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Reviews and Criticisms

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REVIEWS AND CRITICISMS

SOCIAL WORK, AN OUTLINE OF ITS PROFESSIONAL ASPECTS. American Association of Social Workers, 130 E. Twenty-second street, New York. Pp. 31. 25c.

One of the most interesting and valuable publications that the American Association of Social Workers has recently issued is a pamphlet entitled "Social Work, an Outline of Its Professional Aspects." By describing briefly, yet comprehensively, the various lines of activity open to the social worker and telling the sort of training necessary for work along each of these lines, it fills a very decided need in its particular field.

The different kinds of social case work which have developed, including work with families, with children in and out of the schools, with delinquents, and with the physically and mentally incompetent, are adequately reviewed. Paragraphs are devoted to the comparatively new branches of occupational therapy and psychiatric social work. There is a chapter dealing with social group work, such as settlement club work, independent club work, and work in the Christian associations. The section devoted to community organization is especially interesting and informative, embracing as it does rural organization, health organization and education, economic organization and development, housing, leisure time activities, and neighborhood organization.

The book also contains information regarding institutional work, psychological work, personnel work in industry, work with racial groups, public health nursing and nutrition work, besides that very important branch of social work known as social research.

Being, as is stated in the introduction, a discussion of "the activity of the professional social worker," the pamphlet will appeal especially to those already engaged in social work or to those who are planning to train for it.

New York.

J. B. BUELL.

THE TECHNIQUE OF PSYCHO-ANALYSIS. By *David Forsyth*. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Company, Ltd. (London, 1922.) Pp. VIII + 133. Price \$2.00.

This book was written by a trained physician and a professional psycho-analyst. It contains a very clear and detailed account of the rules and cautions to form a practical guide for the psycho-analyst in his practice. While at times the rules laid down smack of dogmatism, nevertheless they are the result of the actual experience of at least one person and the dictates of a leader—Freud. In fact, the reader of the book can hardly help recalling, in this connection, a similar, although more exaggerated, use of Aristotle's opinions and advice in the writings of St. Thomas.

As Dr. Forsyth says in his introduction, the book "comprises three topics—the analyst himself, the conditions under which the treatment should proceed, and the analysis proper. (1) *The Analyst*—In the opening chapter will be considered the personality of the analyst and the role it plays in the treatment. (2) *The Prerequisites of the Treatment*—The second chapter will cover the many details and provisions which must be heeded if the analytical work is to go forward in the most favorable circumstances. (3) *The Analysis Proper*—The largest aspect of the subject is the analytical management of the case. This . . . [is] developed in the remaining four chapters" (p. VIII). This program is carried out to completion in a vigorous, and, most of the time, in a convincing way. It would be impossible, in a short review, to give the reader any clear idea of the great many important details that are discussed within the covers of the books. What will probably seem to most readers the outstanding points include such matters as the distinction made between the aims in the attitude of a physician to his patient in organic treatment and that of the psycho-analytic treatment. The aims in the first case are the following: "first to take the earliest opportunity of gaining his [patient's] confidence and establishing a friendly atmosphere; second, to impress him with his ability to deal successfully with his case; third, to give his opinion with due professional authority which may or may not claim *ex cathedra* infallibility; and last, to require implicit obedience in carrying out this advice, he taking all responsibility, and the patient relying on his superior, special knowledge" (4). On the other hand, in analysis the position is quite otherwise. "Instead of attempting actively to create a friendly relationship the physician accepts the atmosphere brought by his patient, and towards every change in his feelings—and they will be numberless—adopts a passive attitude. . . . Any claim to professional authority, or, still worse, to infallibility, finds no place in the analytical world. . . . While most dangerous, of all, to expect a patient obediently to shelter behind the physician's responsibility would traverse a fundamental principle of analysis which enjoys the exact contrary . . ." (pp. 4-5).

Again, in giving his seasonable advice to the younger practitioner, concerning the rules to be considered when estimating the probable results of treatment, Dr. Forsyth thinks two factors are important: age and intelligence. "The younger the patient the better, as a rule, is the outlook . . . with adults the years between twenty and thirty are the best, while from middle age and onward less benefit is likely to result. Nevertheless, many men and some women over forty make excellent subjects. In all cases an educated mind counts for much—except when education has meant an uncritical acceptance of what has been taught: the mind in such patients has probably long since lost the faculty of independent observation—but a quick intelligence counts for more. A keen-witted, alert individual, open-minded and perspicacious is a far more hopeful subject than one who has succumbed to authority and tradition" (pp. 23-24).

In addition, in another part of the book, Dr. Forsyth says that "by no means every case is suitable for a beginner who needs to be circumspect in making his choice. He must leave alone for the present introverted characters, obsessional cases, obstinate, sadistic and negative types (i. e., all with pronounced anal-erotic characters); narcissistic types are often troublesome. He would do best to select an extroverted type, one with anxiety symptoms and especially a case of anxiety-hysteria" (pp. 45-46).

Dealing at length with the difficult subject of overcoming *the transference* (the play of a patient's emotions about the personality of the physician), Dr. Forsyth makes the following practical suggestions: the first step is "to have at our disposal all the facts proving the existence of the transference—not only those we have observed ourselves but more especially those furnished by the patient in his associations—and placing these before him, and getting him to draw his own conclusions" (p. 87); the second step "is to take up and analyze whatever motive has declared itself in the dream—affection, spite, jealousy, and so on—in order to trace his genesis . . . and the advantage the patient wishes to gain by it. This insight is usually enough to dissolve the feeling at any rate temporarily, though the analyst will now be prepared for its return at any time, and can then deal with it at once, as it has already been recognized by the patient" (p. 88).

Finally, in his discussion of the ultra-practical problem of the termination of the analysis, Dr. Forsyth says that it is "the duty of a physician presently to keep in the patient's full view all the impulses which have been made conscious; this is needed to counteract the almost invariable tendency to forget. By daily paradigms, as it were, the patient learns the healthy control and utilization of these impulses, and with increasing practice becomes more apt until, instead of bringing several or a few or one difficulty during the previous twenty-four hours, he comes one day with nothing on which he needs help. Now it is time to cut down his attendances—every second day, twice a week, weekly, will be often enough. In this way almost the last thread of the transference will break; he ceases even to wish to rely on the analyst or anyone else, and henceforth is self-dependent. . . . To the more intelligent moiety of them he will add the recommendation to keep themselves in touch with the unconscious by analyzing their own dreams" (pp. 128-9).

To say the least, the book should be highly illuminating to the layman and of value to the newly initiated professional analyst.

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A. J. SNOW.

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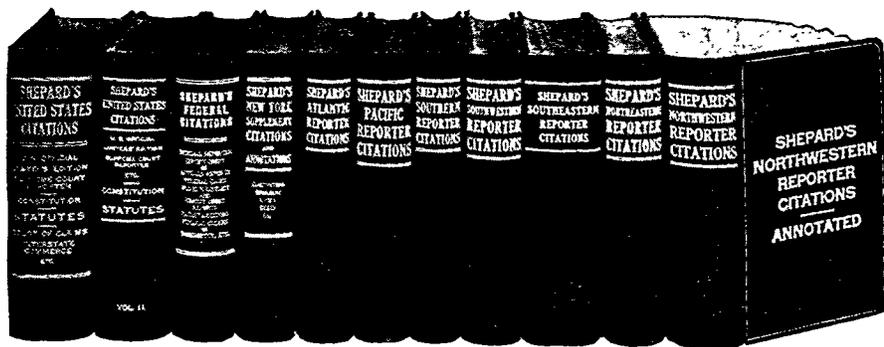
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