

ABSTRACTS AND REVIEWS.

ALBERT MOLL. *The Sexual Life of the Child*. Translated from the German by E. Paul. With an Introduction by E. L. Thorndike. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912. Pp. xvi, 339.

It is impossible to say whether good or evil comes from attempting to popularize the very uncertain knowledge that has been gathered by alienists concerning sex manifestations. To judge by the novels dealing with forbidden sex themes that have appeared on the Continent within the past decade (following the more or less popular accounts of sex perversions written by Kraft-Ebing, Moll and others), one might assume that the recognition given to these morbid manifestations by recognized scientists has encouraged laymen to reject the social disapproval with which these practices have hitherto been stamped. It is reasonable to suppose that, notwithstanding the sincere motive which underlies the scientific discussion of perversions, the mere fact that typical cases are accurately described in books that have a popular circulation will tend to break down the prejudice that society has built up against them. And it is beyond doubt that a vigorous social prejudice is the surest safeguard against any type of moral degeneration. There is a serious problem here that cannot be thrust aside by the dogmatic assertion that "truth never hurts."

The volume before us is relatively, although not entirely, free from the danger spreading contagion through the infecting influence of suggestion. It is evidently written from the most sincere and praiseworthy motives. Certain of its chapters might profitably be read by all who have to do with education of children. The concluding chapter on Sex Education is one of the best discussions of the subject in the literature. Education is conceived as something broader than mere instruction in the facts of sex physiology and hygiene. It includes fundamentally the development of the sentiments of modesty, shame, and disgust. The importance of keeping the attention from becoming engrossed with matters of sex is emphasized, and in this connection the influence of suggestive literature and pictures is helpfully discussed. Moll does not believe that the conventional form of religious education has an appreciable effect upon sex morality. Upon the side of positive enlightenment with regard to sex phenomena, the author contends that the objective phases should be treated first and may be approached in preadolescent years

through instruction in the biological sciences. The subjective phases should not be considered prior to adolescence, and enlightenment here is much better given by the parent than by the teacher. Reference to the danger of venereal infection should be postponed until later. The grave mental disorders that may arise from a morbid conscientiousness regarding normal or inevitable sex phenomena are frequently recurred to by the author, and constitute a part of the discussion that all parents and teachers would do well to read.

W. C. B.

W. PEPPER. *Jugendpsychologie*. Leipzig and Berlin: B. C. Teubner, 1912. Pp. VI, 181. Ten Illustrations.

This book is designed by the author as the first introduction to psychology and child study. The pedagogical instruction of the first year, he believes, should have as its chief problem the awakening of an understanding and love for the developing child. The book is especially designed for normal schools (*Seminaren*) and similar institutions. Since it grew out of the author's work as a teacher, he hopes that it may be of practical pedagogical value (*Vorwort*).

The text is divided into four parts, entitled: (1) *Das Kind im Elternhause*; (2) *Die Eroberung der Welt in Schauen und Schaffen*; (3) *Das Kind in der Schule*, and (4) *Eigenart und werdende Persönlichkeit*. Each part is subdivided into a number of chapters. Many of the chapters are preceded by short quotations from various authors. References are also found at the beginning of each chapter. These references are, as a rule, not to standard writers on psychology, but rather to writers on literature. Chapter XVIII, on "*Das Gedächtniss des Kindes*," might be regarded as a typical chapter. The references are: "Schloz Voncourt" von Chamisso; Voge, *Das Erkennen*; Uhland; Eberhards *Weissdorn*; Chamisso, *Salas Gomez*; *Iphigenie*; *Tells Monolog*; *Johannes zweiter Monolog*; Keller, *Der grüne Heinrich*.

A number of questions designed to lead the pupil to a thoughtful consideration of the text and a professional point of view in observing children is found at the end of many chapters.

Dr. Peper has written one of the most comprehensive and readable books on educational psychology that the reviewer has read.

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