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Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE CRIME PROBLEM. (Revised) By *Walter C. Reckless*. Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1955. Pages 728. \$6.50.

"The Crime Problem" is a text book. It combines useful information-giving with the well known but rarely modified disadvantages of excessive verbosity, difficult reading, and artificial division and separation of subject matter. The book is needlessly lengthy and, therefore, excessively expensive. Its contents range from naive simplicity to almost bizarre complexity.

"The Crime Problem" is primarily an informational volume with some few notable exceptions. Despite pretensions to a "social scientific" approach it describes "crime" as defined in the judicial setting. Though there is some extension of the subject matter to discuss potentially new approaches to the understanding and control of delinquency there is relatively little such "theoretical" or "preventive" commentary.

The book itself is divided into six general areas which discuss criminal behavior, criminal motivation, affiliated crime problems, punishment, treatment and, very briefly, control and prevention. With the exception of the last one, each of these sections is fairly exhaustive in its discussion of past and present approaches to the problem. The descriptive material seems adequate for the most part and provides a good background against which the student can orient his own personal experience while working with delinquents. Oddly enough, it is in the somewhat neglected area of theory and research that Dr. Reckless will probably create most disagreement between himself and others engaged in correctional and criminologic work. It is to these portions of the volume that major critical evaluation is directed here.

In looking through "The Crime Problem" I was once again impressed by the fact that all of the creative, systematic, individually-oriented research in delinquency appears to have been done in the period between the late

1920's and middle 1930's. The footnotes in Dr. Reckless' book are similar to those in other volumes on the subject in that they refer repeatedly to the same few texts, most of which were written prior to 1940. Since that time research in the social sciences has been increasingly limited to studies of a primarily cross-sectional, statistical nature, designed to develop "norms" and "cut-off-points" on the basis of which to distinguish "delinquent prone" from "non-delinquent prone" individuals rather than to give insight into delinquent behavior itself. In this respect, Dr. Reckless cannot be blamed or censured for he has access only to the research which is done, and can report only what he finds. Since therapeutic efforts depend upon dynamic evaluations of criminal behavior the modern, statistified, "social diagnosis" approach provides little impetus to preventive or rehabilitative thinking. However, the fact that a veteran researcher like Reckless seems to accept, and even to approve of this trend contributes to the lamentable lack of "savvy" among present day workers in the field of "criminology." Perhaps this general orientation explains the relative lack of space devoted by Dr. Reckless to therapeutic developments even in this revised edition.

A second critical commentary might be directed toward the author's over-protective attitude toward sociology, sociologists, and social work. Dr. Reckless is a sociologist, and a natural bias is to be expected, but the present volume might better have been entitled, "A Sociologist Looks At Crime." The author is quick to present the "social work approach" to every problem in the area of delinquency. Psychological and psychiatric information in these areas are more likely to be mentioned briefly, omitted entirely or sloughed off. This is not only an indication of bias but also of incompleteness. On the other hand, Dr. Reckless seems to prefer to document instances of psychological and psychiatric inanity. There is

admittedly much inanity making the rounds in the area of delinquency as in most areas in which social scientists have an interest. However, the book creates the unfortunate impression that sociological approaches are clearly superior to others. In his covertly critical attitude toward psychological and psychiatric contributions by reference to the worst work being done in the field, Reckless seems to be whipping a dead horse instead of putting his money on the live ones.

A further objection which might be made to the general tone and tenor of Reckless' presentation is his apparent preference for numerical and pseudo-mathematical approaches to human behavior. He seems to be taking the "human engineering" tack, and falling for a naive kind of psychic arithmetic. While it is not to be denied that statistics have value as directional orientation and as a means to provide cues for further research, there are clinical observations which have much better predictive value in dealing with the individual case. Criminals are, after all, as unique as people in general.

No review of Dr. Reckless' book would be complete without reference to some of the excellent conceptualizations of the problem of criminality in general which can be found in its pages. The volume is filled with exemplary case histories, and descriptive instances which serve a very practical purpose in the instruction of students. One would have to agree that Dr. Reckless' concepts of "vulnerability components" and "categoric risks" are both valid and useful in understanding the behavior which we commonly regard as criminal. While one might quarrel with his limited definition of crime as "misbehavior which is discovered or reported" it must be said, in all fairness, that the general definitive approach is fruitful and well adapted to instructional aims. This practical bent on Dr. Reckless' part is further exemplified by his attempt to describe and briefly evaluate presently existing preventive and punishment facilities. The final third of his book is dedicated almost exclusively to a description of probation, parole, institutional

and legal provisions for the handling of the delinquent.

