

so often it is taken for granted that the cause of pellagra lies solely in an insufficient intake of the chemical, when probably in many cases abnormal functioning of the gastrointestinal tract and liver hinders utilization and storage of the vitamin even though it is present in an adequate quantity in the diet.

Dr. Harris gives evidence to indicate that this insufficiency of the stomach and liver may be due to the following causes:

(1) The ingestion of toxins in beverages and foods over a long period of time which cause gastro-intestinal disease and liver insufficiency.

(2) The ingestion of food or water carrying pathogenic bacteria, disease-producing protozoa, etc., which likewise may cause damage to stomach and liver.

(3) "Intrinsic or endogenous" factors which appear to be "pathologic physiology of the stomach and liver." In this connection the author goes on to point out similarities in pathology and symptomatology in pellagra, pernicious anaemia and sprue, suggesting the possibility that they are allied nutritional diseases.

In chapter 18 it is emphasized that "neurasthenia" is one of the earliest signs of the disease. "Insomnia with varying degrees of mental perturbation, particularly worry" is a frequent complaint of pellagrins. The patient complains of tiring easily, difficult in concentrating and impairment of memory. Mental depression with suicidal tendencies is considered the most important and most constant nervous manifestation of the late stages of pellagra, although "the psychoses of pellagra may simulate any type of mental disease." The diagnosis is stated to be "easy" when taken in conjunction with the other symptoms of pellagra.

In the chapter on "Pellagra and Southern Prosperity" the author scores the unfavorable publicity the Southern States have received because "zealots of food deficiency as the sole cause of pellagra have left the impression that the entire South is backward and poverty stricken." Statistics are quoted to show that pellagra exists in every state in the Union, and is a national problem rather than "the scourge of the South" as so many newspapers, magazines and books state.

There is an excellent bibliography containing some five hundred references.

This book should be very useful and stimulating to clinicians interested in pellagra.

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SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF MODERN LIFE. By *Stewart Henderson Britt*. (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1941.)

The author has successfully attempted to present an interesting survey of social psychology for students of sociology and psychology, and for the layman. As the title of the book suggests, the treatment relates to modern everyday problems; and a remarkably wide array of experimental and observational materials has been drawn upon in presenting the subject in concrete form.

The content includes description of the methods of social psychology; the interrelations of physiological, psychological and sociological materials; the general psychological bases of behavior and learning; the special problems of social behavior; an analysis of representative social groups, and a portrayal of some important social conflicts. In the case of these latter, practical solutions are frequently suggested, consistent with the general point of view of the book as a whole, which repeatedly demands an objective appraisal of facts and a determined programme of social and political activity.

As is inevitable, the treatment of broad social issues in one volume leads to apparent superficiality. Any attempt to portray the issues of Nationalism and War, for example, in a twenty-six page chapter, especially since the present world conflict is also under review, can only result in a statement that is hopelessly inadequate. The very prejudice against which the student is warned lurks in every short-cut that is taken for the sake of brevity. But it would be unfair to criticize the author on this score, since he is asking for a method in approaching social issues and the method demands careful enquiry into facts, opinions, prejudices and the like, and full and free discussion of all major problems. Each issue presented may, therefore, be regarded as a preliminary review, to be discussed and considered far more fully by the readers. Without this, there might arise an attitude of complacent insight, an unfortunate and dangerous tendency not entirely without representation among psychologists.

The questions and problems suggested for discussion at the end of each chapter are, on the whole, well chosen, although, again, one is likely to demur at the scope of many of them. ("Give a complete social-psychological explanation of lynching," (p. 459) asks for, and implies a great deal. Numerous other examples might be cited in similar vein.) Extensive collateral reading is suggested, which would have to be selectively handled by anyone but a full-time social psychologist.

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SCIENCE AND SANITY. AN INTRODUCTION TO NON-ARISTOTELIAN SYSTEMS AND GENERAL SEMANTICS. Second Edition. By *Alfred Korzybski*. (Lancaster and New York: The Science Press Printing Company, 1941)

Count Korzybski is an image breaker. He comes of the honourable line of Lobatchewsky and Brouwer and Einstein and Lucasiewicz. Eric T. Bell in *The Search for Truth* reminds us that the history of man's speculation on the nature of truth is oriented with respect to four great landmarks: (a) the beginnings of measurement by the Egyptians; (b) the demand of Pythagoras for proof by deductive reasoning; (c) the challenge of Euclidean geometry by Lobatchewsky in 1826; (d) the emancipation from Aristotelian logic by Lucasiewicz and Tarski in 1930.

