

REVIEWS

CARACTERE ET PERSONALITE. By E. Peillaube. (Tequi; 20 frs.)

Character is the measure of man as seen in his capacity for rational control of the self and the direction of his life. It is essentially plastic and susceptible of education and re-fashioning. Character, though consisting mainly in will, has a foundation in temperament, which in turn has a physical basis as well as a correlative psychological bias. Temperaments vary and show a tendency to fall into groups or types corresponding in some degree with the bodily habitus, as has recently been shown by Kretschmer, Ledos and other writers.

Character itself is seen as the result of the interplay of various forces, such as heredity, environment, acquired habits, crystallization of ideas, profession in life, and finally imagination as representing the romantic side of the interior life.

The first part of this book deals with temperament and character, current doctrines of which are examined and when necessary criticized in the light of sound philosophy. In the second part the author deals with the problem of Personality, mainly from the empirical standpoint, as distinct from the philosophic conception of personality as such. Here again the empiricist theories of Hume, Kant and others are examined and rejected, on the grounds that they fail to show the distinctive aspect of personality, which lies in the awareness of the essential continuity of the self amid the changing fortunes of character. The volume concludes with a discussion of will and liberty, and education of the will.

The psychopathology of will and its relation to the problem of liberty is ably discussed, together with the question of determinism. It is to be deplored that death prevented the inclusion of a final chapter on the spiritual sources available in the refashioning of character. Nevertheless as it stands the author has achieved a valuable synthesis of the scientific and philosophic aspects of the subject.

G. A. ELINGTON, O.P.

THE CHEMISTRY OF THOUGHT. By Claude A. Claremont. (Geo. Allen & Unwin; 8/6.)

This is a book which we feel will interest a larger circle of readers than those whose interests are mainly in psychology and education. Thinking is a process involving certain elements—the stuff of thought—which are manifested in various ways for various ends, but we usually take it for granted, without stopping to consider the nature of the process.

Psychologists have attacked this problem before now. The "Würzburg" school of experimental psychology, led by the late Professor O. Külpe, introduced the psychology of the higher thought processes with a special technique of controlled introspection. In England Prof. Spearman is known for his theory of "noegenesis."