

neurasthenia (in the German sense) is different from all the other kinds of neuroses, and he prefers to call it a "neurosis of civilization", it being the result of tension between modern civilized life and the psychical-nervous efficiency of the individual. He divides the other neuroses, the neuroses *sensu strictu*, into two different groups. In the first, the difficulties arise from the fact that the individual comes into collision with existing social, moral or professional standards. In the second group, on the other hand, the battlefield is inside the individual, because his social wishes are incompatible with some of his other personal tendencies. The author shows, for instance, that the "œdipus-complex" arises from social difficulties, the term "social" being applied to all kinds of relationships between human beings.

The author does not regard the neurotic predisposition as being without importance, but notes that there is a tendency in modern psychopathology (Jung, Jaensch, Kretschmer) to classify the psychopathic constitutions with reference to their social attitude.

The way in which various types become neurotic through different social difficulties is then briefly but clearly demonstrated. The next paragraph deals with neuroses of development, which result from the inability of the young individual to adjust himself to the increasing demands of society. The way in which the different social and cultural tendencies are responsible for the formation of various types of neurosis is enlarged upon, with special reference to the "renten-neurose" (or "compensation" neurosis), the importance of which increased gradually with the financial depression.

The neurosis being an individual phenomenon, the author thinks it difficult to demonstrate its effect on society generally. For the analysis of the individual case he thinks Freud's and Adler's theories are of special importance. He emphasizes the necessity of having reliable statistics for further investigation.

Not only social treatment is needed, but preventive measures, and for both purposes one has to distinguish between dealing with the surroundings and with the individual himself. For the latter he assigns more importance to a non-dogmatic re-education (Psychagogik) and individual psychology than to psycho-analysis, the merits of which are not denied in some cases. He finally stresses the importance of Weizsäcker's and Unger's "situation-therapy", and of the co-operation with the social service.

S. L. LAST.

*Methodological Principles in Pathography.* (*L'Hyg. Ment.*, vol. xxviii, p. 173, Sept.-Oct., 1933.) Wigert, V.

The author points out that the discussion of the mental illnesses of individuals of historical interest is fraught with difficulties and faced with a doubting attitude, which is not found in discussions of physical maladies. There is, he says, a tendency to regard mental maladies as things apart, and not amenable to ordinary writing.

How often, he says, does creative work owe itself to psychopathological phenomena?

Like psychiatry itself, pathography is not an old branch of medical science—in the modern sense. It has made mistakes, it has an exaggerated idea of its possibilities, it draws too hasty conclusions and has justified the criticisms which have been levelled at it. It does not follow, however, that it is unworthy of attention. Under a critical and informed approach it is capable of adding "a new and flourishing branch to the tree of humanistic science".

W. MCC. HARROWES.

*The Psychic Structure of Edgar Poe.* (*L'Hyg. Ment.*, vol. xxviii, p. 184, Sept.-Oct., 1933.) Bonaparte, M.

This is the first instalment of a study of the personality make-up of Poe. It is an interesting example of pathographic technique. The amount of detail which exists regarding the life of Poe makes the deductions drawn especially interesting. The ability to make a complete longitudinal section of a life-history adds a good deal to the approach of living psychiatric problems.