

## REVIEWS.

**ELECTROCARDIOGRAPHY.**

By C. C. MAHER. Pp. xiv+250. Figs. 95.  
Published by Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1934.  
Price 18/-.

This is "a treatise on Electrocardiography, for use by the general practitioner, the medical student, and the specialist exclusive of the cardiologist," according to the author. The information contained in this book covers almost the complete field of electrocardiography in a manner that is certainly not superficial. One is, therefore, driven to the conclusion that the American general practitioner and medical student are expected to know much more than those on this side of the Atlantic, or else that the book goes too deeply into a very specialised subject.

The first two chapters appear to be rather unnecessary, dealing with "Clinical Concepts of Heart Disease, and of the Arrhythmias." The section explaining the significance of the various waves is quite good and is carefully restricted to non-controversial views. The last chapter, which is on "Routine Interpretation of Electrocardiograms," is excellent, clear and concise. The author reproduces a diagram of the conducting system of the heart about thirty times; its frequent reappearance in slightly altered form is somewhat monotonous, and does not seem to be very helpful. The reproduction of the electrocardiograms is very good, though it is not always clear which are actual photographs and which are diagrams. Unfortunately several rare conditions are illustrated, such as ventricular escape, wandering pacemaker, etc.; the chance of a general practitioner meeting with more than one of these is so rare, that they might have been omitted without risk of diminishing the value of the book. On the whole, there are too many photographs of electrocardiograms, and the explanation of each is much longer than is customary in this country.

The main criticisms of this well produced work are that it covers too much ground for the type of doctor for which it is intended, and that there is too much detail for a busy general practitioner to digest.

**A TEXT-BOOK OF MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGY.**

By E. KRETSCHMER. Translated by E. B. STRAUSS. Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, London. 1934. pp. xiii + 274. Price 15/-.

As Dr. Strauss remarks in his introduction, this book is an attempt to correct a defect in the average medical course, which sends a student into practice with the most meagre understanding of the minds of his patients, in spite of the fact that a physician's job is with men and women more than with disease, so that he has to practice psychology without professing it: he must have a detailed knowledge of centres of ossification and such-like anatomical details, but he is expected to know no more about human psychology and psycho-pathology than his own patients.

From the author of "Körperbau und Charakter" and "Geniale Menschen" one expects a text-book which will be stimulating and original, bearing the impress of personal experience, and these expectations are realised. This is unlike the usual text-book—it is not a system, nor does it present the tenets of any one school—it is eclectic, a collection of empirical facts and observations from anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, psychiatry, anthropology, psychology, and other sources arranged so as to throw light on the problems of human thought, feeling and conduct. Unlike so many psychiatrists, Kretschmer brings the psychic functions into relationship with the results of recent research into their anatomical and physiological bases, and stresses the connections between normal and abnormal psychology.

The terminology and style of the first half of the book make it somewhat heavy reading, but this impression disappears in the second half where, in discussing temperament, personality, and psycho-therapy, the author's thinking moves more easily. It is the work of a clinician, which is an advantage in a work intended for medical practitioners, to whom it can be confidently recommended. The chapter on psycho-therapy is remarkable for its lucidity and comprehensiveness.