Unfortunately, only the last chapter, a very brief one, was devoted specifically to the problem of prevention. In this section the aberrant behavior of the "criminal" was aptly described, and a social "front" against crime was strongly suggested. Very little attention is accorded the fact that individual involvement and identification with such motivations would have to be developed *in the criminal*, and that development of such attitudes is a matter of individualized approach. Actually, the only specific mention of individual, non-sociological treatment for delinquency was made in a two paragraph reference to "psychiatric clinics," while the ethical, legal, moral, economic, and educational approaches were given much more careful consideration. Greater emphasis might have been given to the fact that housing, case-spotting, and education fail completely in the absence of motivation on the part of the potential delinquent to adjust successfully to a social "norm" which he must perceive as "accepting" and "rewarding."

Certainly this volume is a valuable addition to contemporary criminal literature. It is a useful teaching aid in that it introduces both theoretical and practical aspects of a field in which very little formal training is available, and in which instruction heretofore has been disturbingly out of contact with reality.

SHELDON B. PEIZER

Mansfield, O. Reformatory

THE FIELDS OF GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY.

Edited by S. R. Slavson. New York: International Universities Press, 1956. Pp. xiii + 338. \$6.00.

The present volume may be considered as a continuing series on *The Practice of Group Therapy* published in 1947. At that time, group therapy was hardly out of its infancy and, therefore, the older volume was years ahead of its time. Times have changed in the theories and practices of group psychotherapy and to reassess these, Slavson has undertaken the task of illustrating in the present volume, how the inter-disciplinary "look" appears to the pro-

fessional practitioner in group psychotherapy in the middle fifties. The book displays a variety of settings, with a variety of somatically or psychologically ill patients. The settings include, in addition, mental hospitals, child guidance clinics, family service agencies, industry and private practice; the socio-psychosomatic etiologies encompass the subjects of addicts, alcoholics, stutterers, allergies, mothers (wed and unwed) and delinquents, and sex and marriage problems. There are two presentations by Slavson himself concerned with the general field and multifold aspects of group psychotherapy. To be sure, the present anthology is not comprehensive: omitted are tuberculosis, poliomyelitis, heart, cancer, or cerebral palsy; some of the settings which are not included are in the correctional field, in government, in out-patient clinics, in the maternity home, and in children's institutions; some of the important "tools" used in group therapy are missing, such as music, clay, and puppets. Some of these omissions are interwoven incidentally in the individual papers. However, in an anthology of this nature it seems to me that the general layout, variety and content, quality and quantity, are about what the average reader could wish for both as profitable reading and as ready reference, as physical limitations are to be expected.

Among the notable contributions, chapters on the alcoholic, narcotic addict, and delinquent, and on child guidance may be of particular interest to readers of this *JOURNAL*. Leslie Rosenthal wrote on child guidance and discusses the various types of treatment used in his sessions with children: activity group therapy (conceived and developed by Slavson), activity interview groups, play groups, interview groups with adolescents and parents, and guidance groups for parents, which, perhaps, strictly speaking, is not therapy.

The chapter on delinquents was written by Irving Schulman, primarily psychoanalytically oriented according to authors, such as Aichhorn, Friedlander, and Eissler. Schulman divides his stages of treatment into catharsis (which includes free association, associative thinking, directed discussion, induced discus-

sion, forced discussion, and vicarious catharsis), insight, which is particularly important in the case of the antisocial adolescent, because he should (but often does not) "develop an authority-dependent relationship with the therapist," and the therapist needs to "gain an understanding of his behavior since he lacks motivation to change due to his low level of psychic discomfort," and reality testing, i.e., "the examination of the adequacy of one's feelings, ideas, and actions," relating to ego-strength.

Alcoholics, according to Martha Brunner-Orne and Martin T. Orne, have already stopped drinking before they are seen by the therapist. A "friendly hospital atmosphere where they are treated with sympathy and understanding" will break the vicious cycle of a "deteriorating position associated with intense guilt feelings with sobering up, which again force the alcoholic to continue drinking." The authors agree that in such a setting, as described by them, when applied to group therapy, the therapist can be successful wherever "patients have been unable to accede to A.A.'s requirement that they confess their alcoholism."

