PSYCHOLOGY

FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY. By Peter Sandiford. (Longmans; 12s. 6d.)

Modern psychology has to a large extent departed from the earlier experimental studies of consciousness and mental states, to take up a bio-social attitude in which the observation of human behaviour in its various manifestations is its principal object. Reviewing briefly the course psychology has taken in the centuries and the various schools which in late years have come into existence, the author finally takes up a strictly objective standpoint and maintains that educational psychology—a major branch of applied psychology—has for its subject matter the behaviour of human beings undergoing the process of education. He is, however, aware that 'there are certain obvious limitations and even more obvious losses by restricting the subject in this way . . . We neglect some of the most important elements in our lives, namely, our subjective reactions to music, art, people and literature. But there are also gains.' Whatever view we take of the essential meaning and purport of education it will not be contested that it rests upon the general foundation of Nature's Gifts to Man; the sub-title given to this treatise.

Every individual possesses in some degree or other, barring certain exceptions, some capacities for education which are due partly to native constitution in which heredity plays an important part, and partly to environmental and social factors. 'Heredity and environment are correlative factors; each one is inconceivable without the other.' After a brief account of Man's place in Nature and his ancestry which is somewhat uncertain, the author proceeds in the first chapter to an exposition of the fundamental laws of heredity especially in regard to Mendelian discoveries and their application to man. Detailed investigations into family histories on the one hand, and that of twins and the now famous Dionne quintuplets, shed much light on this question. The relations of heredity and environment in regard to educational potentialities receives full consideration and many interesting and important facts are brought forward to show that these factors must be considered together; for environment includes a social heritage which greatly affects the task of education. 'Children are born *with* a biological heritage; they are also born *into* a social heritage.'

From the study of heredity there arises the further problem of individual differences. Galton's Enquiries into Human

Faculty and its Development (1888) was the starting point of psychological research in this field, and of the introduction of statistical methods carried on later by C. Spearman and his followers.

Psychology did not indeed discover the obvious fact of individual differences of ability, intelligence and other elements of personality, but with the aid of various kinds of tests and rating scales it has been able to throw light upon the degrees and distribution of such differences in so far as they are susceptible of measure. Whilst the bulk of any considerable population of children tends to be ranged about an average, which justifies the class method of instruction, we have to take into account extreme deviations whether below or above these average abilities. Provision has to be made in particular for those who fall far below the average; but for those who rise considerably above it adequate provision is often lacking and their subjects may sometimes develop into 'problems.'

Turning next to the question of behaviour in general, the two succeeding chapters are given up first to the foundations of behaviour which is defined as response to stimulation; and involves the physiological organisation of the individual and its interaction with the environment. This chapter is mainly physiological. Behaviour is also made up of non-variable or unlearned behaviour which includes reflex activities, instincts and emotions which are dealt with in the following chapter. Thence the author passes on to discuss Intelligence, its Nature and Measurement (chap. 5). Whilst intelligence, whatever this is taken to mean, is innate, yet in its development environmental factors are important. These include Teaching and Training. The nature, use and value of intelligence tests are explained and discussed; as also the questions of sex differences in this respect.

Personality, its Nature and Measurement, is dealt with in the last chapter. This is a difficult subject, but one with which psychology is extensively interested to-day. Many attempts have been made to describe and classify types of personality; but personality is a concept difficult to use scientifically, since so many different meanings are attached to the word.

Keeping in view therefore the limitations, already referred to, of the behaviouristic approach to educational psychology, this volume by the Professor of Educational Psychology in the University of Toronto will be found to contain much valuable and interesting information, supplemented by copious references to the literature of the subject, as well as a good index. To what

extent, however, educational practice will be influenced thereby, or how, is a matter which is open to a discussion beyond the limits of a review.

AIDAN ELRINGTON, O.P.

L'INSTINCT D'APRES W. MCDOUGALL. Par Ed. Jannsens. (Desclée, de Brouwer; 15 frs.)

In a series of writings commencing in 1908 with his Introduction to Social Psychology, William McDougall sought to bring psychology more into touch with the vital problems of human nature and conduct than could be achieved by the experimental psychology of his day. In the new orientation of psychology which has proved so fruitful, the ancient tradition derived from Aristotle was to a large extent restored.

The core of McDougall's psychology lies in the theory of the instincts and their attendant emotions which supply the drives and motivations in animal and human behaviour; hence the term 'hormic' by which he describes his point of view.

Recognizing the fundamental value of McDougall's psychology as well as its obvious limitations, Professor Ed. Jannsens presents in this brief study a summary of the doctrine of instinct followed by criticism in which its defects are analysed and corrected. These the author declares are mainly due to McDougall's strong anti-intellectual bias, according to which intellect and intelligence take a subordinate place to the instincts in conduct. Intellect being considered as the servant of the instincts which it organises in view of the purposes of conduct. While this to a certain extent is true, nevertheless when such problems arise as the moral control of impulse, the creative activity of mind, and free will, which McDougall defends, difficulties arise which lead McDougall himself to question the complete validity of his outlook and to ask among other questions: 'Are there any innate cognitive dispositions beyond those involved in the structure of the instincts?' (*Outline of Psychology*, p. 450).

Professor Jannsens, in pointing out certain difficulties and inconsistencies in the theory of instincts in relation to human conduct, nevertheless declares that the 'hormic' psychology in itself possesses sufficient doctrinal riches to direct it towards more comprehensive and adequate conceptions of the complexities of human nature.

These we would suggest could be derived from the incorporation in the theory of instinct of the traditional doctrine of the powers of the soul and particularly of the lucid teaching of St,