

Book Reviews

the Shakers, and the Holy Rollers can be similarly interpreted.

The author presents a large amount of disparate information in support of his thesis and he could be, at least in part, correct. It is a pity, however, than when putting forward an original and provocative view he has not documented his data accurately in order to substantiate his claims with authority. Moreover, his knowledge of the history of neurology and psychiatry is neither as extensive nor as accurate as one would expect, and his claim concerning the paucity of historical works on mesmerism is difficult to accept.

However, the book should stimulate others to re-evaluate inexplicable phenomena, with the possibility that in some cases epilepsy will be found to be the etiological agent.

CLARENCE MALONEY (editor), *The evil eye*, New York Columbia University Press, 1976, 8vo, pp. xix, 335, illus., \$18.75.

Spread throughout the world is the notion that a person can have harm done him or his property by another projecting it upon him. One of the methods is by evil forces directed from the eye, and this book brings together fifteen essays by anthropologists who are investigating the evil eye. The idea originated with the Ancient Egyptians, and today is found in many parts of the world which the authors here describe in topographical sequence: Italy, Greece, Tunisia, Arabia and Iran, Ethiopia, India, Philippines, Guatemala, Mexico, and America. It is fascinating to review the diversities of this variety of magic and myth and to see how it still flourishes in modern communities and seems to correlate with certain technologies, but not with others. Professor Maloney's book is one of the most detailed on an absorbing subject and will be warmly welcomed mainly by anthropologists. Historians of medicine will also be interested in the evil eye as a primitive agent in disease causation, and in the wide variety of methods used in prophylaxis and treatment.

E. WILLIAM MONTER, *Witchcraft in France and Switzerland. The borderlands during the Reformation*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1976, 8vo, pp. 232, illus., £12.00.

For a period of about two and a half centuries, beginning early in the fifteenth century, the French-Swiss border, like other parts of Europe including Britain, was the scene of many witchcraft trials. Professor Monter has selected this "Jura region" because of the different styles of witchcraft encountered and the rich source-material available. A comparative study is always of value, and he skilfully compares and contrasts the components of Jura witchcraft with those elsewhere in Europe. Phenomena witnessed in Germany, France, and Britain were not seen in the Jura. These differences, and the variations along the French-Swiss border, have a variety of explanations, not all of which were religious. Analysis of them demands a detailed knowledge of both local and general affairs, which the author clearly has. His book is an important scholarly contribution to witchcraft studies, upon which, it is to be hoped, future workers will base their studies. It is well written, the documentation is neither oppressive nor scanty, and it can be strongly recommended.