The addicts, on the other hand, can be treated only on hospital wards with a thoroughly permissive atmosphere, according to James J. Thorpe. His chapter concerns itself mostly with the experiences of a group of therapists who worked in the hospital prison settings of Lexington, Kentucky, and Fort Worth, Texas. Since these hospitals are administratively under the U. S. Bureau of Prisons, it is the author's opinion that many of the patients had not been treated psychiatrically, since they are just "serving time;" therefore group therapy is the best "substitute" for psychiatric treatment (isn't group therapy part and parcel of psychiatric treatment?). While this paper should be enlightening even to those therapists who rarely deal with addicts, I would like to caution the reader of this chapter against undue optimism; in my opinion, the addict generally seems to be the least accessible to insight and hence to therapy.

It seems to me that this anthology will be most welcome to all those who are genuinely interested in and willing to approach the "new"

field of group psychotherapy without prejudice, let alone to the many practitioners who would like nothing better than to look into the workshops of their fellow-therapists.

HANS A. ILLING

Los Angeles, California

ALCOHOLISM—ITS PSYCHOLOGY AND CURE.

By *Frederick B. Rea*. New York: The Philosophical Library, Pp. 143, \$3.50.

This book is concerned with alcohol addiction and cure. It also explores the spiritual causes of addiction, wherein a plea is made for interdisciplinary action between the public welfare services, the medical profession and the church in attacking the scourge of alcoholism. The author is of the belief that the recovery of the alcoholic is not solely a question of moral or spiritual imperfection. All healing agencies have a part to play in such an experience.

It must be admitted that Mr. Rea's approach is one which has not received the attention in the literature such as it merits, exclusive of course of *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

The author appears to have a dynamic concern with the part that religious conversion can play in the rehabilitation process. In so presenting his theme, he does an admirable job of objectivity and does not go overboard in denying scientific implications. As a matter of fact, the sections on "How Alcoholic Beverages are Made", "Alcohol in the Body", "Alcohol as a Food", "How Alcohol affects the Brain", "Aversion Treatments," and many more are worth-while materials for any library on alcoholism.

Though the reader may feel that the author in some instances oversimplifies the subject, particularly in the chapter on conversion, this book is to be welcomed for making the attempt to at least scratch the surface of an important phase of the alcohol problem—namely, the role of spiritual forces in the addict's life. It is to be hoped that much serious consideration and desirable application will result from this small volume.

ARTHUR LERNER

Los Angeles, California

SAMMLUNG VERSORGUNGS — UND SOZIALGERICHTSÄRZTLICHER GUTACHTEN AUS DEM GEBIETE DER INNEREN MEDIZIN (COLLECTION OF OPINIONS ON INTERNAL MEDICINE CASES RENDERED TO VETERANS ADMINISTRATION AND COMPENSATION COURTS). By *H. Meyeringh u. A. Dietze*. Georg Thieme Verlag, Stuttgart, 1956, Pp. XI + p. 476 with index. DM 30.

The sickness funds and compensation laws in Germany have been in existence for 75 years, Bismark's imperial message to the Reichstag on Social Welfare was read in 1881. German jurisdictions and physicians, therefore, have been able to gather more experience in litigation and compensation than the experts of any other country. For many years the *Reichsarbeitsamt* (Office of the Secretary of Labor) has published opinions, from time to time, in the fields of surgical, neuropsychiatric, medical, dermatological, and gynecological medicine. The case histories in the present volume were written by particularly experienced physicians, many of them Directors of University Hospitals and some in private practice. Perusal of the detailed case histories will be richly rewarding for they demonstrate the application of present day medical theories to the problems of the individual cases.

W. G. ELLASBERG

New York City

AN INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHIATRY. By *Max Valentine*, M.D., D.P.M. The Williams & Wilkins Co., Baltimore, 1955. 15 Chapters. Appendix and index, 47 pp. \$3.75.

This excellent manual of psychiatry was written by a senior lecturer of the Department of Mental Health of the University of Aberdeen (Scotland), as "an attempt to present psychiatry for the medical reader in such a way that it will be consistent with his training in applied biological science." The author stresses the "difficulty that there seems to be no obvious bridge between psychiatry and the rest of medical science" and tries to establish better liaison between the disciplines.

For the non-medical reader, and especially for the criminologist, the chapters on "Mind

and Body" and "The Emotions" will be most enlightening and very helpful. A discussion of the concept of the "Visceral Brain," as developed first by Papez and later by MacLean, makes stimulating reading. In trying better to understand impairments of the freedom of the human will, it is essential to know the present state of scientific evidence in regard to organic disturbances affecting human behavior. The author's presentation of newer neurological hypotheses, arising from work on anatomical connections, physiological neurography, and electro-encephalography, is lucid and easily understandable to the non-medical reader.

