Book Reviews

Estimation of the vitamins. (Biological Symposia, Vol. XII.) W. J. Dann and G. Howard Satterfield. (Eds.) Lancaster, Pa.: Jaques Cattell Press, 1947. Pp. xiv + 531. (Illustrated.) $6.50.

There are about 15 vitamins which have been clearly characterized and which are of importance directly or indirectly to man. From one to many methods have been proposed for the estimation of each of these in food and biological fluids. Descriptions of these many methods are widely scattered in the scientific literature, some of them are but slight variations of others, many are of questionable merit or of limited application. The time is more than ripe for a critical evaluation of the situation. This has been done in a thorough and competent manner in this new book, which should be in the library of anyone interested in the estimation of the vitamins.

Each of the 29 chapters which the book contains is written by a contributor who has had intimate experience with the subject. The editors have done unusually well in their selection of contributors, and the authors have done unusually well with their assignments.

Available methods based on biological, microbiological, and physical and chemical principles are included. In each case a recommended method is presented along with a critical discussion of the details of the method, its limitations and merits. This is a book which should find wide and heavy use.

OTTO A. BESSEY

The Public Health Research Institute of The City of New York, Inc.

La perception de la causalité. A. Michotte. Louvain: L'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie; Paris: J. Vrin, 1946. Pp. viii + 296.

It is with a certain feeling of excitement that one begins the reading of a book with a title as intriguing as *The perception of causality*, written by a distinguished psychologist.

In his experimental technique, Michotte takes off from the classic example of causality used in philosophic discussion—the impact of one billiard ball on another. To find out what are perceived as "causal phenomena," he used a projection technique in which two disks could be observed behind a screen in various relations to each other. Variations in speed, distance, angle, temporal, spatial, and kinetic order were controlled to determine the conditions and limits of what were perceived as causal relationships.

Whether or not a person experiences a "causal impression" is held to be entirely a matter of the structural organization of the perceptive field, of the intrinsic properties of stimuli organized in certain spatial and temporal relationships. The author relies heavily on Gestalt psychology and believes that "the perception of causality is as 'objective' as all other perceptions."

What he terms the "generative aspect of causal impression" is also a phenomenal given. Luckily for man, he says, there exists a high correspondence between the physical world and the phenomenal world, between the laws of mechanics and the properties of causal impression. Causal impressions of qualitative change, he maintains, are limited to combinations of movement or changes of form.

Whether or not one agrees with Michotte that his interpretations are both valid and adequate, he has performed the great service of pointing out the paradoxes that must be resolved because of the inadequacy of our up-to-now understandings of the type of phenomena he investigated. But, in the reviewer's opinion, it is risky to apply generalizations obtained from the perception of billiard ball situations to "causality" as conceived when we try to understand an individual who exhibits purposive behavior, who initiates voluntary actions, and who makes value-judgments in his effort to modify in the present the causes of what he foresees as future effects.

ADELBERT AMES, JR.

The Hanover Institute, Hanover, New Hampshire

Psychoanalytic therapy. Franz Alexander, Thomas Morton French, *et al.* New York: Ronald Press, 1946. Pp. xiii + 353. $5.00.

This volume, the fruit of 7 years of research at the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis, offers perhaps the best statement of the possibilities and limits of brief psychotherapy that has appeared in psychological literature to date. The book should have a profound influence on the future course of psychiatry, social work, and clinical psychology. In the choice of a title and in their text (pp. 208, 338–339), the authors indicate that they would prefer to have their theories and techniques regarded as "psychoanalytic." The orthodox analysts who have reacted to the book apparently think otherwise. The modes of therapy reported by Alexander and his co-workers are anything but "analytic," in the sense of being "Freudian." They are patterned in the main after the thinking of two of Freud's great contemporaries, Otto Rank and Alfred Adler. For their dynamics of *therapy*, or their clinical approach to the individual who is suffering from an emotional disturbance, Alexander and his colleagues are indebted for the most part to Rank (pp. v, 22–23). As for their dynamics of *personality*, or their theories of the structure of neuroses—which the therapist must grasp quickly if he is to make a success of shortened psychotherapy (pp. 11, 172, 262–263)—the Chicago group would seem to be Adlerian through and through. (Such is the conclusion one is forced to draw after making a close examination of the volume's excellent case histories.) The Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis is not alone in this seeming rediscovery of Rank and Adler. Psychiatry and clinical psychology as a whole seem to be drifting in the same direction. Adler has come to life in other vigorous circles, notably in the publications of the "Horney" school. The fertile Philadelphia School of Social Work owes its orientation to Rank. Rank is also the father