practical plan is concerned, every one of them showing a very wide and detailed acquaintance with the world's work each in its own direction. The titles of the chapters are these: "The study of the individual in relation to educational and social problems; adjusting mechanisms; special mechanisms of adjustment; the personality; the development of the personality; organization and synthesis (temperament, character, and intelligence); controlling mechanisms (inhibition); factors determining the trends of activities (dispositions); habit-formation; involution of the personality; imperfect organization of activities (conflict and dissociation of the personality); methods of studying the personality; the intelligent direction of activities (education); and the study of man in relation to the progress of civilization."

Besides being, in the good sense of the term, a useful compendium of the best thoughts on this great subject, Doctor Paton's present work is marked by that wisdom that comes from extensive reading ably digested and the food-essence thus obtained then pushed a little further toward our knowledge of the truth. "Gnothi seauton!" said the wise-man of Athens; here and today we find it echoed in our introductory chapter: "The truth which will eventually make men free will be the truth revealed by patient, careful study of the human individual; and upon this revelation depend many of the hopes for the continued existence of the human race." At present "man is his own worst enemy." The present reviewer (as much of his work would show) heartily agrees with the author that in studying all available aspects of the human being the real student is doing an intensive bit of evolution, — mayhap the most intensive that he could do. The physician who does not get this point, sharp and penetrating into the very heart of scientific Truth, fails to get beneath the epidermis, as it were, of his opportunity and so he rails at the psychologist and all that this creature thinks and does, not knowing, usually, even what it is all about.

Indeed, the average physician is a sort of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," for when associating with his patients (usually) he is a natural idealist, but when talking shop ostensibly only a mechanism, albeit a machine his utmost imagination cannot adequately compass. To correct this lamentable and persistent state of medical affairs, this curable hemiplegia of wisdom, is one of the greatest of present problems of medical education. This book and similar works, could they be sympathetically read by the "doctors," would sometime or other force the mental aspect of life into the effective consciousness of most of them, preferably, of course, in school.

Doctor Paton's book is undoubtedly the best of its kind, and is a fine synthesis of modern knowledge enlivened and humanized with human scientific imagination from many minds besides the author's. The ever-more numerous students of Things-in-general in the ancient town of Weiss-nicht-wo can't fail to welcome it with wide open hands — wider open often than some of the impatient minds who will not appreciate its large value as a basis of further synthesis as well as a contribution to important knowledge.

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