In Chapter 15, dealing with forensic psychiatry, an excellent, condensed report on the concept of criminal responsibility is offered, although related only to the English law. Since most of the States of our country still adhere to the McNaghten rules, the presentation is valid also in the respective jurisdictions.

The book is warmly recommended to everybody participating in the administration of criminal justice, as a most valuable contribution to a professional library.

MARCEL FRYM, J. D.

Beverly Hills, California

UNIVERSITY AND CRIMINAL LAW. By *Johannes H. Van Bemmelen, LL.D.* Martinus Nyhoff, The Hague, 1954

Professor Van Bemmelen has clearly pictured here the evolution of criminal law and its relationship to the Dutch Universities in past centuries, particularly of Leyden University. The occasion was the 397th birthday of the University at Leyden, when the author was its President.

This University in the beginning of its existence, as a *Praesidium Libertatis*, vigorously opposed the witchcraft trials. Under its influence, Holland, in 1610, became the first country in Europe to outlaw such trials.

Despite the great development of shipping, trade and art in the 17th century, (the so-called Golden Century), criminal law did not keep comparable pace.

Van Bemmelen has firmly ascertained that

the Calvinists, who believed in the devil and witches, defeated the *Remonstrants*, who among others were against rack and capital punishment, and thereby prevented the development of criminal law and, consequently, the fight against crime. However, Dirk Coornhert, under influence of the philosopher Erasmus, can be considered in the 17th century, as the originator of the open prisons which recognized labour therapy. He disapproved of corporal punishment and the exiling of prisoners: Instead he preferred that prisoners should work on irrigation projects and that prisons should have facilities for manufacturing.—A very modern opinion in those days!—

However, the politico-religious struggles among the Protestants slowed down reform measures until the middle of the 19th century when corporal- and capital punishment in The Netherlands were abolished.

The Universities again are of great influence in rendering criminal law humane.

Despite the fact that the rule *Nullum crimen sine lege* holds its value, Van Bemmelen stressed that more and more we must try to fight the causes of crime, rather than the crime itself; we must make all parents more conscious of their responsibilities as parents to avoid the possibility of neuroses and criminal tendencies on the part of the children.

This speech includes an excellent bibliography provided for those who may be interested in further readings on the philosophy of crime in The Netherlands since 1550.

PHILIPPE F. SCHOLTEN

Columbia University

FRONTIERS OF CRIMINAL LAW. By *Johannes H. Van Bemmelen, LL.D.* H. D. Tjeenk Willink & Son, Haarlem, 1955. Pp. 270.

This title has been given to a collection of essays published in professional and lay periodicals.

The purpose of this collection is to show that it is impossible to punish every injustice and to reveal that there are circumstances in which violations of legal statutes had best be left unpunished.

Of course, the contents apply specifically

to Dutch Criminal Law; but precisely because of the sound opinion of Van Bemmelen's premise: "Injustice and guilt lead to a possibility of punishment", these essays reach far beyond their intended scope.

There are many cases discussed in which extenuating circumstances serve to reduce the severity of the judgment passed upon the wrongdoer (such as when in the case of euthanasia the violation of the law does not necessarily represent a danger to society, but only to a restricted number of individuals).

This book is interesting and valuable from the standpoint of gaining insight into the psychology and the application of Dutch Criminal Law.

PHILIPPE F. SCHOLTEN

Columbia University

THE PHYSICIAN AND THE LAW. By *Rowland H. Long*. Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1955, xii + 284. \$5.75.

This volume is designed exclusively for the use of physicians as an aid in their conduct (1) as a witness in court and (2) with their patients. The material is presented in clear-cut and concise fashion with due regard for the lack of knowledge of physicians regarding legal terms. Those terms which are inevitably necessary are explained in an excellent glossary. Although the preface states that the book may be helpful to lawyers, it is doubtful that the majority would have the necessary medical terminology at their fingertips to make convenient use possible.

The full range of medical specialties is encompassed in explanations of what a physician's position should be in giving testimony; including what diagnostic aids he may employ, as for example in toxicology and pathology; to what degree he should give testimony which would incriminate himself in such poorly defined legal areas as the prescription of contraception and certain types of narcotics. There is an excellent discussion of the privileged communication which points out the widespread misconception that the "privilege" is the physician's, when it is in fact the patient's; such that the physician may not refuse to

testify unless the patient objects to it (providing the patient is competent to object). A separate section deals with testimony on questions of competency and commitment (involuntary) to mental hospitals.

