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Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ABERRATIONS: A PSYCHIATRIC HANDBOOK. *Edward Podolsky*, M.D., Editor. Philosophical Library, 1953. Pp. 550. \$10.00

DICTIONARY OF PSYCHIATRY AND PSYCHOLOGY. By *William H. Kupper*. The Colt Press, Paterson, N. J., 1953. Pp. 194. \$4.50.

The Encyclopedia of Aberrations is, no doubt, intended to be what its title says: an encyclopedia in the sense that it includes entries each of which is a systematic statement of a given subject. For example, *Lying*, by Dr. Benjamin Karpman, is treated in 12 pages—approximately 9,000 words. But seven lines above the opening sentence in “Lying,” “Letheomania” is treated in four words: “Morbid craving for drugs.” “Psychoanalytic Concepts of Criminality” is interestingly treated by Dr. C. P. Obendorf.

Criminologists nowadays are repeatedly running into neurologic and psychiatric terms which have been invented long since the “Golden Age of Homespun.” These terms are likely to be unfamiliar jawbreakers, therefore, in the mouths of many criminologists—especially those whose training has been off-side from neurology and psychiatry.

Readers of criminology, of whatever vintage, will want this book because it contains, in convenient form, much of what they need to bring them up to date and to stay there. Some of them will look in vain for what they may want to know and they will wonder at the omission. This reviewer has made no attempt to compose a list of possible disappointments. It has just “happened so” that he has unsuccessfully looked for *hebephrenia*, *paraphilia*, *repression*, *Deception (except as lying)*, *stealing (except as kleptomania)* and a few others. His satisfaction with what is in the book, however, outweighs his dissatisfaction because of what isn’t in it.

There are more than a half million words in this book, and 58 writers have contributed signed entries.

Dr. Kupper’s book is a dictionary. In its 194 pages there are approximately 63,000 words and about 3,500 definitions. Not all are just dogmatic definitions, either. For instance, *cortisone* occupies a half page and *cranial nerves* almost a page and a half of text, plus an excellent plate, full page.

The book contains 11 half tone illustrations, showing anatomical details of the nervous system and other parts of the body. There are 11 pages of information about mental hospitals (including five pages in tabular form). Such information will be far out of date long before the rest of the book shall have grown old, and one wonders why it has been put into a dictionary.

Evanston, Ill.

ROBERT H. GAULT

EXPERIMENTAL DIAGNOSTICS OF DRIVES. By *L. Szondi*. Translated by Gertrude Aull. 272 pp., with illustrations and diagnostic tables. New York: Grune & Stratton, Inc., 1952.

About three years ago, *Deri's Introduction to the Szondi Test* was dealt with in these pages by the present reviewer. Now Szondi’s own book, EXPERIMENTAL DIAGNOSTICS OF DRIVES, has finally been issued in the long-awaited English version. The appearance of this volume is a welcome event to those who have become interested in Szondi’s method of personality exploration and diagnostics, and it must be acknowledged that the translator, Gertrude Aull, deserves great credit for the painstaking manner in which she has performed what seems like a singularly difficult task.

Since Deri's book appeared towards the end of 1949, the Szondi Test has become more widely known and used as an instrument in clinical psychology. In *EXPERIMENTAL DIAGNOSTICS OF DRIVES*, Szondi details his method and presents the underlying rationale in a coherent and very lucid way. If the Szondi Test is used judiciously, and if the results are evaluated objectively and rationally, the probability is that it can provide the psychologist with helpful hints and valuable information as to the personality structure and drives, including criminal impulses, neurotic tendencies, and psychotic predispositions.

The present volume is very highly recommended to all who desire a more comprehensive grasp of Szondi's technique of personality study.

New York, New York

NATHANIEL THORNTON

UP YOUR ALLEY. A Mail Survey of Pinboys. By *Lazelle D. Alway*. National Child Labor Committee, New York, Publication No. 410, 1953, Pp. 31, free.

The author starts out the little pamphlet innocently enough by quoting from the "History of Bowling," outlining the development of bowling from the cathedral cloisters of the Middle Ages to the bowling alley of today where a section of the people in your city, including civic, church and youth groups, participate in large numbers. These first two pages, being historical, are pleasant reading. After that, however, the author pulls no punches but lets the chips fall where they may. And yet his factual analysis understates the evils observable in bowling alleys.

