

## Reviews

**Who Shall Survive?** Foundations of Sociometry, Group Psychotherapy and Sociodrama. By J. L. Moreno. Beacon House Inc., New York. \$10.

This is a large and voluminous exposition on Social Psychiatry covering 724 pages and divided into 6 books, by Moreno. He self-styles it his "Bible of Human Relationships". Any book of necessity reflects the personality of the author; this is certainly no exception; in fact Moreno is completely carried away by his exuberance and becomes positively euphoric over the great disclosures he makes, frequently to the detriment of other workers in the same field and showing a biased critical analysis of their work as a whole. Even if one allows oneself to become fired by his enthusiasm, it is another matter to practice what he preaches without his attribute of self-display. For him "stage space becomes an extension of life beyond the reality test of life itself;" reality and fantasy are thereby prevented from conflict.

In the prelude he roughly sketches his own auto-biography and in the introduction develops his philosophy of the here and now approach in tackling psychiatric problems. Later in the book he develops the theories and uses of sociometric techniques and defines the difference between psycho-drama and socio-drama. In describing various sociometric methods, the idea expounded carries one away from the concept of changing the individual or restoring him to normal by direct attack, towards a therapy centred on leaving the individual unchanged but reorganised in his group. In other words, he finds his place in the community. Moreno maintains that not until this has happened can sublimation occur, the result being that the individual is not forcibly developed beyond his spontaneous strivings.

His various methods are so organised to conform to his new scientific era, being marked by (a) diagnostic (sociometry) (b) actional (psychodrama) and (c) therapeutic (group psychotherapy). In postulating his new theories and using his own terminology it is interesting to note that he compares psycho-analysis in his theme, the couch becoming for him the stage, sexuality becoming spontaneity, the unconscious the warming up process and transference being "tele"—"tele" defined by him as "attractions, revulsions—indifferences between people need a common denominator, the simplest unit of feeling transmitted from one individual to another".

Books 2 and 3 represent largely the conclusion of his sociometric studies with groups of varying sizes and complexity—the

latter parts of the book, 4 and 5, being a suggested approach of the preventative type to problems of even larger social units, based on the principles learnt from books 2 and 3. He even makes suggestions of how to tackle world problems and to create an Utopian Cosmos.

There can be no doubt that this authoritative work is not in the same category as the general medical textbooks; at the same time it is the best comprehensive treatment of Group methods that I have yet read. It is not too easily read, and there is a lot of wading through a marshy conglomeration of explanation in which one is liable to get bogged down before one comes on solid ground. If there is one good factor alone which emerges and stands out, it is the technique he has created of *measurement*. "Every science refers to a constellation of facts and the means of their measurement". Group techniques, if they are to become accepted and recognised methods of treatment, must be capable of assessment in the good that they do. The sociogram has been evolved as the test method, measuring the amount of organisation by social groups. This by itself makes the work valuable and acceptable, even if it does provoke, as Moreno has himself suggested, "a lot of personal controversy".

R. B. MORTON.

**Psychological Problems in Mental Deficiency.** By Seymour B. Sarason. 2nd Edition. New York: Harper Bros. London: Hamish Hamilton. 40/-.

Workers in the field of mental deficiency who regret the dearth of new books with a fresh approach to problems involved in this field will welcome Dr. Sarason's new edition. Those of us who are acquainted with the first edition will remember that it dealt mainly with theoretical problems, psychological explanations and classifications. This earlier edition departed most from the traditional approach by including two extensive chapters on projective techniques and psychotherapy. These chapters embody the modern psychological approach to the field of mental deficiency and provoke much stimulating thought on the traditionally accepted I.Q., replacing the rigid I.Q. concept with a more dynamic approach.

Dr. Sarason's chapter on Psychotherapy includes an extensive report on two cases which he treated himself. He is obviously a person who has had much practical experience with defectives and a deep understanding of their problems. Consequently, he has extended the scope of his original book to include, in this edition, more material dealing with the practical problems presented by mental deficiency. He has added three chapters which deal with the interpretation of mental deficiency to parents, the problem of