

into a new coherent theory of consciousness. Very few contemporary heads could do this with the evident competence of Ey, who seems equally at home in all these areas and can bend what seems useful to him into an organic whole of his own creation. Whether he has in fact succeeded one will only be able to judge later.

The book is not easy to read but is well worth the effort.
J. HOENIG.

EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Experimental Psychology: its scope and method.

I. History and method. By JEAN PIAGET, PAUL FRAISSE and MAURICE REUHLIN. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1968. Pp. 245. 35s.

This book is of such unusually high quality that reading it produced something akin to catharsis in me. I am certain that my health has been improved, and the medicine is available to others.

This is the first volume of a nine-volume handbook of experimental psychology, edited by Fraisse and Piaget. It is concerned with history and method, but let me assure the reader immediately that this is not tedious. There is the all-pervading influence of Piaget; and there is a 'foreignness' about the writers (compared with Anglo-American), who at the same time differ in their approach but are spontaneous and friendly in style.

The most interesting section is undoubtedly the first (Fraisse), which is historical. The contribution of workers from many countries is discussed, including those not over-represented in our texts, like France and Russia. This section discusses philosophical, experimental, statistical, medical and comparative approaches. The second section is on experimental method (Fraisse) which deals with observation, hypotheses, types of experiment and analysis of results; and there is another section on measurement, especially scaling methods (Reuchlin). These are thoughtful and quite straightforward.

Piaget contributes a section on Explanation in psychology and psychophysiological parallelism which is tough—the toughest forty pages in the book. It is highly abstract and closely argued. Discussion at this level is compulsive reading for me, but I inevitably find myself asking what 'use' it is, and whether it would not be better to go and 'do' an experiment.

This comprehensive handbook with Piaget among the editors is a significant event in psychological publishing. I look forward enthusiastically to the later volumes, especially those on the more complex aspects of personality from the standpoint of these eminent experimentalists.

SIDNEY CROWN.

A STANDARD WORK

Der Balkenmangel (Agenesis of the Corpus Callosum). By F. UNTERHARNSCHEIDT, D. JACHNIK and H. GOTT. Monographien aus dem Gesamtgebiete der Neurologie und Psychiatrie No. 128. Berlin-Heidelberg: Springer Verlag. 1968. Pp. 232. Price DM. 68.

The book, which is dedicated to Hugo Spatz on his eightieth birthday, is an up-to-date survey of the symptomatology, patho-physiology and anatomy of this rare but important condition, and a report of thirty-three cases observed by the authors. Dr. Unterharnscheidt is Chief of the Division of Neuropathology, Experimental Neurosurgery and Experimental Neurology of the University of Texas. The first symptoms were usually observed in childhood; they were cerebral seizures, mental retardation and organic personality changes.

The diagnosis can be confirmed only by pneumoencephalography. Hallucinations and delusions are rare. There is a comprehensive bibliography of the world literature on the subject. A syndrome typical of tumours involving the corpus callosum does not exist.

This book, which has a fairly detailed summary in English, is a worthy successor to Mingazzini's monograph (1922), and is sure to become a standard work to be consulted by neuropathologists, neurologists and by experts in mental subnormality.

E. STENDEL.

PHARMACOLOGY

Non-specific Factors in Drug Therapy. Edited by K. RICKELS. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1969. Pp. 149. Price \$7.75.

The idea has become established that the actions of any drug as observed in clinical practice can be divided into two parts, firstly, the pharmacodynamic actions attributable to the direct, specific properties of the drug, secondly, those not so attributable, the 'non-specific factors'. The latter are dependent on complex interactions involving the therapist, the patient, the social milieu and the act of giving tablets itself. These non-specific factors are most important, as Hamilton puts it, with respect to 'small treatments and small illnesses'. As the majority of our pharmacotherapies in psychiatry are only moderately effective, the need to examine closely the factors governing the non-specific elements of drug response is apparent.

This book contains the separately published proceedings of one of the sessions of the Fourth World Congress of Psychiatry held in Madrid in September, 1966. The session was organized and chaired by

Dr. Karl Rickels, the editor of this book. He contributes the first chapter which broadly reviews the topic and serves as a useful introduction. Rickels points out that not only do non-specific factors influence treatment outcome, but they also affect the incidence of 'drop-out' in patients admitted to a clinical trial, and their reporting of side-reactions.

