

demonstration, but learned little or no psychiatry in the process.

Trevor Turner's contribution is to be strongly recommended to all those who would hope to gain some insight into that brilliant yet enigmatic psychiatrist/philosopher who dominated the British scene in the 19th and early 20th centuries – Henry Maudsley. Incidentally, Turner, a mere stripling in chronological terms, gives the lie to the somewhat snide allegations in the Introduction to Volume II that the history of psychiatry is “the almost exclusive preserve of elderly psychiatrists”. It is true, alas, that the subject has been largely taken over by scholars in peripheral disciplines, but it could be that the establishment of a History of Psychiatry Group of the College will redress the balance.

The standard of scholarship overall is high, and the essays are rich in primary and secondary sources which have hitherto been under-researched. There is the occasional flaw, however. For example, Nancy Tomes (p.193) claims that the title of the journal of the Association of Medical Officers of Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane, first published in 1853, was the *Asylum Journal of Mental Science*. The title was, of course, *The Asylum Journal*, later to be changed to the *Journal of Mental Science*. Again, her claim that the poor attendance at early meetings of the Association was due to divisions between private madhouse doctors and those working in county asylums is only partially true. More to the point is the fact that asylum doctors were marooned in their isolated institutions which they often ran single-handed. For them to attend meetings in, say, London, Oxford, or Edinburgh was difficult if not impossible.

Nevertheless, a boxed set of all three volumes of the series would make an excellent gift to retiring consultant psychiatrists if, that is, the not inconsiderable monies involved were to be subscribed by sorrowing colleagues when the hat went round.

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Lithium Treatment of Manic Depressive Illness: A Practical Guide (4th edn). By M. SCHOU. Basel: S. Karger. 1989. 50 pp. £6.40.

This book had to be written. It is no exaggeration to talk of the “lithium revolution” of the 1970s. Few psychiatrists or general practitioners do not encounter manic depression in their everyday practice, and affective disorders are of major epidemiological significance. Likewise, most doctors have had to deal with patients who are inclined to take their own lives. The national suicide statistics are still frightening. Many of these individuals suffer from ‘affective illness’ of a recurrent or bipolar type, and are therefore potential candidates for

lithium therapy or prophylaxis. Lithium is to manic depression as neuroleptics are to schizophrenia.

This thin volume is written by an acknowledged master of his craft. It is admirably brief – even terse. The language is simple layman's English, easy to understand and assimilate. The book is thus likely to become required reading for all who have to do with lithium – patients and carers alike. The notes on lithium, pregnancy, and breast feeding are particularly well done.

There are, however, minor blemishes. To whom is the book directed – patients or physicians? The note on the unwanted effects of neuroleptic-lithium combinations fails to discuss the reports of neurological sequelae. Although there is a section on renal function, there is no mention of the diabetes insipidus-like syndrome which may be irreversible in some cases. But these points apart, this book deserves to be widely circulated and read. The price is well within the reach of most pockets.

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Organic Psychiatry: The Psychological Consequences of Cerebral Disorder (2nd edn). By ALWYN LISHMAN. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific. 1987. 745 pp. £25.00 (pb), £45.00 (hb).

Lishman was awarded a six-month visiting fellowship at Green College, Oxford, where he was able to update the first edition of his book in the Radcliffe Science Library Division of the Bodlean Library – a place well-known to him, since this was where he wrote his first clinical papers. The result is a larger and more comprehensive edition, trimmed in some areas but expanded in others such as dementia and his own particular interest, brain damage associated with alcoholism. Over the 10 years since the first edition was published, certain areas of organic psychiatry have expanded explosively, particularly as a result of the new techniques for brain imaging. Structural techniques such as nuclear magnetic resonance and functionally-orientated techniques such as positron emission tomography (PET) scanning have become more available, the latter as a research tool. Both are covered in their theoretical aspects, and indeed the early papers on PET scanning in schizophrenia are mentioned. However, these inevitable omissions do not in any way detract from this vast body of knowledge, presented with immense care and attention to detail in a form which is easily read. There must be a great many psychiatrists like myself who when problems in organic psychiatry emerge think to ourselves, “I must check Lishman”. I personally have never found him wanting.

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