

seems to regard them as unique, but psychiatrists would regard them as commonplace and frequently encountered in practice. Moreover, the descriptions are not in a form which would make them valuable as primary data in the same way as, say, Schreber's "Memoirs of my Mental Illness." The text abounds in such statements as: "My soul left my body through my eyes and shot straight through the sun." This is an interpretation of some psychic or somatic experience, and what would interest the psychiatrist is a description of the primary experiences rather than the interpretation.

The second part of the book is naive and it is obvious that the author lacks the basic knowledge of theology and psychiatry into which her experiences could be fitted. To consider a particular example: the commentary begins with the remark: "If my sex life had been normal, none of my so-called spiritual experiences would have happened." There is perhaps a grain of truth in this, and we are all familiar with old maid's insanity, but it does not represent a very profound contribution towards our understanding of the aetiology of schizophrenia.

One's attitude to this book must be coloured by the extent to which one considers that the phenomena of mental illness should be minutely studied, either in order to elucidate the nature of the disease process or as a gateway to spiritual knowledge. So far as the first aspect is concerned, most people would agree that minute analysis of the experiences of a schizophrenic or temporal-lobe epileptic show why the patient had these particular experiences, delusions, and hallucinations rather than any others, but not why he had the abnormal experiences in the first place. So far as the second aspect is concerned, it is well known that hallucinations and delusions with spiritual content are encountered in various illnesses, particularly schizophrenia, temporal-lobe epilepsy,

and hysteria, and it is possible that some hagiological literature has been written by people suffering from such disorders. The conventional theological view, so far as contemporary writings are concerned, would be to reject the contributions of the mentally sick and to reject the idea that these people have been specially chosen by God to communicate His ideas.

An alternative view is expressed by the author of the preface. He says that "Since natural science studies only the relation between things, we are thus in a context of relevance that is outwith [sic] the domain of natural scientific investigation. . . . I can think of no better word for this experiential domain that lies 'beyond' the reach of perception, thinking, imagination, dreams, phantasy than the spiritual world—or the domain of spirits, Powers, Thrones, Principalities, Seraphim, Cherubim, The Light." A more conventional view might be that it took psychiatry centuries to rid itself of Seraphim and Cherubim, and progress was possible only when this had been done. However, I may be wrong. As Dr. Laing asks in the preface: "Who of us is not a fallen Son of Prophecy?"

A. W. BEARD.

## Hormone Reviews

**L'Année Endocrinologique.** 16th year. By M. Albeaux-Fernet, L. Bellot, L. Canet, J. Deribreux, M. Gelinet, and J. D. Romani. (Pp. 232. 36 F.) Paris: Masson. 1964.

This little volume, which is the 16th issue of a series, "The Endocrinological Year," contains 21 reviews of endocrine subjects varying in length from one to 42 pages. All are in French and unsigned, and all conclude with a bibliography, mostly modern, though

many of the sources quoted are to provincial journals not easily available in Britain.

The section on the thyroid comprises reviews of toxic adenomata, the anaemias of hypothyroidism, and the treatment of thyrotoxicosis in pregnant women. In the section on the ovary there is a useful review of the past four years' progress in knowledge of steroid metabolism in the Stein-Leventhal syndrome and a concise survey of published experience with immunological tests of pregnancy. The section on the breast contains a review of modern progress in diagnosis of carcinoma of the breast, with generous references, a review of recent literature on steroid excretion in breast cancer, and a survey of the effects of endocrine treatment on this disorder, including surgical and medical approaches. Here remissions in 40 to 50% of cases are claimed for oestrogen therapy, only 20% for castration, adrenalectomy, hypophysectomy, or androgen therapy, and no significant effect from glucocorticoids. An interesting survey of cataracts of endocrine origin includes those due to cortisone therapy, and a 42-page review of diabetic coma covers the literature of the past 25 years and follows orthodox or classical lines likely to be already largely familiar to many British readers. Finally, the significance of hydroxyproline metabolism is discussed. The urinary excretion of this amino-acid comes mainly from endogenous metabolism rather than from diet. It is derived largely from collagen and may prove a helpful index of bone metabolism.