DiMascio's contribution is especially interesting to psychologists, as it concerns the assessment of drug effects on groups of normal subjects distinguished by their personality characteristics. For example, subjects with extreme scores on the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale were given a benzodiazepine compound such as diazepam for a week. A lowering in anxiety level was noted only in the high anxiety group, whereas a paradoxical increase in anxiety was induced in the low anxiety subjects. Similarly, in normal subjects with high or low M.M.P.I. depression scores treated with imipramine the antidepressant action of the drug was discernible only in the high depression subjects.

Several chapters are wholly or partly concerned with the properties of the placebo, placebo reactions and placebo reactors. Beecher, the doyen of this area of research, concludes that one can identify consistent placebo reactors and non-reactors. An essentially similar conclusion is reached by the French workers, Pichot and Perse, from their studies of that constituent of response set identified as 'acquiescence'. According to McNair and his co-workers examining the same problem, 'acquiescers are likely to be rather thoughtless non-discriminating individuals, rather than complaint conformers'. Such subjects add 'noise' to a drug trial and should be evaluated separately or trained to give reliable subjective ratings.

The longest chapter is Horningfeld's review of non-specific factors in the treatment of depressed states. His discussion of these factors is generally sound, but his account of depressive syndromes is oversimplified and perpetuates some canards such as the obsessional pre-morbid personality of the agitated depressive.

In the reviewer's opinion, the strict dichotomy into specific and non-specific factors in drug response may prove misleading in the long run. Even such ostensibly non-specific factors as the patient-physician relationship may be influenced by specific drug effects such as sedation. Accordingly, the interactions involved are very complicated indeed, and it may become useful to array drug effects along a continuum from highly selective, specific actions (i.e. with postulated anatomical receptor-sites) to very diffuse non-specific effects. All in all, the publication of this book separately from the main bulk of

the Congress Proceedings (reviewed in this *Journal* Nov. 1968, p. 1459) is to be welcomed. The individual contributions inevitably vary in length, complexity and thoroughness, but they dovetail neatly with one another avoiding needless, boring repetition. Finally, the book is carefully indexed and well produced.

MALCOLM LADER.

SOCIAL PSYCHIATRY OR PSYCHIATRIC SOCIOLOGY?

Social Psychiatry. Edited by JOSEPH ZUBIN and FRITZ A. FREYHAN. New York, London: Grune and Stratton. Pp. 382. Price £6 10s. 6d.

This symposium of contributions at the 57th Annual Meeting of the American Psychopathological Association held in 1967 presents the strength and the weakness of such publications. The Editors frankly acknowledge this fact, with the added comment that the reader of this book is neither a full participant in the symposium nor can he expect a comprehensive textbook approach on social psychiatry. They had invited the speakers to consider the key concepts of the field both scientifically and ideologically, and so divided the programme into separate sections dealing with assumptions and hypotheses, a review of current evidence, and methodological problems of interpretation and evaluation. However, neither the Table of Contents nor the text displays this classification, nor is there an index, apart from that of names. Notwithstanding these drawbacks of presentation and format, there is much of intrinsic value and substance in both individual papers and discussions, some of which will rank as classics in the field of social psychiatry, particularly where they illuminate areas of uncertainty and indicate the need for further research.

Recognition of the social factors that are the cause or consequence of mental disorders, or that may be relevant to their prevention or treatment, is fundamental in this field. The investigation of these factors may be discerned throughout the history of psychiatry, although the last half century has seen its most intensive growth. In this context the synonymous use of the terms 'social' and 'community' psychiatry is to be deprecated, the former being both different from and wider in connotation than the latter. Inevitably, the growth of related disciplines especially the social sciences with their corresponding 'psychiatric sociology' has led not only to cross-fertilization with 'social psychiatry' but often to semantic confusion. This facet is ably discussed by Leo Srole as 'A Case of the Babel Syndrome', drawing attention to the service-versus-research functions of the different professions concerned in these fields.