

a point of view and a description adequate for clinical practice. The "point of view" shows a decided advance on some good text-books; but the treatment of it is still hampered with a good deal of traditional baggage. The central concept is the functionally composite character of the nervous system, which is a system of systems, the possible dissociation of systems, and the corresponding dissociation of the parallel mental systems. These latter include the "unconscious mind," to which Dr. MacPherson gives great prominence. One regrets that he should draw so much on a metaphysical work like Von Hartmann's when so much well-wrought psychology is available in (say) Janet, or Ribot; for he is certainly led into much that has no direct bearing on the concrete problems of the insanities. Then, in dealing with "association of ideas," one naturally expects an author to have regard to the latest criticism of categories, as presented, for example, in Hoffding or Dr. Stout's *Psychology*. That would have saved the author from speaking of the "contest of ideas" in terms like—"it is certain that only one idea can be present in consciousness at a time; but a struggle between abstractions is absurd and inconceivable" (p. 115). Many similar propositions are open to criticism; but for practical purposes the chapter is good. On the physical side, Dr. MacPherson emphasises the neuron as the functional unit, which, in its varieties of excitability and blocked resistances, suggests an easy formula for many orders of insanity. The hierarchical character of the nervous system is not forgotten; but it is not made as prominent as its importance warrants. It is puzzling to see why the book begins with heredity, and the causes of insanity. Here, I think, the author yields needlessly to traditional exposition. He does not take up very decisive ground on the heredity or non-heredity of acquired characters. He emphasises the "transmutation of neuroses" in heredity, so indicating a leaning to Weismann's view. Then as to classification, the author no more than other authors succeeds perfectly in systematising the insanities; but his excellent exposition of the toxic insanities certainly achieves something of system. His "insanity of the degenerate" is also a justifiable and well-worked-out section. Had he begun with his exposition of the psycho-physical parallelism—lamination, centres, neurons, dissociation—he would have been better able to exhibit the "causes of insanity" as operating on a known organisation and so originating the "forms" of insanity. Then he could have classified the clinical insanities to suit the purposes of practice. But, with all deductions, the book remains a solid presentment of the leading facts of alienism on its practical side.

W. LESLIE MACKENZIE.

Institutes of Education. By S. S. LAURIE. Second Edition. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd. Pp.

This volume contains in a summarised form the matter of an important section of the author's class lectures. Those who agree with Mr. Sidgwick's protest against the lecturing system at our universities will welcome the book as a step in the direction of reform. It is to be hoped that the professor's colleagues will soon follow his example: dictation is a somewhat elementary exercise for university students. On the other hand, what is good for the students is not perhaps equally good for the book. It necessarily bears traces of its origin; and indicates its purpose by a more than usually elaborate arrangement. There are too many divisions and subdivisions for those who have no examination in view. But students will appreciate the careful classification, while general readers will take pleasure in noting the skill with which the writer keeps

steadily in view the essential unity of the subject. For Prof. Laurie claims to have established an unbroken chain of rational interdependence from his first principles to his ultimate rules and applications. The contrast between the attitudinal and rational planes is made to produce valuable applications; and the exclusion of memory and imagination from the "dynamic process of mind as such," gets rid of much of the confusion that the usual classification of those modes of being conscious involves. The practical identification of reason and will is at first startling, but after all we see no cause to refuse our author's invitation when he begs us "to go deeper down and see in Will the root, possibility and essence of this very endowment which in its fulness, that is to say, as including the form in which it moves to its end, *vis.*, knowing and willing, is called Reason" (p. 117). We doubt, all the same, whether he would be willing to let us make a general application of this system of Concept-interpretation, after the manner of Prof. James. It is interesting to note that though Prof. Laurie has adopted a new principle, and has followed entirely his own method, he has reached a body of sound doctrine in education which cannot fail to commend itself to all experts in that subject.

- Dreams and Omens.* Modernised and alphabetically arranged by C. DE BARS. Chicago: Laird & Lee, 1899. Pp. 192. Price, 75 c.
The Book of Destiny. Translated from the Italian by C. DE BARSY. Chicago: Laird & Lee, 1899. Pp. xxii., 169. Price, 75 c.
Practical Palmistry. By C. DE SAINT-GERMAIN. Chicago: Laird & Lee, 1899. Pp. 307. Price, \$1.00.

These works are severely practical in character. Only in the last, and there only in an appendix, do we find a theory: the theory of an astral fluid, respired by the heavenly bodies, and absorbed by the Paonian corpuscles of the human hand. Apart from this contribution to philosophy, the significance of the books lies in their existence and selling power. As indices of the present state of folk-psychology in a civilised nation, they may find mention in a psychological journal.

- Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason and Seeking Truth in the Sciences.* By RENÉ DESCARTES. Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1899. Pp. vii., 87. Price, 25 c.; 1s. 6d.
Elementary Illustrations of the Differential and Integral Calculus. By A. DE MORGAN. Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1899. Pp. viii., 144. Price, \$1.00; 5s.
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Psychology for Beginners: an Outline Sketch. By H. M. STANLEY. Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1899. Pp. iv., 44. Price, 20 c.; 1s.

The first of these little books is a reprint (with portrait of Descartes) of Veitch's translation of the *Discourse*. Veitch's "Introduction" is omitted, and a preface written in popular terms by T. J. McCormack substituted for it. The book is well printed, and should prove extremely useful.—The reprint of De Morgan's *Illustrations* has been reparagraphed, furnished with descriptive sub-headings, and carefully indexed.—Miss Frances Welby's translation of Ribot's *General Ideas* is accurate and readable.—Mr. Stanley's *Psychology* deals cursorily with the definition of psychology, knowing (sensation and perception, memory, ideation and introspection), feeling and will, and 'special' psychology. The essay

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sciousness, which stores up and synthesises the acquisitions of the senses. Subconsciousness "is, for the most part, independent of the normal will and consciousness" (p. 129), and hence it is difficult to determine where it begins and ends; but it exercises a general guidance in the manifestations of consciousness, and may be supposed to know and influence consciousness without being known by it. The subconscious being furnishes the conscious being with innate faculties and predispositions, and adapts these as far as possible to the organic conditions, for the development of the conscious being; and, since it evidently has some power of directing matter, may have some share in the development of the organism.