The punches take the form, mainly, of statistics, simple and direct, and rounded out with comments which emphasize their social significance to John and Jane Doe whose favorite leisure-time activity is bowling but who see in the pin-boy no more than a human machine. For example, John and Jane Doe don't know that 50 per cent of the pinboys earn from 3¢ to 9¢ a line. The pinboys' own comment on this are summarized by the author in the sentence, "Earning of the pinboy can be classed as pin money in amount as well as in source." He leaves the topic of "Earnings" with this conclusion: "Cash in the pocket looks good to a boy, good to his parents and friends, too. But when this cash is earned at the expense of sleep as well as time and energy needed for school work and recreation, he loses more than he gains."

Long, late hours of work, hazards to limb, the association with older pinboys who are "drifters, bums and down-and-outers," the violation of child labor laws (if there are any) by employers,—such is the grim picture brought home to the decent bowler. He has to know that his recreation is purchased at the expense of a kid under sixteen who could very well be his own son. The survey also aims powerful punches against state lobbies and their meretricious arguments, which is taking advantage of the good standing and great popularity of bowling, and against the proprietors who delude the public into thinking a bowler and a pinsetter are one and the same thing, assuming that the public "don't know one end of the alley from the other"!

They tell the public that the pinboy's work "provides youth with employment," "curbs juvenile delinquency," or "provides youth with wholesome leisure-time activity." The author is right in the assumption that most of the facts presented will come as news to the public. His purpose is to arouse public opinion to the extent of influencing state legislatures to stricter child labor regulations and to require better working conditions for the pinboys in the alleys.

The National Child Labor Committee, the author and the illustrator, Gloria Bley, are all to be congratulated on this eloquent effort to bring home to John

and Jane Doe some of the facts of life, which, as a rule, often escape even the thoughtful and sympathetic citizen.

Los Angeles.

HANS A. ILLING

SOCIETY AND SANITY. By *F. J. Sheed*. Sheed & Ward, New York. 1953. Pp. 274. \$3.00.

This book is an attempt to examine the nature of society through its institutions. Whatever the institutions, religion, marriage, and man, and whatever makes them click, the author firmly believes in the laws as pronounced by man and, through man, by God.

Any order, the author believes, even a political order must be based on social facts and factors if it is to be the universally best. Any moral order or "law" can be provided for by some "psychological strengthening." This strengthening will cover such sexual deviations, as homosexuality and adultery.

Much of what Sheed tries to convey to the reader has been said before, either from an all-religious or from an all-social science point of view. While to combine both views is not new, Sheed seems to have gone all out for a fusion of religion and science, with the usual shortcomings. His attempts to give religion a dominant role are obvious and many readers will appreciate his profound erudition in explaining both sides of the law from the Bible.

An interesting addition to the literature of an all-too-"scientific" sociology! Los Angeles.

HANS A. ILLING

STRAFUDMAALING (Danish). By *W. E. von Eyben*. Copenhagen, Denmark: G.E.C.Gad 1952. Pp. VIII, 502. Danish Kr. 36,-

Under a system of definite sentences the question of sentencing (in Danish: *Strafudmaaling*) is obviously a most important one.

The Scandinavian, like other European countries, practice definite sentences. Much has been published about interpretation of criminal laws and criminal procedure, but only few and scattered theses have appeared about the question of sentencing. It is therefore worth notice when a modern, thorough study of this subject now has been published in Denmark.

At the time when this book was published, W. E. von Eyben was a judge in the City Court of Copenhagen. For his study of sentencing he received not only the doctor's degree, but also a professorate at the University of Copenhagen.

von Eyben's study is based upon an inquiry into 4,302 unprinted judgments of Danish courts of first and second jurisdiction during a period of about 1.5 year, and besides on 113 replies from judges in Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Holland to his questionnaires.

The book is divided into 13 chapters with an English summary. An appendix contains a review of the judgments inquired into and the judges' response to the questionnaires.

As the author points out in Chapter 2, the different European countries have generally accepted the system of latitudes of punishment, but they differ much as to the latitude left for the judge's arbitrary decision.

The author shows quite clearly that the different maxima and minima in the criminal codes are set up at different times and for various reasons—sometimes without any reason at all.—and the presumption that the greater the latitude of punishment the heavier the sentence, is not corroborated.

In Chapter 4 the author has studied the development of sentencing during

the period 1866-1933 in Denmark while criminal law remained practically unchanged. In this period no general tendency to greater mildness is found. On the contrary, there has been a tendency to greater severity, or rather towards special measures of indefinite character and often of long duration, but at the same time increased use of conditional or suspended sentences.

