

The Scope of Epidemiology in Psychiatry. By TSUNG-YI LIN and C. C. STANDLEY. World Health Organization. Public Health Papers. No. 16. Geneva. Pp. 76. 1962. Price 5s.

This is one of a series of Public Health pamphlets published by the World Health Organization and designed to stimulate international thinking and planning on particular health questions. It is a companion volume to Reid's *Epidemiological Methods of Mental Disorders* (1960) and presents, with a refreshingly international flavour, a general review of work done and work in progress in the field of psychiatric epidemiology. There are three main sections: these deal with the statistics of mental disorder, with population morbidity surveys, and with factors bearing on the aetiology and evolution of mental illness. In a concluding section the authors stress the need for clear definitions of the criteria and methods used in survey work; and they also suggest that more attention might be given in such work to the degree of impairment caused by illness and less to attempts at textbook diagnosis.

This short book (there are only 56 pages of text) gives an excellent introduction to a rapidly developing branch of psychiatry. It is of general interest, but it will be particularly useful to psychiatrists, sociologists and public health workers intending to start or to encourage research into the preventable causes of mental disorder.

E. H. HARE.

The Scientific Basis of Medicine Annual Reviews 1963. University of London. London: The Athlone Press. Pp. 348. Price 40s.

This year's British Postgraduate Medical Federation reviews follows the usual pattern of an opening rather general dissertation, followed by, in this instance, nineteen specialized lectures. Lord Cohen opens the volume with an introduction to human genetics, and amongst the following contributions there are perhaps five that might interest psychiatrists. Feldberg discusses the effects of injection of drugs directly into the ventricles (though by no means in such detail as in his also published Graham lectures); Daniel describes work on the blood supply of the pituitary, Millen the anatomy of the pia mater and the choroid plexuses, Donovan experimental work on the control of time of puberty, and Parkes factors affecting reproduction in mammals including social factors. All these essays are interesting, but they would scarcely warrant the outlay of 40s. by a senior psychiatric registrar.

J. M. TANNER.

2. SPECIAL SYNDROMES AND TREATMENTS

Psychogenic Psychoses: a Description and Follow-up of Psychoses Following Psychological Stress. By POUL M. FAERGEMAN. London: Butterworths. 1963. Pp. xii+268. Price 42s.

Die Schizophrenieähnlichen Emotionspsychosen: ein Beitrag zur Abgrenzung Schizophrenieartiger Zustandsbilder. By F. LABHARDT. Berlin: Springer-Verlag. Pp. vi+103. 1963. Price DM28.

In 1916 August Wimmer, then the Professor of Psychiatry in the University of Copenhagen, published a monograph on the psychogenic psychoses. These he defined as a group of psychoses, independent of other accepted groups, caused by psychic trauma in individuals with a psychopathic predisposition. The psychic traumata were responsible for the appearance of the illness, its clinical "movements", its content, and very often its termination; the prognosis was regarded as favourable, never resulting in deterioration of the personality. Wimmer's monograph did not include any follow-up study. It was as a result of a suggestion by Erik Strömberg that Dr. Faergeman undertook a follow-up study of 170 patients diagnosed as suffering from psychogenic psychoses by Wimmer and his staff during the years 1924-26. He succeeded in tracing practically all of them, though this was after an interval of 15-20 years, and in personally examining 98; 53 of the patients had died. Only 10 cases had to be excluded, in the end, because it was thought the amount of follow-up information was insufficient.

The great value of Dr. Faergeman's monograph consists in the long-term follow-up information which it provides. The reviewer did not find either the introductory chapters, or the discussion which follows the analysis of the results, helpful in settling any of the difficult questions which are raised for consideration. Dr. Faergeman is not only an obviously exceedingly competent clinical psychiatrist; he is also a practising psychoanalyst. The trouble is that the two disciplines mix no better than spring-water and train-oil. The illuminations provided by a discussion along psychoanalytic lines are of value only within the psychoanalytic universe of discourse, and leave the non-analyst just where he was. The factual evidence supplied is, however, of the greatest importance. Case summaries of all 170 patients, together with the follow-up data, are there for the reader to study.

The first point that emerges is the clinical heterogeneity of these psychoses. Dr. Faergeman classifies