as the country as a whole, promises much for the future.

Under the auspices of certain of the national, private, and public health foundations and institutes concerned with the problem, Masland, Sarason, Gladwin (neuropsychiatrist, psychologist, and anthropologist, respectively) were commissioned to review critically the past and present research and thinking in the vast field of mental subnormality. The authors were not only to examine and cull the good work from the mass of poorly conceived and conducted studies of past generations, but also to integrate their findings into a meaningful whole, and in addition, to discuss the promising leads for future research. This volume is the result of 2 years of intensive work.

Interestingly enough, Masland, who summarized the prenatal and postnatal organic causes of mental deficiency, has titled his part "The Prevention of Mental Subnormality." Sarason and Gladwin enter upon the usually disconcerting effort of defining intelligence and then go on to an intensive discussion of the relationships of psychological and sociocultural variables to intellectual functioning. In this extensive review of years of effort by thousands of individuals, the authors have managed to produce a coherent, lucid, and eminently usable account of a large number of heterogeneous conditions which are multivariably caused and which may be related or unrelated. The authors come to no single or simple conclusion. However, beginning with quite different frames of reference, they "take very different avenues to attack a single worrisome and damaging concept, that of a hereditary taint as the basis for all mental subnormality. The attempt to lay this shibboleth finally to rest is implicit in much of both reports." It was apparent to the collaborators, as the attribution of etiological factors became increasingly specific and valid, that geneborne disorders had been frequently offered on a *post hoc* basis.

The attempt to unravel and specify established and likely causations, separately and in combination, becomes the theme of the book, and it must be acknowledged that the authors have performed exceedingly well an almost impossible task. Illustrative of the magnitude of this massive effort is the fact that each one of the over 600 references given has been used at least once and frequently many times in the structure of their argument and has not been inserted as padding—a too-common occurrence in academic work. It is, therefore, not too surprising that a number of annoying bibliographic errors are found when attempts to trace specific references are made. There are a few errors in quotation or interpretation as well as over- and underemphasis. The authors, themselves, are aware that they have not given sufficient effort to the integration of the interplay of organic, psychological, and social factors. It would be surprising in a work occupied with every level of integration from nuclear physics to culture if some errors could not be found to criticize. These can be left to succeeding editions for correction, and there would appear to be little doubt that succeeding editions will be forthcoming in view of the obvious and critical need for the book. This is a nodal piece of work in the field of mental subnormality. Its definitiveness and its stimulating and exciting qualities make it all the more valuable. It will be widely read and discussed, and it should be the fervent hope of all who work in the area of mental health that its implications and recommendations will be widely disseminated.

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**The American Labor Force: Its Growth and Changing Composition.** Gertrude Bancroft. Wiley, New York; Chapman and Hall, London, 1958. xiv + 256 pp. Illus. $7.50.

Following the 1950 United States census, several studies, entitled the *Census Monograph Series,* were prepared under the auspices of the Social Science Research Council in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of the Census. These studies considered such topics as the changing population of the United States, American families, and urban and rural areas.

*The American Labor Force* is a volume in this series. By *labor force* is meant the total number of persons reported as employed, plus the unemployed—that is, persons so reported to the census enumerator at the time of the 1950 census (or at the time of the pertinent monthly sample survey of the population).

Bancroft's study is largely concerned with analyzing the statistics provided by the census of 1950 and earlier censuses supplemented by data from the Census Bureau's monthly sample surveys. She deals with selected aspects of the measurement, growth, and composition of the labor force. Chapter 1 describes the United States labor force as of 1956; some additional material about persons not in the labor force—that is, the nonworkers—is included. Chapter 2 describes trends in the labor force from 1890 to 1955, giving the numbers and proportions of persons engaged in various occupations, together with brief mention of changing occupational patterns. Chapter 3, the longest in the book, contains an exhaustive and detailed analysis of changes between 1940 and 1950—changes in labor force participation from the standpoint of age, color, marital status, and so forth.

Trends in the part-time labor force (chapter 4) and family employment patterns (chapter 5) are two topics which have been seriously neglected in past analyses of the labor force. This resulted in part from the lack of statistics which would permit study of these topics and in part from undue preoccupation with the individual worker rather than interest in the family as a working entity. Bancroft has brought together many data, most of which have become available only since the end of World War II, and has obtained some interesting findings, such as, "there is not much reason to believe that 'that interesting part time job' which is the goal of so many better educated women has become a very common feature of the present labor market" (page 107). More definitive analysis of these two interrelated topics, unfortunately, will have to await the availability of more statistics and information. The reader who is interested in these two topics should also see Paul Glick's *American Families,* another volume in the *Census Monograph Series.*

Projections of the labor force to 1975 are given in chapter 6. Four methodological appendices complete the volume.

On the whole, this is an excellent census type analysis, in line with the presentations in other volumes of the series. I feel, however, that the inclusion of more noncensus material and analyses (of which there is a considerable body available) would have given more breadth and scope to the findings and, indeed, would have strengthened them.

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**On the Magnet.** William Gilbert. A volume in the "Collector's Series in Science." Derek J. Price, Ed. Basic Books, New York, 1958. xi + 247 pp. $8.50.

The period between the mid-16th and mid-17th centuries was one of great creative activity in the field of natural philosophy. A number of investigators took a fresh look at the world about them and sought not only to comprehend that world but to apply the newly gained understanding.

One of these men was William Gilbert, Elizabethan physician and student of the loadstone. His findings were incorporated in *De Magnete,* first published in London in 1600. Basic Books