In the following chapter the author deals with the possible effects of changes in the latitudes of punishment. His conclusion is that new, milder laws do not cause any sudden tendency to mildness of punishment. This may be the effect in the long run, however. New laws changing the minima of punishment may be successful, but such laws are felt as heavy restrictions upon the judge's freedom.

In Chapter 6 the author compares the judges' response as to sentencing in Holland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway. It is impressive to learn that except for some details, the response as to larceny, burglary and assault were so much alike that they might have been mixed up in one group, and one should not afterwards from the judge's response be able to tell his nationality. And still there are great differences between the latitudes of punishment in the countries mentioned.

One might have expected that criminal codes in general would give the judges some directions for use of the latitudes of punishment. The Dutch, Swedish and Norwegian codes, however, have no such directions. The Danish code has a general rule for sentencing, but according to the author the law gives little help when a practical question turns up.

There is then good reason for asking what are the rules for sentencing? In the following chapter, after having investigated the Danish judgments he concludes that the punishment seems to be the product of two main factors: the graveness of the crime and the character of the earlier sentences served, mainly by their number, length and distance in time from the present crime.

In the last chapter of his work the author makes some proposals of reforms, but his proposals are neither many nor radical. The latitudes of punishment, he claims, are superfluous, sometimes even harmful, and ought to be abolished. To avoid eventual changes then in the sentencing practice, the author proposes what may be called a "tax system," that is a scale of punishment based upon the court's practice instead of the latitudes of the law. This system is of course to be employed *cum grano salis* with an open eye for the individual circumstances in every case.

For those who might have expected more radical proposals it is well to keep in mind that the author is a representative of a country with old traditions in this field and with great respect for laws and courts. No wonder he would hesitate in what may seem to him like pouring the child out with the water of the bath.

Hammerfest, Norway.

ULRIK BORGH

TRIAL OF NEVILLE GEORGE CLEVELY HEATH. Edited by *Macdonald Critchley*. Pp. 239, preface, illustrations. London and Edinburgh, William Hodge and Company, Limited, 1952. \$3.50.

TRIAL OF FREDERICK BYWATERS AND EDITH THOMPSON. Edited by *Filson Young*. Pp. xxxii, 157, preface, illustrations, appendices. 2nd ed.; London and Edinburgh, William Hodge and Company, Limited, 1952. \$3.50.

These volumes in the Notable British Trials Series relate the intimate details of two cases of violent death in which the lurid and coarser aspects of the sex

motive played a fundamental part. In neither charge are the facts contested nor are the pre-trial investigations noteworthy exercises in crime detection. The cases, however, involved personalities who intrigued the general reading public—in the one instance, a handsome, manicured psychopath; in the other, a young lover and a conspiring wife. Both trials, no doubt, were included in the Series as noteworthy crimes of passion which would appeal especially to scandal-mongering devotees of the Sunday supplements.

The *Trial of Neville George Clevely Heath* brings up once again the vexed legal issue of criminal responsibility. Here the court was called upon to judge whether a perverse sexual sadist was insane or merely a moral psychopath. Even the Crown conceded that Heath was an abnormal person, but did his strong sexual instinct, love of bloodshed, social recklessness, and inability to resist the temptations of perverted impulses make him legally insane? Dr. Macdonald Critchley uses a fifty-three page introduction to strip the question of "diminished responsibility" of its deceiving medical verbiage, and to examine the formula established by the M'Naghten Rules of 1843. His conclusions coincide with the court's ruling that Heath, albeit a criminal, sexual psychopath, was not insane at the time he committed his nefarious deeds.

Dr. Critchley will doubtless stir up a hornet's nest of controversy by his blunt refusal to concede that the legal attitude toward insanity, presently based on a set of principles formulated more than a century ago, need be altered or broadened by the newer disciplines of clinical psychiatry. He insists that although the concepts of psychiatry have advanced in an "astounding way" during the past one hundred years, the questions of "right and wrong," "responsibility for actions," and "self-control" are nonetheless exercises in moral philosophy or ethics that cannot be answered by the practicing psychiatrist with any scientific degree of confidence. This contention is sure to be rebutted by some of the editor's professional colleagues who have insisted that medical ministrations can alter the anti-social patterns of a psychopathic personality, or by criminologists who have maintained the need for special colonies or institutions where the psychopath, detained under an indefinite sentence, might lose his delinquent propensities.

