

Book Reviews

ROBERT BYCK (editor), *Cocaine papers by Sigmund Freud*, New York, Stonehill, 1974, 8vo, pp. xxxix, 402, [7 11.], \$14.95.

Most people are aware that Freud, like other outstanding medical men, passed through a phase of cocaine addiction. His writings on this episode are, however, less well known. This authoritative and complete version of the 'Cocaine papers' (1884–1887), with notes by his daughter Anna, is, therefore, welcome. They include his writings on the subject: for example, his paper 'Über Coca' of 1884, and his pertinent letters, recollections, dreams, and notes, all in translation. To these are added articles by others dating from the nineteenth century to the present day, the last one, 'Proposals for the evaluation of cocaine' having appeared in 1974. Thus the history of cocaine as well as Freud's encounter with it is presented so that his involvement is placed in perspective.

Professor Byck's book is important for a number of reasons. It illuminates significant aspects of Freud's personality and his private life, some of the supporting material having been previously unavailable. But it also contributes to the history of pharmacology, drug addiction in general, psychology, and to social history. It is a scholarly work, and in addition to notes to the text there are useful, brief biographical sketches of individuals referred to. It deserves wide attention.

JOHN MCLEISH, *Soviet psychology; history, theory, content*, London, Methuen, 1975, 8vo, pp. xii, 308, £6.95.

Dr. McLeish, who is Professor of Educational Psychology in the University of Alberta, has produced an unique book. Everyone has been aware of the differences between Soviet and Western psychology, but few have understood how and why. But the present-day situation in Russia can only be understood by tracing the historical foundations of Soviet psychology, and this Professor McLeish does in the first part of his book (pp. 5–62). Russia has had a quite different political, cultural, religious and social history from Western Europe, even long before the Revolution. Since the latter its psychology has been even further removed from us. It is based on political action and social changes, as is also revealed by a study of its history, and it rejects the inductive eclecticism of the West. Today, therefore, Soviet psychology, with its radical philosophical background, primarily serves the Communist Party.

Professor McLeish deals at length with Pavlov's contribution, and it is clear from present-day attitudes that he is entirely responsible for today's concepts. But as well as his contribution, the conditioned reflex, there is the governing control of the cerebral cortex, which links neatly with basic Marxist precepts. Historians of medicine may not be interested in the more recent developments in Soviet psychology, or in the present position or in the future, which form a major part of this work, but, should they ever need an authoritative, balanced and well-written account of them, they will find it in Professor McLeish's excellent book. There are numerous textual annotations and references, together with an excellent bibliography and index.

Much has been written on the history of psychology in the past, partly because psychologists are especially articulate individuals, but nowhere is there to be found a better example than this of a book that shows how vital it is to approach modern opinion by way of its historical development.