

the following excerpt on gizzard-renewal from Professor Newton's 'Dictionary of Birds': 'As a rule the cuticle (gizzard lining) is continually wearing away and being reproduced, but many cases are known in which most of the lining is suddenly cast off and ejected through the mouth.'

The author adds:

"I often heard curlew having long spells of coughing by night, but only understood what that meant after my discovery. The function of stomach-renewal takes place in early autumn, and it is in September or early October that one finds newly-shed pouches."

Mr. Dugald Macintyre is a keen fisherman, and has found that an effective lure for seatrout in the lower pools of a river at dusk is small saithe flies. I myself have caught saithe when fishing for seatrout in the tidal waters, and have known of one occasion when a silvery herring snatched the fly and was landed.

The author narrates (p. 136) an occasion on which a cold spell which visited Mull suddenly during October 1936 had the effect of causing stoats to turn white prematurely, and believes that the weather largely influences their change of colour.

SETON GORDON.

CAUSATION OF MENTAL ABNORMALITY

The Psychodynamics of Abnormal Behavior

By Prof. J. F. Brown, with the collaboration of Dr. Karl A. Menninger. (McGraw-Hill Publications in Psychology.) Pp. xvi+484. (New York and London: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1940.) 24s. 6d.

THESE are a number of faults which are common to introductory books on psychopathology. They are often written by those who have themselves but a smattering of the subject—in spite of the fact that it needs wide acquaintance with it to write easily in simple language. Such books usually deal with fundamental material, which the student could read with advantage in the original work, and so neglects the more recent advances. Finally there is often a gross bias in favour of one particular school of thought.

These faults have been avoided by the authors of the interesting book under review. It is an excellent introduction to psychopathology planned for the student, but the general physician will also find it of interest.

The writers take the organismic point of view as their basis and, although they have a strong psychoanalytic leaning, they are critical in everything they say and do not repeat simplified orthodoxy. For example, they state: "We need more precise definitions of our theoretical concepts. In our criticism of psychoanalytic theory we saw that, despite the very great genius of Freud and many of his followers, many of the concepts were ambiguous and not at the present time capable of either scientific definition or experimental evaluation. It is to be hoped that the collaboration of psychoanalysts and academically trained psychologists will bring about a sounder background for psychopathology." This broad-minded view is

taken throughout the book. Everywhere the importance of psychosomatic factors is noted; for example, on p. 68 it is stated: "A discussion of the several types of mental abnormality indicates the presence of psychic factors in those usually thought of as purely somatic and of organic factors in those usually thought of as purely psychogenic."

The book is divided into five parts. Part 1 deals with the organismic point of view (the reaction of the individual in his environment), normality, abnormality, the nature of personality, the historical development of psychopathology and the psychosomatic problem. Part 2 describes symptomology, modern ideas regarding symptoms, abnormalities of the cognitive, motor and emotional processes. Part 3 deals with the theory of the genesis and structure of the personality. Part 4 gives an outline of psychiatry (including sexual abnormalities and genius). Part 5 suggests the future possibilities of the psychodynamic theory. It is this last part which is of most interest to the practising psychiatrist, since it is full of common sense and points to many fascinating developments.

The book is well presented, with excellent binding and good print. The style is clear and illustrated with diagrams. It should be easy for one who has had a little acquaintance with psychology to understand the theories presented, but naturally those who are studying medicine should augment it with a text-book of psychiatry, since the clinical descriptions are a little curtailed. The value of the book is enhanced by a full bibliography—there are eighteen pages containing some four hundred references, mainly of recent work. There are also good author and subject indexes which make the book a pleasure to use.

CLIFFORD ALLEN.