Being in French this book will be of limited interest in Britain. But the very concise, up-to-date reviews of recent work contain much of value. Their usefulness to English readers will, however, be considerably reduced by what appears to have been inadequate proof reading. This is especially evident in the bibliographies, which also refer too often to journals difficult to obtain outside France.

C. L. COPE.

## Books Received

*Review is not precluded by notice here of books recently received.*

**Classic Descriptions in Diagnostic Roentgenology.** Edited by André J. Bruwer. In two volumes. (Pp. 2059+xxi; illustrated. \$49.50.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1964.

**Inside the Black Room.** By Jack A. Vernon Ph.D. (Pp. 203+ xvii. 21s.) London: Souvenir Press. 1965.

**Recent Advances in Paediatrics.** Edited by Douglas Gairdner, M.A.(Cantab.), D.M.(Oxon.), F.R.C.P. (Pp. 349+ viii; illustrated. 60s.) London: Churchill. 1965.

**Positive Disintegration.** By Kazimierz Dabrowski M.D., Ph.D. Edited, with an introduction by Jason Aronson, M.D. (Pp. 132+xxviii; 40s.) Boston: Little, Brown. 1964.

**Food Inspection Notes.** Handbook for Students. 6th edition. By H. Hill, F.R.S.H., F.A.P.H.I., A.M.I.P.H.E., and E. Dodsworth, F.R.S.H., F.A.P.H.I., M.Inst.P.C. (Pp. 131. 15s.) London: H. K. Lewis. 1965.

**Fact and Fiction in Psychology.** By H. J. Eysenck. (Pp. 300. 5s.) Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin. 1965.

**Mental Retardation.** Edited by Harvey A. Sevens and Rick Heber. (Pp. 502+ xii; illustrated. 90s.) Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press. 1965.

**X-ray Examination of the Stomach.** Revised edition. By Frederic E. Templeton, M.D. (Pp. 598+ xviii; illustrated. £5 5s.) Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press. 1964.

**Pancreatic Inflammatory Disease.** A Physiological Approach. By David A. Dreiling, M.D., Henry D. Janowitz, M.D., and Claude V. Perrier, M.D. (Pp. 238+ xii; illustrated. 79s.) New York, Evanston, and London: Harper & Row. 1964.

**Backache.** From Occiput to Coccyx. By Gerald L. Burke, B.Sc., M.D., F.I.C.S. (Pp. 189; illustrated. No price given.) Vancouver: W. E. G. Macdonald. 1964.

**Internal Factors in Evolution.** By Lancelot Law Whyte. (Pp. 81+xxiii. 18s.) London: Tavistock. 1965.

**Clinical Electrocardiograms.** Edited by Stephen R. Elek, M.D., F.C.C.P., F.A.C.P. (Pp. 236+ ix; illustrated. \$11.75.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1965.

**Alfred Hospital Clinical Reports.** Vol. 12, 1964. (Pp. 99. No price given.) Melbourne: Alfred Hospital. 1965.

**Fundamental Techniques of Plastic Surgery and their Surgical Applications.** 3rd edition. By Ian A. McGregor, M.B., F.R.C.S.(Eng.), F.R.C.S.(Glasg.) (Pp. 300+ xi; illustrated. 35s.) Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone. 1965.

**Reconstructive Plastic Surgery.** Principles and Procedures in Correction, Reconstruction and Transplantation. In 5 volumes. Edited by John Marquis Comverse, M.D. With a section on the hand edited by J. William Littler, M.D. (Pp. 2,253; illustrated. £43 15s. per set of 5 volumes.) Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders. 1964.

**Die Menschliche Leber im Elektronen-Mikroskop.** Untersuchungen an Leberpunktionen. By Dr. Lothar Cossel. (Pp. 271+ £7 17s. 11d.) Jena: Gustav Fischer. 1965.

**Pedophilia and Exhibitionism.** A Handbook. By J. W. Mohr, R. E. Turner, and M. B. Jerry. (Pp. 204+ xvi. No price given.) Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 1964.

**Notes for Introductory Courses in Genetics.** 4th edition. By Charlotte Auerbach, Ph.D., D.Sc., F.R.S. (Pp. 42. 3s. 6d.) Edinburgh and London: Oliver & Boyd. 1965.

**Chirurgie des Coronaires.** By G. Arnulf. (Pp. 389+ vii; illustrated. 110 F.) Paris: Masson. 1965.