

Eva Frommer presents a compassionate account of the developmental stages from dependency to independence. It is not entirely clear to whom the author is addressing herself; presumably she is writing to the sophisticated lay reader rather than the professional worker. However, some features are of interest to the latter, namely the reference to the concepts on which the work of the Rudolph Steiner Communities is based; the attempt to examine behavioural types in the chapter on temperament and personality, the sanguine, phlegmatic, melancholic and choleric; the career patterns of young people, again divided into four types. In addition to the detailed reference to the fantasy life of children, the importance of preparation for the reality of life is also emphasized, and a particularly important suggestion is that the work of the health visitor and social worker should be intensified and that they could perform a valuable task for the young wife and mother by helping her improve her practical housewifery and child care in addition to 'proffering abstract advice'.

Despite these positive features this book is not easy to read, and fact and impression are difficult to disentangle, so that it cannot be recommended unreservedly.

EDNA M. IRWIN.

PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology Today. An Introduction. Edited by G. JOYCE, A. LAZERSON, C. STARR and B. H. WYKOFF. Del Mar, California. C.R.M. Books Inc., 1970. Pp. 707. No price stated.

This is a well produced and lavishly illustrated textbook designed for undergraduate students studying psychology at a fairly rudimentary level. Any book of this nature, if it is to appeal to the population for which it is intended, must be attractive in its presentation, comprehensive in its scope and relatively cheap. The editors have provided us with an extremely attractive book which, perhaps, covers more areas of psychology than any other introductory text.

Eight divisions have been made within the field of general psychology e.g. The Sensory World: Personality: Social Psychology; and these areas have been further subdivided into chapters of a more homogeneous nature. The British student will find a distinct American bias in many areas. One doubts, for example, whether many British institutions offer extensive teaching and discussion of 'The Intensive Group Experience' to their first year undergraduates. However, even given a difference in teaching bias, one gets the impression that the publishers have sometimes been over-concerned to include 'novel'

or 'interesting' topics at the expense of some of the fundamental but perhaps duller areas of psychology which must form the basis of any experimentally orientated course.

The chapters concerned with the sensory world, the nervous system, and motivation are particularly to be recommended, this recommendation being made partly because of the stimulating and appropriate use which has been made of colour plates in these chapters. However, this having been said, it is doubtful if the book as a whole will recommend itself to either undergraduates or psychiatrists in training owing to the expected high cost of the volume (no price is listed) and the fact that existing textbooks already provide an adequate, if less colourful, introduction to the subject.

G. ROBERTSON.

Homo Psychologicus. By JOHN COHEN. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1970. Pp. 192. Price £2.50.

The book is thoughtful, literate and concerned with men, so it is quite likely that the High Science Brigade will deem it not a psychology book at all.

It wanders gently away from those psychologists who 'are ready to explore anything so long as it has nothing to do with the history or geography of their own mind;' into issues like creativity, the experience of time, secrecy, the dichotomy of work and play, and the issues of culture, technology and war. The book seeks truth by speculation and draws aptly on history and literature for much of the material of its argument.

When the author draws directly on experimental psychology, relevance and conviction diminish, which is sad for the author and sad for experimental psychology. The experiment of his own, which he quotes in relation to the idea of 'search', has some of that shrunken quality which he condemns in much traditional research.

True, the book is more of a collection of essays than an integrated thesis. True, the author has spotted the hollow centre in reductionism and scientism, but he has not clearly seen the dangers of 'area' psychology and the disguised theoretical assumptions contained therein. But the perspective he offers for psychology is rich; the work will refresh the soul of many a student dehydrated by the standard texts.

Cohen writes in the tradition of James, Bartlett, Thouless and Raven and is the more welcome therefore.

D. BANNISTER.