No such medico-legal conundrums are posed to Filson Young, editor of the *Trial of Frederick Bywaters and Edith Thompson*. The circumstances surrounding that case are commonplace—a husband stabbed to death by a jealous rival. However, the prosecution introduced into evidence a collection of love letters to show the emotional antecedents of the murder and to prove the wife's complicity in the crime. Filson Young has augmented and reproduced in full these letters and has made them the substance of his account. In contrast to the usual restrained exercised by editors of the Notable British Trials Series, Mr. Young's handling of this case is abristle with superficial judgments, verbal kickshaws, sob-sisterish romanticism, and agitated belittlings. The court characterized the letters penned by Mrs. Edith Thompson as "insensate, silly affection," but to Young the correspondence breathed a "deep and true" emotion which transcended the mundane realities of the justice administered in British courtrooms. Though the court and jury both cast Edith Thompson in the drab role of an unfaithful, conspiring wife, she emerges, in the eyes of the editor, as a semi-fictional, imaginative heroine, dramatically living in her dream world of make-believe.

This reviewer sympathizes with the feverish sincerity with which Filson Young pleads for "human justice" as distinct from the harsh technicality of the law which maintained that Mrs. Thompson counselled, procured, and abetted her lover in murder. But nowhere in the letters cited or in the

account of the court proceedings is there the slightest shred of objective evidence to justify the editor's sketch of Bywaters as a "verile degenerate," or of Mrs. Thompson as a tragic soul inhabiting "a world of dreams," or his fanciful judgment that this ordinary adulterous affair was "the expression of true emotion," pardonable to people who have not forgotten "the power of youthful passion." Filson Young's dizzying proclivity for romanticism has obscured the facts of a simple, sordid crime. Truth still is sometimes stranger than fiction in spite of Mr. Young's attempt to make fiction of truth.

The Ohio State University

HAROLD M. HELFMAN

THE COURT OF LAST RESORT. By *Erle Stanley Gardner*. New York, William Sloane Associates, 1952. Pp. vi, 277. \$3.50.

Long-suffering Vance Hardy spent twenty-seven years in prison for a murder he didn't commit. Incredible Clarence Boggie served thirteen and one-half years in Walla Walla Prison on the mistaken charge of murdering an old man. Red-headed William Marvin Lindley awaited execution in California for a brutal sex murder or which he was innocent. Louis Gross was made the "fall guy" for the murder of a Syrian laborer in Detroit. When all other legal remedies had been exhausted, these men and three others also unjustly convicted of murder were freed by the Court of Last Resort, a unique group of selfless criminologists who served without pay to fight militantly for the freedom of wrongfully convicted men.

Devoting their energies to the Court's crusade against injustice has been a distinguished board of trained investigators, able men fighting against the occasional haste, ineptitude, and political chicanery of criminal justice: Erle Stanley Gardner, trial lawyer, best-selling author of Perry Mason detective stories and creator of the Court of Last Resort; Harry Steeger, publisher of *Argosy* magazine; Raymond C. Schindler, internationally famous detective; Dr. LeMoyne Snyder, lawyer, physician, and pathologist; Alex Gregory, investigator and operator of the lie detector; Tom Smith, former warden of the Washington State Prison; and Robert Rhay, field investigator and student of the criminal psychology. In the end, however, as Gardner points out, the Court of Last Resort is actually the force of an enlightened public opinion to which the investigative board must appeal if final justice is to prevail.

Why do these men (and others) champion the cause of the helpless underdog? Gardner explains this quixotic streak by pointing out that there is no simple legal procedure or informal tribunal in this country by which a man who has been wrongfully convicted can have the facts in his case reviewed. The Court of Last Resort, however, has not been able to investigate and appeal every case where there is a question as to the guilt of the prisoner. It has generally limited itself to cases where the prisoner was convicted of murder, was penniless, without counsel, and where he had exhausted all other remedies. To vindicate the Court's judgment and to demonstrate a defendant's innocence entail months of dreary investigative work: interviews, travel, reviewing musty court records, tracking down witnesses, seeking new evidence on a trail cold years before, initiating lengthy legal procedures, and incurring great expense. Sometimes a case has been misrepresented to the Court or no new, positive piece of evidence has been uncovered to make it definitely appear that there was either false testimony or a wrong interpretation put upon available evidence. Yet the results have been rewarding. Seven innocent men have been freed from prison, men on whom the stamp of killer had been branded.

The Court of Last Resort is more than a collection of exciting and heart-