

therapy. The series remains a 'must' for all psychiatric libraries.

MICHAEL RUTTER.

ORGANIC PSYCHIATRY

Advances in Neurology. Vol. 1. Huntington's Chorea, 1872-1972. Edited by A. BARBEAU, T. N. CHASE and G. W. PAULSON. Elsevier/Excerpta Medica/North Holland. 1973. Pp. xxii+801. Index 25 pp. Illustrated. Price Dfl. 150.00.

In 1872 George Huntington described a hereditary form of chorea which had been observed by himself and his predecessors in the family practice on Long Island, New York. This well-produced book contains papers presented to an international Centennial Conference held at Columbus, Ohio, where Huntington had presented his original paper to a local medical society. In addition to historical papers and extant early accounts of the condition, it contains review articles and reports of recent studies of the genetics, epidemiology, biochemistry, pathology and behavioural aspects of Huntington's chorea and its clinical variants, of related conditions such as Gilles de la Tourette's disease, and of the natural and experimentally-produced dyskinesias in animals. The conference discussion of these papers is not included. Most papers have a lengthy bibliography and there are detailed author and subject indexes.

The result is an exhaustive and authoritative coverage of what is known and not known of this illness, with perhaps some over-emphasis on current research preoccupations. It tempts one to think that the clue to this clinical puzzle lies somewhere in these pages, and the book will undoubtedly appeal to anyone who fancies an attempt to solve a clinical problem from his armchair. It will, of course, disappoint the reader who cannot tolerate detail or negative results or who needs the satisfaction of knowing the answer. Nature is keeping her secret a little longer.

R. N. HERRINGTON.

The Origin of Alpha Rhythm. By OLOF LIPPOLD. Edinburgh and London: Churchill-Livingstone. 1973. Pp. x+268. Index 3 pp. Price £6.00.

In his preface, the author mentions how an early experience as a medical student determined his career and his research interests. During a demonstration, he was struck by what seemed to him a close resemblance between physiological tremor and the alpha rhythm. The conclusion of his book is that the alpha rhythm in normal human subjects does not arise in the brain, but 'in fact does have rather a prosaic origin in the tremor to be found in the external muscles of the eye'.

The author, who properly acknowledges his co-workers and particularly Dr. G. E. K. Novotny, must have spent a tremendous amount of time, let alone money, to support his hypothesis. He has, however, avoided, or neglected, a great deal of evidence which demonstrates that the alpha rhythm as well as other rhythmic activities recordable through scalp electrodes are closely related to the underlying activity of the brain and may be modified by various stimuli quite independently from eye movements. Not only the pioneer work of Hans Berger but also that of Adrian and Matthews, of Grey Walter, of Lindsley and many others is unfairly criticized. When good evidence is quoted against the author's hypothesis, this is done by playing on words: for example it has been proven that enucleation of both eyes does not abolish the alpha rhythm: Lippold's version is that 'a wave form resembling alpha rhythm can be found in persons who have had both eyes removed'.

This book should be considered as an 'academic exercise' and a very costly one, at £6.00.

G. PAMPIGLIONE.

Surgical Approaches in Psychiatry. Edited by LAURI LATTINEN and KENNETH LIVINGSTON. Lancaster: Medical and Technical Publishing Co. Pp. 335+xvi. Illus. Price £9.50.

These are the Proceedings of the Third International Congress of Psychosurgery, held in Cambridge in August 1972. The first Congress in 1948 was concerned with devising techniques that would avoid the undesirable side-effects of the standard leucotomy. The development of phenothiazine derivatives, and the emotional and ethical antagonism against psychosurgery, caused many years to pass before the second Congress was held in Copenhagen, the proceedings of which were published last year. These congresses are a serious attempt to avoid repeating past errors, to base surgical procedures on a sound anatomical and physiological basis, and to bring research into the open where it can be evaluated and accepted or rejected.

The book begins with an admirable summary of the history and present aims of psychosurgery by Gošta Rylander. There follow sections on lesions in various parts of the brain. Finally, there are the extremely important sections on electrophysiology and the basic sciences in relation to psychosurgery. The latter papers summarize anatomical and physiological researches on related subjects, which makes them more accessible than in the specialist journals and provides points of reference to work from.