It is inevitable in the eternal questing of the human mind that from time to time authorities are set up; and it is the task of those who come after to determine whether such authorities shall continue to hold sway. Twenty-three hundred years ago Aristotle formulated certain "laws of thought," and until the twentieth century A.D. these dicta of Aristotle were held to be of the nature of axioms. But among searchers for truth authoritarianism is less popular today than it used to be; and among pioneering thinkers absolutes and ultimates and axioms have lost caste. Euclid did not give to the world the *only* geometry; Newtonian physics has had to be recast; and Aristotle is now arraigned as a false witness who has misled seventy-odd generations of logicians.

A somewhat extended discussion of Korzybski's system, as presented in the first edition of *Science and Sanity*, was offered by Douglas Campbell in his article, "General Semantics," which appeared in the January 1937 issue of this JOURNAL. The fundamentals of semantics were also set forth by Count Korzybski in a paper read at the Cincinnati meeting of the Association and later published in the JOURNAL (September 1941).

The text of the present edition remains the same as in the first, but a new fifty-page introduction, including 100 additional bibliographical references, has been provided to cover later developments in the field of general semantics.

The author starts with the postulate that all science, logic and philosophy is simply a "product of the functioning of the human nervous system, involving some sort of internal orientations, or evaluations, which are not necessarily formalized. The analysis of such *living reactions* is the sole object of general semantics as a natural *empirical science*."

The statement that no two persons think or feel in identical fashion about anything requires no demonstration. May we not assume that any well-informed person will accept the statement as true? But is it so well recognized that 'words' and 'facts' are merely two kinds of 'data' and that one can never precisely represent the other; and further, that taking 'words' too seriously and equating them with 'facts' may lead to grievous mis-evaluations which prejudice happiness and even health? Those who wish to avoid such dangers, as the author remarks, "would do well to study the verbalizations and mis-evaluations of the men-

tally ill in hospitals." It is a paramount aim of semantics to correct this almost universal proclivity to 'identification.'

Semantics lends its voice also to lay the fallacy of the Aristotelian 'either-or' and of the dichotomy of the human being ("with jails for the 'animal' and churches for the 'soul'"). Such verbal splittings have been the plague of science. "Until recently we have had a split medicine. One branch, general medicine, was interested in the 'body' (soma); the other was interested in the 'soul' (psyche). The net result was that general medicine was a glorified form of veterinary science, while psychiatry remained metaphysical." The mischief of this ancient misevaluation is recognized today. The verbal dichotomies 'subjective-objective,' 'affective-intellective' are other linguistic dilemmas which semantics endeavors to solve.

Korzybski contends that much individual maladjustment and international disorder results from ignorance or disregard of the elementary principles of the new science of evaluation. It cannot be gainsaid. Certainly the mis-evaluation of casual utterances and commonplace experiences plays its part in the genesis of malignant delusions; and certainly the muddy flood of words which constitutes organized destructive propaganda is a social toxin of the most virulent kind. The mass mentality of Nazism is today a horrid example of social disease which might not have become epidemic in Germany if the individual voters of 1930, 1931 and 1932 had been stabilized in a truer understanding of the significance of words and deeds.

Hoping that "the governments of the world will awaken and realize that the proper functioning of the nervous systems of their citizens is in many ways more important than any gun, battleship or aeroplane," Korzybski also looks forward to the time when a permanent and full-time board of specialists in the fields of anthropology, psychiatry and semantics may become a regular part of the government advisory services. "It seems extremely short-sighted in 1941 that governments should employ permanently specialists in chemistry, physics, engineering, etc.; other specialists who advise how to eliminate lice from poultry, raise pigs, conserve wild life, etc.—and yet have no permanent consulting board of specialists who would advise how to conserve and prevent the abuse of human nervous systems."

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