attitude to decisive problems is absent. It certainly does not compare with the earlier chapters in which the contribution to emotions of the different parts of the central nervous sytem and of the endocrine glands in health and disease is recorded. Here, the high academic standard one would expect is kept up throughout, and a full account of our knowledge can be found, at least as far as it is represented in the literature in English. Regrettably, there is an almost complete absence of reference to work published in French and German, especially on the classification of emotions and their relation to cerebral lesions.

To sum up: Cobb's book on the rôle of the emotions in medicine is not the critical survey that can be handed to the interested student, but rather a physician's collections of personal impressions garnered from the literature and the clinic. W. MAYER-GROSS.

The Sober Truth. By LINCOLN WILLIAMS. Distributed by Edgar Backus, Leicester. Price 6s.

This small book gives a clear and straightforward account of the problem of alcoholism. It outlines various patterns of alcoholic consumption, and emphasizes that the true alcoholic is a compulsive drinker who cannot revert to drinking in moderation and for whom a single drink is like "putting a lighted match to petrol." Other chapters describe briefly and in simple terms the psychological and physical effects of alcohol, the influence of heredity and the legal aspects of alcoholism. The last three chapters are devoted to treatment, and here the emphasis is almost entirely on the activities of "Alcoholics Anonymous," which the author describes as "an outstanding form of . . . group therapy."

The Sober Truth has been written for the alcoholic and his relatives and can be confidently recommended to them. Further editions should include a bibliography of the papers on alcoholism mentioned in the text.

J. HARPER.

Hay-Fever. By JOHN FREEMAN, D.M.Oxon.

The subject of this book is one with many sides to it, yet heretofore the medical public has been regaled with many articles and books written from a single standpoint instead of taking into consideration all possible synergic factors.

Here, on the other hand, three chapters (covering 52 pages) are taken up with the emotional factor in the causation of hay-fever, and all through the book the note of psychosomatic synergy presents itself.

The book is thus of an unusual character, and this would, by itself, be a reason for recommending it, but it is worth much more than that would suggest. Indeed, I would give it to a young doctor on the day of his graduation with the request that he preserves it as a bedside book for his whole professional life. Dr. Freeman, like his great teacher Sir Almroth Wright, has that touch of genius which turns trivial evidence into valuable conclusions: the gift, that is to say, of binocular vision—seeing the objective picture and accepting it at its true value, while the subjective side is maintained with the same validity of evidence.

The author shows a disarming combination of assurance and of tentative reservation. He is convinced by his own argument only after much conflict and much sifting of evidence.

Here is a highly significant passage (Chap. 3): "Single Cause Fallacy—I speak deliberately of the 'causal mechanism' and not of 'the cause.' Much medical controversy and misunderstanding is based on what may be called the Fallacy of the Single Cause." Dr. Freeman sets forth seven causative

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factors which he calls " manipulable." Then our author takes a great plunge : " I would go further and guess that all seven causes are necessarily involved in every case to a greater or less extent." There are not many even amongst the most zealous psychosomatic preachers and teachers who would endorse without reservation this universal doctrine. The seven causative factors are :

(*a*) Heredity—(hardly treatable).
(*b*) Idiotoxin—(e.g., grass pollen in hay fever).
(*c*) Idioceptor—(sensitiveness to the idiotoxin).
(*d*) Serious Leak—(that is, from the blood vessels).
(*e*) Trauma—(the localizing factor).
(*f*) Emotions—(always play a part, but *only* a part in causation).
(*g*) Bacterial—(acts in various ways).

Taken all round this book is worthy of immortality as a classic, because the psychosomatic gospel is here presented in its dual aspect—that is to say, in describing the effect of emotional reaction on the symptom as well as the toxic effect upon the patient's mentality. The author is indeed to be congratulated on compounding a book that reveals his own scientific judgment and open-mindedness. Finally, this is a book that only reactionaries will have the courage to condemn. We hope it will have the circulation it merits and pass from edition to edition as it clearly deserves.

H. CRICHTON-MILLER.

Modern Abnormal Psychology. Edited by W. H. MIKESELL. New York : Philosophical Library, 1950. Pp. 880. Price $10.00.

This is an erudite and eclectic book, written by thirteen psychiatrists and twelve psychologists for the benefit of students and the general public.

The chapters vary in worth and style, but Chapter 2, on " Psychotherapy : Outline of its History and Present Situation," by Drs. Grotjahn and Gabe, excels in both. Some chapters are pompous, but all are realistic, even if they also read in places like a guide-book. One chapter alone has 106 references, and over 500 persons are mentioned at the end of the book in an Index of Names. Yet the book is modest about our knowledge of abnormal psychology ; as Albert C. Voth, Ph.D., says in the last chapter, " we are still groping in a pre-dawn darkness."

American spelling is of course used, and so are words such as " acculturation," and unexpected phrases punctuate the book in a startling manner—a patient struggling to succeed in life is described as " punch drunk " with failure. A doctor or psychologist treats his " client " in an " office."

The book is printed clearly on good paper. C. E. H. TURNER.

The Law Relating to Mental Treatment and the Health Service. By HAROLD BERRY. Churchill, 1951. Pp. 121.

This little book is reasonably accurate, and contains much useful information about the law governing the treatment of mental illness and mental deficiency. It is, however, a little difficult to assess for whom it is intended. If addressed to those requiring full details of the law in connection with their professional work in relation to patients in or going into mental hospitals, then one must deplore certain glaring omissions, chief of which we would mention the position of voluntary patients losing volition and of temporary patients regaining it. No mention is made in the voluntary patient section of the fact that he can leave on his own notice, nor is the method of extending temporary treatment described. The rules and procedures to be observed when patients die in hospital are nowhere to be found (except for burial arrangements), while there is no reference to divorce on grounds of incurable insanity.

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