All this is very vague; but Dr. Gyl is not attempting to prove anything, but merely to show what deductions might be made from his hypothesis, if true, and how it would solve the problems of normal and abnormal psychology. And he adds that it would do more than that. If the personality that exists from birth to death is transient, if individuality endures and advances through successive incarnations, if ultimate happiness is attained by the observance of moral law, man is set free from the false principles of authority and social justice, assured of immortality and provided, by his belief in the progress of humanity through the free efforts of individuals, with an adequate motive for conduct.

E. F. STEVENSON.

Esquisse d'un Enseignement basé sur la Psychologie de l'enfant. By PAUL LACOMBE. Paris: Armand Colin et Cie.

The brilliant epigrammatic style of this little book must not distract our attention from the solid common sense with which the whole subject is treated. No doubt educational heresies are so common now that M. Lacombe is much less out of the rut than he thinks he is; yet his revolt against the *fonctionnaire* way of regarding education is none too common in France where such a revolt is urgently called for. The existing system would do admirably if only the pupil were not a child, and "s'il était en bas âge un estimable professeur de l'Université". Against the present dogmatic instruction our author recommends what he calls dialectic instruction. This new method corresponds in everything but name with the method rising into favour in all quarters and usually labelled as *heuristic*. M. Lacombe is, however, more thorough than most supporters of this method. His view of a teacher is not "en homme qui, sachant tout, enseigne tout, mais en homme qui aide à apprendre tout ce qu'on veut savoir". If a child wants to know about bookbinding, let the teacher take him to a bookbinder's. The Psychology upon which the *enseignement* is based naturally interests us here. We have no objection to the limitation of our forces over the child to the three levers, *curiosity*, *imitation* and *amour propre*. We even admire the epigrammatic use of his "la moutonnerie des enfants". But on pages 71 and 72 we find a theory sketched out which surely deserves fuller treatment. All formal logic is based upon the assumption that the processes of mind are the same no matter what the subject upon which the mind acts. Without a word of apology to the author of the *Outlines of the Laws of Thought* M. Lacombe tells us that the intellectual operations differ with the subject, and concludes his paragraph with the pregnant words: "A l'enfant qui de neurerait tout à fait ignorant de l'une de ces matresses branches du savoir humain, il manquerait l'idée de l'un des procédés qui composent la raison humaine". He meets the educational difficulty by suggesting typical forms to illustrate all the different processes, but we cannot help

feeling that the psychological foundation is a little too easily gained to be quite secure. Another example of a serious difficulty summarily dismissed is to be found in the footnote on page 203. Whatever may be said of his premises, M. Lacombe carries them logically to practical and useful conclusions.

Psychologische Untersuchungen ueber das Lesen. Von BENNO ERDMANN und RAYMOND DODGE. Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1898. Pp. viii., 360.

As its title implies, this book gives a *résumé* of the works on reading that appeared prior to 1896, and records the results of additional experiments on new or disputed points.

The volume begins with a summary of the preceding discussions, having particular reference to the controversy between the alienists as to whether reading is by letters or entire words. This serves to introduce the treatment of the problem as a whole.

The first phase of the question that the authors consider on their own account, and the one to which they contribute most new material, is as to the part played by eye movements and pauses in reading. The fundamental question in this connexion has regard to the number and conditions of the pauses that are made in reading a line. The conditions fall into two classes. The first, the merely physiological, are to be found in the size of the field of clear vision; the second are furnished by supplementing in terms of context. The distance of each eye movement is about one half of the diameter of the field of clear vision, but varies with the part of the line, and with the degree of familiarity with language, subject matter, and text. It is less for proof-reading than for ordinary reading (reading for the meaning). In general, it can be said that the pauses in eye-movements are most frequent when context helps least.

Chapters iii.-viii. are devoted to a discussion of the question of the nature of reading, whether by words or separate letters, and the problems that Wundt has treated under the head of 'the range of attention'. The authors constructed a new instrument, which is a combination of the revolving disk of Goldscheider and Müller and the projection apparatus of Scripture. It consisted, essentially, of a camera with a revolving disk before the lens. The length of the exposure is controlled by adjusting a radial slit in the disk. They assert that it possesses the advantages of great accuracy and of binocular adaptation. Wundt¹ has called attention, in his recent criticism, to the fact that the great accuracy for small time intervals is of little or no value, because of the long latent period of the retina, and that the Helmholtz and Cattell instruments both permit the use of the two eyes.

The results obtained confirm that of Cattell, that four or five letters can be seen with a single exposure, and that four or five times as many letters can be read, if they are grouped in familiar words. In this field, too, two factors are to be distinguished. The one is, again, the physiological range of clear vision; the other, the apperceptive factors. With discrete letters, not all that are within the limit of the field of clear vision can be read, *i.e.*, come into consciousness; while when the letters are grouped in words, more letters can be read than can be clearly seen. That is, letters that extended beyond the field were read, and words could be read that were so far away that the separate letters could not be seen. Moreover, in connected sentences less than a line in length, words could be read that fell entirely without the field of clear vision. In view of these facts and the errors that are made in reading indistinct

¹ *Phil. Stud.*, vol. xv., p. 287.