The afore-mentioned items are several among many designed to enable the physician better to make himself presentable to the court without appearing either to be ignorant or overburdened with his own importance. Perhaps of as much or more use to the physician are the sections dealing with his own responsibility to legally constituted authority for the performance of duty in his own profession. His liability and duty in cases of unexpected death, dying declarations, legal and illegal abortions, adoption, artificial insemination, transfusions, and compensation, are fully brought forth. Throughout the book many fine shadings of meaning, nuances, and sharp discriminations are brought to the attention of the reader regarding legal matters which are so often taken for granted that one seems horrified to learn things were not the way they seemed. Only when one has been on the witness stand giving testimony and had it discounted because of improper presentation and faulty knowledge of what is admissible as evidence, can there be a full appreciation of the wealth of information contained in these pages. Emphasis must be placed on the fact again, however, that it is a technical book designed for a special population.

A. STANLEY WEBSTER

University of Tennessee

THE CHALLENGE OF DELINQUENCY. By *Negley K. Teeters* and *John Otto Reinemann*. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950. Pp. xi + 819

This book, a noteworthy addition to the literature on juvenile delinquency, has been designed to serve both as a textbook for college students and as a reference work for practitioners and citizens. Its format is similar to the earlier "New Horizons in Criminology" by Teeters and Barnes.

The first part consists primarily of a review and appraisal of the varied definitions, in-

dexes, and alleged causes of delinquency. Each of the past and current theories when tested by the canons of logic is found inadequate and all of them when juxtaposed reveal what McIver called (in viewing theories of adult crime) "conflicting voices". In the opinion of the authors, a sociologist and a probation administrator, mental conflict, a resultant of either social disorganization or individual-societal conflict, is the causal agent in delinquency. Their supporting evidence is, regretfully, meager.

The care and treatment of delinquents from apprehension to institutional confinement are discussed in part two. Generally, rehabilitative programs of today are based less upon repressive devices and more upon insight into and sympathetic response to the total needs of each child.

These principles of social casework plus an early recognition of the symptoms of childhood tensions are likewise important in the area of delinquency prevention. In part three, there is a delineation of the roles to be performed by the parents, school, police, guidance clinic, and the agencies of communication. An appendix containing fifteen case history summaries is added to illustrate etiological factors, detention, probation, and forms of therapy.

In the opinion of this reviewer, the shortcomings of the book are that: (1) the frame of reference shifts from delinquent to maladjusted children; (2) statistics are sometimes employed which when refined lose their significance (compare, for example, p. 514 with p. 516); and, occasionally, statements are contradictory. On the one hand, "the writers have no clear-cut answer to the question of just how much delinquency there is or whether the rate is rising or falling" (p. 18), and, on the other hand, the "over-all picture of delinquency varies with various national cataclysms" (p. 12).

The general response to the book is exceedingly favorable. It is comprehensive, usually accurate, lucidly written, and thought-provoking.

EDWIN D. DRIVER

University of Massachusetts

SOCIAL WORK YEARBOOK 1954. A DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZED ACTIVITIES IN SOCIAL WORK AND IN RELATED FIELDS. Twelfth Issue. Edited by *Russel H. Kurtz*. American Association of Social Workers, New York, 1954. Pp. 703. \$6.00.

This is the second report published under the auspices of the American Association of Social Workers. It has, almost to the page, the same length. Part One consists of 72 topical articles written by authorities; Part Two, of four directories of agencies whose programs are related to the subject matter of Part One.

Describing activities discussed in the 1951 edition under other titles are twelve articles: "The Aging," "Civil Rights and Civil Liberties," "Correctional Treatment," "Courts and Social Work," "Juvenile Delinquency," "Labor and Social Work," "Mental Health," "National Organizations in Social Welfare," "Research in Social Work," "School Social Services," "Social Work and National Defense," and "Youth Services." Three other topics are treated for the first time in the YEARBOOK: "Epilepsy," "Public Health Education," and "Group Psychotherapy."

The article on "Correctional Treatment" was written ably and competently by Russell G. Oswald, director of the Division of Corrections, Wisconsin Department of Public Welfare. "Courts and Social Work" comes from none other than the late Frank T. Flynn of the University of Chicago, with an extensive and up-to-date bibliography. "Juvenile Delinquency" was written by Bertram M. Beck, director of the Special Juvenile Delinquency Project of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. These are just a few articles, in whose topics the readers of this JOURNAL are likely to be especially interested.

However, the YEARBOOK as a whole serves a different purpose. While most practitioners in the correctional field can be expected to be familiar with these three areas, the same practitioners may not be familiar with related areas, such as "Volunteers in Social Work," or "Public Welfare," or "Maternal and Child Health," or "Homemaker Service," to name just a few.