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CHILDHOOD PSYCHOSIS : Childhood Psychosis: Initial Studies and New Insights.

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formulation of paranoid and paranoiac conditions. The place of hallucinations in hysteria is also duly examined; 'hallucinations and depression constantly appear as clinical manifestations of hysteria, but in the imaginary factitious world of the hysteric delusions and hallucinations are themselves falsified phenomena. The hallucination of the hysteric does not put an object where there is none, it puts objects without reality in a world operating on the pleasure principle'.

The greater part of the rest of the book is taken up with theory—often abstruse theory. There are, Ey holds, two fundamental models of a theory of hallucination, which he calls 'linear and 'architectonic'. The linear model is 'mechanical or 'psycho-genic'. He considers these models faulty in that they reduce the hallucination to a simple positive phenomenon—stimulation of sensory centres or affective thrust. The organo-dynamic model instead goes to the root of all the modalities of hallucination. As a phenomenon contravening the order and regularity of our mental organization the hallucination makes us perceive when a false object is being put forward.

The final four chapters of the book contain a restrained account of the methods of treatment commonly employed on schizophrenic and other patients in whom hallucinations may be a prominent feature.

This treatise is a monument of learning and critical exposition. It opens the door to a whole corpus of French psychiatry which is little known to English or American readers (though in reverse Dr. Ey shows himself to be intimately acquainted with German, English and American literature). However, working one's way through it is heavy going, partly because there is much repetition, still more because of the unfamiliarity of the modes of thought and language in which it is couched.

AUBREY LEWIS.

CHILDHOOD PSYCHOSIS

Childhood Psychosis: Initial Studies and New Insights. By LEO KANNER. Chichester: John Wiley and Sons for V. H. Winston. 1973. Pp. vii+283. Price £5.50.

This book could equally well be entitled 'Childhood Psychosis Revisited, the main theme being that there is little new in infantile autism apart from the development of more sophisticated instruments with more powerful lenses for focussing upon the old issues. Such critical hyperbole is, of course, a tribute to Kanner and attests to the way the old master combined creative thinking with accurate recording of clinical data in such a way as to sharpen and magnify perception of an area of childhood problems

hitherto dim and hazy. He perceived harmonies where none had been perceived before and offered theories (only some of which, as is to be expected, stood the test of time) to explain the observed facts. Such theories and facts generated thoughtful and provocative hypotheses, many of which today still constitute the basis of major research.

Rereading all these essays in one book is a salutary experience, as it reminds us that it was in the 1940s that Kanner discussed the relationship between autism and dysphasia, and between autism and the psychoses occurring in later childhood (of a schizophrenic variety), and made the observation that autistic children never developed hallucinations or delusions. And it was in the mid-1950s that he took the first tentative (but often unheeded) step in evaluation when he pointed out that none of the various treatments employed had any noticeable effect, and at this time that he provided prognostic pointers such as that the absence of language in pre-school children serves as a criterion of severity of the autistic process. In addition, one becomes appreciative of the way in which Kanner has combined a mastery of the clinical anecdote with penetrating insights so that the book is not only rich in information but also eminently readable.

His final chapter provides a previously unpublished descriptive account of the course of the disorder in terms of a follow-up of 34 psychotic children. Indeed, the last few chapters provide fascinating new findings still presented in his clear and distinctive style, so that the book is not only a reprint of the old but reveals that he has not lost his touch in providing an account of the new.

This book is essential reading for those professionally committed to child psychiatry and child psychology. But general psychiatrists, too, will find here a lucid and absorbing account of how impressively accurate clinical observation and analysis followed by synthesis of the essential elements has led to the delineation and development of our knowledge of the syndrome of infantile autism.

ISRAEL KOLVIN and DONALD MCL. SCOTT.

ALIMENTARY DISORDERS

Eating Disorders: Obesity, Anorexia Nervosa and the Person Within. By HILDE BRUCH. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1974. Pp. x+396. Index pp. 8. Price £3.95.

Hilde Bruch is an American psychiatrist who has made a unique contribution to the study of the emotional aspects of the eating disorders, spanning over 35 years. This book presents an account of the continuing development of her ideas over this period. Her present central position is that the feeding dis-