

Marriage.

Ideal Marriage: its Physiology and Technique. By Dr. Th. H. Van de Velde. Translated by Stella Browne. Pp. xxvi + 323 + 8 plates. (London: William Heinemann (Medical Books), Ltd., 1928.) 25s. net.

THIS compact book, written by the some-time director of the gynæcological clinic at Haarlem, a psychologist, and a connoisseur of human nature, gives, as its sub-title indicates, an introduction into the art of conducting an ideal marriage. It approaches its subject from the physiological side mainly, but it is based on an essentially sound sociological conception of matrimony.

Nowadays, when the institution of marriage is being the subject of much discussion and some reform—revolutionary as in Russia, somewhat hysterical as in the United States, and perhaps almost too slow as in Great Britain—this book will be of interest not only to those who read it as a practical guide, but also to students of human society and human nature.

In the first part, after a succinct but comprehensive introduction discussing the real nature of marriage, the author gives a detailed analysis of the physiology of reproduction. The second part deals with more specific questions of anatomy and function. The third part is an outspoken, but in no way pornographic, analysis of technique in marital relations. In the last part, Dr. Van de Velde gives advice as to the mental and physical hygiene of the personal relations between married people.

The book raises, of course, the question how far it is possible to deal scientifically with what might be called the most subtle and most intimate technique of human relations. The present work gives us the reflections, conclusions, and the philosophy of a man with wide experience, with a great deal of common sense, and a capacity for plain but clean speaking, and it justifies itself as a manual of conduct, if not as a scientific disquisition. Treated as a document, it is really valuable for the sociologist, the student of human culture and of the human mind.

This brings us to the second question: such a book could obviously not be sold in the open book-selling market; the publishers have limited its sale strictly to the medical profession. This certainly is not in any way justifiable: there should be some provision by which a man of science, whether he be a biologist interested in reproduction, or a psychologist studying problems of sex, or a socio-

logist, should have as easy an access to such a book as the average medical practitioner. The neglect and even scorn of science and of scientific status, so characteristic of public opinion and official attitude in Great Britain, is exemplified nowhere so clearly as in the silly and irksome discrimination which is given to the 'medical and legal professions' and neglects completely the researcher and the academic teacher; and gives him no place above the man in the street or the seeker after pornography. B. M.

Our Bookshelf.

Anatomy and the Problem of Behaviour. By G. E. Coghill. (Lectures delivered at University College, London.) Pp. xii + 113. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1929.) 7s. 6d. net.

THE anatomy into which behaviour does not enter, at least unconsciously, is generally regarded as an academic study incapable of formulating general conclusions and therefore sterile. The anatomical method which has proved most valuable in the hands of British investigators is that which seeks to establish a comparative correlation between structure and function. It is therefore hard to understand why the same method which has proved so suggestive in comparative anatomy has not been pursued more vigorously by embryologists, in order to elucidate the meaning of neurological structures, since this method is even more accessible to professed zoologists than to human anatomists in England. Dr. Coghill, the author of these three lectures, is a member of the Wistar Institute of Anatomy and Biology at Philadelphia; but the lectures were delivered in London. He has made a parallel study of the development of behaviour and of the nervous system of *Amblystoma* with signal success for his purpose.

We should expect behaviour to develop consistently with the order of development of the nervous system. The demonstration that it does so is therefore of less general interest than, for example, Dr. Coghill's observation that the muscles which move the gills of *Amblystoma* act at first with the trunk muscles although they are under the nervous control of different centres. The reason assigned is that until appropriate sensory connexions are established for local reflexes, the motor pathway to the trunk actuates the gill nerves and their muscles. There is thus evidence for the existence of an early, more generalised anatomical pattern which acquires discreteness anatomically and physiologically. "The development of behaviour primarily through the extension of the total pattern rather than through the projection of primarily isolated parts to become integrated secondarily, means that the maintenance of the integrity of the individual as a whole is the elementary function of the nervous system." However complex the organisation, conduction alone cannot fully account for the rôle of the nervous system. Its own growth is one of the conditions of