

Book Reviews

and contributed to by social and intellectual historians and historians of psychology and psychiatry. They cover the period 1894 to 1944 and are meant to be provocative rather than to create a definitive history of it. Each essay is a scholarly presentation, and together they represent an impressive amount of historical material.

However, they deal mainly with individuals, and thirteen are biographical accounts of pioneers and their important work. The book is well illustrated and will provide a wide circle of readers with a fascinating case-study in the history of American psychiatry, which it is hoped will stimulate similar investigations of other specific regions.

RUTH HALL (editor), *Dear Dr. Stopes. Sex in the 1920s. Letters to Marie Stopes*, London, Deutsch, 1978, 8vo, pp. 218, £6.50.

The editor has had the excellent idea of a survey of sexual matters in the 1920s, based on letters written to Marie Stopes (1880–1958). Her correspondence was unique, because she was the first to receive large numbers of letters on sexual and marital problems written uninhibitedly by men and women. In 1921, after the opening of her first birth control clinic, she claimed to have received one thousand letters a week. The British Library has most of her correspondence, but this will not be available until 2008. However, the present selection comes from letters in the possession of her son, and covers the years 1918 to 1928. Extracts or whole letters are grouped in chapters: the lower classes; the upper classes; the clergy; the medical profession; the armed services; politics; etc. Together they form an important social and historical document, which would have been of greater value had Dr. Stopes' replies been available.

RICHARD D. ALTICK, *The shows of London. A panoramic history of exhibitions, 1600–1862*, Cambridge, Mass., and London, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1978, 4to, pp. [x], 553, illus., £19.75.

Little research has so far been carried out on this interesting aspect of English social history. Much of the material used by Professor Altick appears here for the first time, and he has produced a unique account of London exhibitions from 1600 to a decade after the Crystal Palace Great Exhibition of 1851. The variety is enormous: religious relics, eighteenth-century virtuosi, scientific displays, art collections, the panorama and diorama, freaks, waxworks, etc. This book is, however, by no means a catalogue of such attractions, because the London shows have been integrated with contemporary intellectual attitudes and public taste.

The medical and scientific aspects of this survey are especially interesting, because every possible variety of anomaly and physical peculiarity was exhibited at one time or another. The whole history of the dissemination of medical and scientific ideas and data by this medium needs a much deeper study.

However, Professor Altick is to be congratulated on his excellent and scholarly work and the industry needed for its production. The only criticism of note relates to his 181 well-chosen illustrations which adorn the book. In some cases their reproduction leaves much to be desired; possibly due to the state of the originals.