

UEBER NERVÖSE ENTARTUNG. Von Prof. Dr. Med. Oswald Bumke. Julius Springer. 5.60 Marks.

This is the first number of a new monograph series issued by the *Zeitschrift f. d. gesammten Neurologie und Psychiatrie* and edited by Alzheimer and Lewandowsky. Subscribers to the *Zeitschrift* can purchase the monograph for 4½ Marks.

The present volume is 116 pages. It is a comprehensive review of the degeneration problem; a problem of great age and interest, especially as it unfolds in the field of psychiatry. The word and idea existed long before Morel raised it to a cult. Rieger in his aprioristic way has said that "Degeneration is only a declamatory phrase." Rieger's attitude would seem to be more than justified in view of the widespread misuse of the term as well as the idea. Bumke quotes Walton's excellent suggestion of introducing the word deviate instead of degenerate. Bumke here adopts a criterion that degeneration signifies an increasing vitiation of the species from generation to generation, resulting in a useless deviation from the type. In the psychiatric sense the deviation refers to the health of the mental life.

Bumke raises the question whether nervous degeneration can take place with heredity and particularly of the heredity of acquired characters. This latter he takes up in a second chapter and comes to a negative conclusion.

A third chapter deals with nervous and mental heredity. It gives a fairly complete summary of the older literature but has little of the English or American work, much to the detriment of the monograph, for the best actual hereditary studies are from Galton and his followers in the eugenic movement. Bumke has missed an opportunity in not rounding out this chapter from the actual field work accomplished. The bibliography is rich in citations, but contains only a few of the names of actual vital workers in the problems under discussion. Taken all in all the study follows old lines too closely and is not up to standard although containing much of value.

JELLIFFE.

L'AFFAIBLISSEMENT INTELLECTUEL CHEZ LES DÉMENTES. Dr. G. Revault d'Allonnes, Agréé de Philosophie, Docteur ès lettres. Félix Alcan. Paris.

The present-day tendency to regard dementia as a general process, rather than a specific one, is here wisely reflected. Although psychiatry has not yet entirely purged itself of such generalizations; although one still hears of primary and secondary dementias, and the law courts still reverberate with the century-old notions of "dementia," yet there is hope that the unitary psychosis, dementia, may finally be abrogated from psychiatric literature and thought.

Mild or severe intellectual loss, particularly as it occurs in senility, in paresis, and in schizophrenia is the goal of the author's present study. Thirty patients were studied from the standpoint of what the author has denominated the modalities of mental mobility, viscosity, slowness in reaction, attention time, loss of direction, incontinence of activities, emotions, speech and ideas.

He establishes six grades of a mental defect among these patients who nosologically represent senile psychoses, paresis, and schizophrenia—

according to Ballet's Kraepelinized categories. His "cubage intellectual" mensurates according to these degrees. The first he terms partial disintegration of working capacity—especially in lack of initiative, of combining power; the second degree consists of a total loss of the working capacity; the third consists of a total loss of the working capacity plus a partial disintegration of verbal objective activity; a fourth consists of the former three plus partial loss of subjective ideation; a fifth of the fourth with total loss of subjective ideation; while a sixth consists of the total loss of the entire psychic life.

The work makes an interesting attempt at providing a rough and ready scale for measuring different grades of mental loss.

LES PARATHYROÏDES. Par Louis Morel. Libraire Scientifique. A. Hermann & Fils. Paris.

The author has filled 340 pages of a good size in detailing our present day knowledge of the parathyroids, and there is no padding, no repetition but straight-away material of the best type. It has both German thoroughness and French brilliancy and is the most desirable monograph on the parathyroids extant. The price is only 10 francs.

JELLIFFE.

LE LANGAGE ET LA VERBOMANIE. Essai de Psychologie Morbide. Par Ossip-Lowrié. Félix Alcan. Paris.

This series of lectures delivered before the University of Brussels is entertaining if not profound. He would trace primitive language from cries and gestures as many have done; beyond this he does not go. Why even cries and gestures arose is not touched upon and a dynamic or genetic explanation is conspicuous by its absence, yet the general scheme is sound as far as it goes. The pathological feature of the situation takes up the subject of too much talky-talk. Such a work is certainly needed and should be translated into every language. Whether this one fills the bill is questionable as it is not sufficiently convincing in its fundamental psychology. Verbomania in women is an instructive chapter. That on the prophylaxis of verbomania in childhood is practical and suggestive.

VORLESUNGEN UEBER DEN BAU DER NERVÖSEN ZENTRALORGANE DES MENSCHEN UND DER TIERE. Von Prof. Dr. Ludwig Edinger. Erster Band. Achte Auflage. F. W. C. Vogel. Leipzig.

No work on the structure of the nervous system has enjoyed the wide popularity of these lectures of Edinger. They are now in their eighth edition. In spite of the many intricacies which modern technical studies have introduced Edinger's work still retains its simple logical character and broad general grasp of the main anatomical features of practical importance to the neurologist.

Entirely new chapters are here introduced for the first time. There is a complete presentation of the autonomic sympathetic system and the cerebellum chapter has been greatly remodeled. The evolutionary, comparative anatomy viewpoint is kept to resolutely and a fitting close to the work is an attractive chapter on psychology as viewed from the anatomic-physiological viewpoints.

JELLIFFE.