

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SPECIAL ABILITIES AND DISABILITIES

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The psychology of special abilities and disabilities by Augusta F. Bronner

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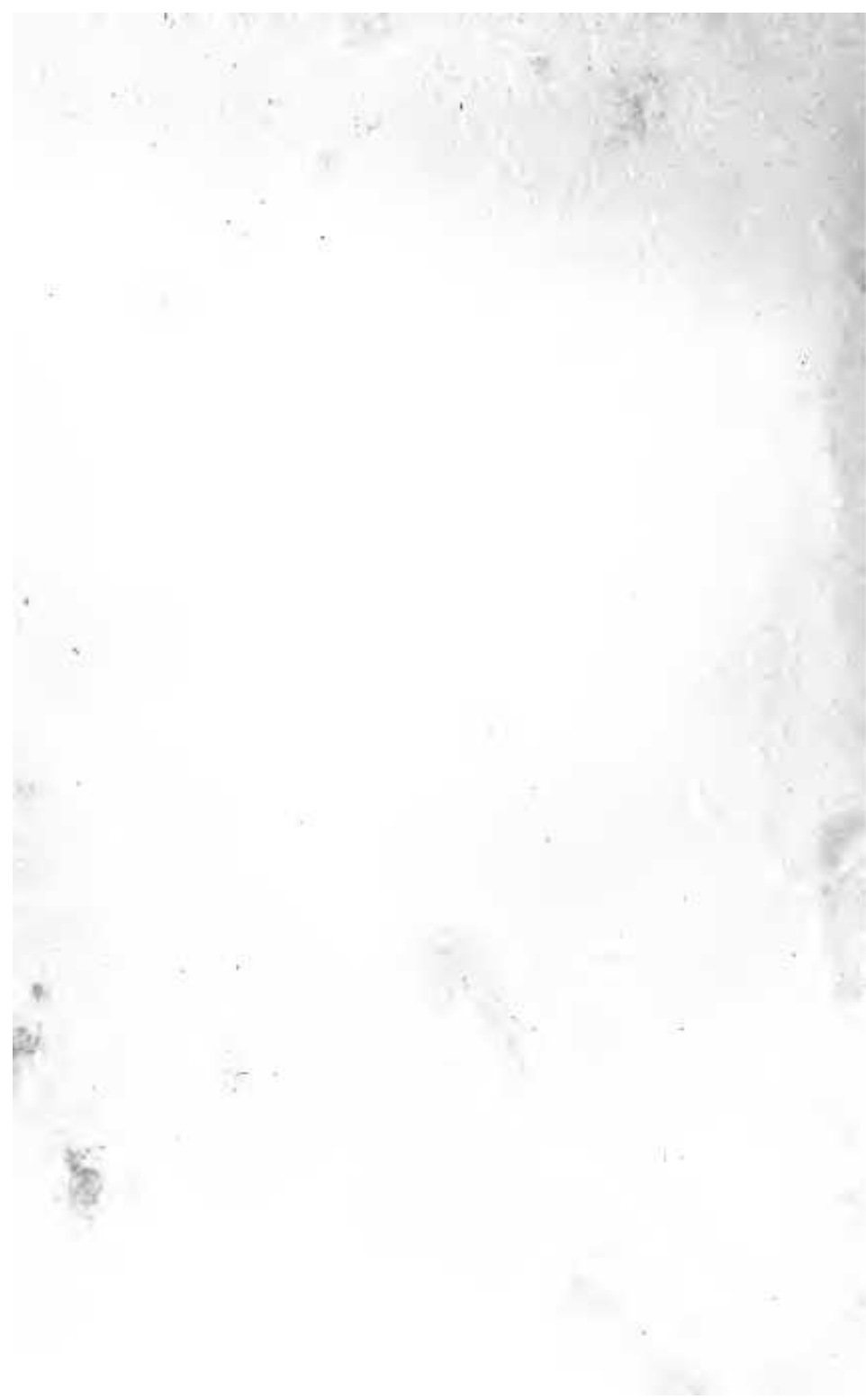
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BY

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PREFACE

WITH the ever increasing demand in education for recognition of the individual rather than the mass, it is remarkable that no attempt has been made as yet to formulate specifically the problems of specialized abilities and disabilities. On the side of mental defect, interest is centered so largely on testing and caring for individuals of general low intelligence that the problems of narrower types of defect have been neglected and still are largely misunderstood. Some writers have touched upon related questions, mainly in referring to the fact of individual differences in mental capacities, but only general statements are to be found; nowhere else have special defects been outlined and nowhere can one find even enumeration of the types of variation that are practically important.

In this book an attempt has been made to discuss practical aspects of special abilities and disabilities, to offer in detail methods of attacking problem-cases, and to present various types, both (*a*) of particular disabilities in those who have normal general ability and (*b*) of particular abilities in those who are below normal in general capacities. The great tendency of to-day in the psychological study of individuals is to make general diagnoses, stressing particularly the defects that

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are found. But there is also great value in discovering abilities which exist and in endeavoring to base constructive measures on them.

It is fully recognized that many of the questions concerning special abilities and disabilities cannot yet be solved. It is hoped, however, that the present discussion will lead to appreciation of the need for greater study in this field and will stimulate other efforts in this direction.

The whole presentation of the subject is based on the experience that many case-studies have afforded. In the selection of cases, in the analysis of the material, and, indeed, in the preparation of the entire book I have been greatly helped by Doctor William Healy, to whom I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness for inspiration, encouragement, and wise counsel.

AUGUSTA F. BRONNER.

CHICAGO,
October, 1916.

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