New knowledge of neuro-physiology is already coming from research directed primarily to the

perfection of psychosurgical techniques. This is leading to better understanding of biochemical mechanisms specific to various anatomical structures. The step from here to pharmacological control of the function of these areas is not a big one, and the hope that psycho-pharmacology will replace psychosurgery may be fulfilled in this way. It is not yet in a position to do this. Clearly, there are fields in which psychosurgery should be out of the question, but to ban the whole of psychosurgery is illogical and the idea is often based on misconception. This book should be made widely available and should be read by all those who wish to base their opinions on a scientific footing; for those directly concerned with the subject it is an essential work of reference.

PETER H. SCHURR.

MISCELLANEOUS

About Epilepsy. By DONALD SCOTT. London: Duckworth. 1973. Pp. 184. Index 5 pp. (second edition). Price £3.45.

Donald Scott's book has been revised and reprinted in its second edition. It is already too well known to require a full review. The second edition includes additional information related to the recent advances in the surgical and pharmacological treatment of epilepsy. The book remains a concise, simple, yet comprehensive account of the pathogenesis and treatment of epilepsy and is suitable for the intelligent parents of epileptic children, and for nurses and social workers. It should also be included in the libraries of our medical schools as it provides an easy introduction to epilepsy.

P. B. C. FENWICK.

The American Disease. Origins of Narcotic Control. By DAVID F. MUSTO. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. 1973. Pp. xiii+333. Index 19 pp. Price £4.75.

Dr. Musto writes both as historian and psychiatrist, but mainly as the former. His study of the chequered development of policies for the control of drug dependence in the United States is detailed and absorbing. He emphasizes the tendency of his countrymen to attribute 'the American Disease' to the un-American activity of ethnic minorities. There are many quotations from early writers and speakers, including a diatribe against Coca-Cola, which contained cocaine until 1903 and was blamed for negro riots.

A critical account of the early U.S. treatment clinics is of topical interest. At least 44 such clinics were established from 1912 onwards. At first, maintenance prescribing of narcotics was undertaken, but after numerous legal battles, of which the book gives

a blow by blow account, this was prohibited. Thereafter, out-patient prescribing was permitted only on the basis of progressive reduction in dosage. Even so, the initial dosage (grains 10 or mgms. 600 of morphine or heroin daily) was liberal by to-day's standards. The Federal Narcotics Division of the Prohibition Unit (supported by outside medical opinion) enforced the closure of all the clinics by the mid-twenties. The busiest clinic had treated 7,500 patients in all, of whom few were cured.

There are valuable historical perspectives in this volume, although so much that is described is particular to United States politics that it is difficult to derive lessons directly applicable elsewhere. Clinicians in the new treatment centres in the United Kingdom may, on reading this book, be led to reflect both on the intelligent benevolence of our Home Office colleagues and on the fact that with our maintenance prescribing we are not exactly blazing a trail.

DENIS PARR.

Clinical Use of Psychotherapeutic Drugs.

By LEO E. HOLLISTER. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1973. Pp. vii+192. Index 6 pp. Price \$5.95.

The author is well-known for his work on the clinical evaluation of psychotropic drugs. He has written the book 'to provide a general approach to drug therapy for mental and emotional disorders'. The book is intended for clinicians and students, not for experts in psychopharmacology. To what extent has the author achieved his aim?

Reasonably well. He tempers his enthusiasm for the drugs with awareness of their limitations and of the almost invariable need for other forms of management as well. He uses a simple classification of antipsychotic, antimanic, antidepressant and antianxiety drugs, while admitting that the same drug may be used for different purposes at different times. Enough chemical and pharmacological information is provided for the non-expert reader. There follows a brief but sensible account of how each class of drugs should be used in practice, without a lot of tiresome detail. For those who want the detail, a reasonable bibliography is provided.

In such a subject, no author could hope to satisfy all his readers. Long-acting intramuscular preparations of fluphenazine etc. rate only one paragraph, without a single reference. The chapter on drugs in children is really too brief to be helpful and seems to have been written less critically than the rest of the book. The author obviously had American clinicians in mind when he wrote the book; their British counterparts could also benefit from reading it.

J. L. GIBBONS.