

of psychiatric sciences. But psychiatrists in general, and French psychiatrists in particular, were deprived of a history of their discipline by his untimely death. An attempt is made in this book to delineate the scientific evolution of medicine. It elegantly describes its emergence from the magical and mythological thinking and follows the historical movement which permitted its elaboration as a scientific discipline. Written by a psychiatrist, this book is eminently worth reading and in addition to being stimulating to the general reader, will appeal to psychiatrists with a special interest in psychotherapy and history of psychiatry.

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Foundations of Psychosomatics. Edited by MARGARET J. CHRISTIE and PETER MELLETT. Chichester: John Wiley. 1981. Pp 428. £17.50.

This book is based on the sciences basic to psychosomatics and contains a series of essays in four sections: Early Experience, Emotions, Individual Differences and Environment in relation to psychosomatics. A second volume will focus on clinical applications. The editors have chosen authors whose contributions are designed to span the disciplinary boundaries; thus this book should find favour with a multi-disciplinary readership. It is not a formal text book and is therefore not comprehensive in its coverage. There is a wide ranging but somewhat arbitrary choice of subject matter which includes essays on Intra-uterine Experience and its Long-term Outcome, Biofeedback and Emotional Behaviour, the Psychophysiology of Psychopathic Behaviour, Pain and Personality, Culture and Illness and The Treatment Environment. The contributions are on the whole clearly and well presented, comprehensible to a readership ranging from medicine to the behavioural and life sciences. There is an extensive bibliography at the end of each essay.

The editors have been closely identified with the Society for Psychosomatic Research and this book reflects the approach, balance and ethos which was such an attractive feature of the earlier annual conferences of this Society. I found this collection stimulating, readable and thought-provoking and I thoroughly recommend it. As a clinician, I also look forward to the second volume.

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Tredgold's Mental Retardation. (12th edition). Edited by MICHAEL CRAFT. London: Baillière Tindall. 1979. Pp 384. £16.00.

This is the 12th edition of *Tredgold's Mental Retardation* and is virtually an entirely new book edited by Michael Craft. The stated underlying intention to describe and evaluate the many multi-disciplinary contributions to advances that are taking place in the field of mental handicap, is unfortunately over-shadowed by the prominent position occupied by chapters on the medical and physical causes of 'retardation'. While I sympathise with the need to present background reference material for the various disciplines in the mental handicap team in a comprehensive text book, I would have preferred the strictly medical data to be presented in a specialized section at the back. Likewise the chapters of more general interest to a community mental handicap team should achieve more prominence. I include here the excellent chapter on personal relationships and partnerships for the mentally handicapped and the whole section on the law relating to mental handicap in England, Scotland the United States.

Following on from the Court report and the establishment of district handicap teams to coordinate at district level all the services which are available for handicapped children and their families, I would have liked to see a section of the book bring together all the contributions relating to the mentally handicapped child.

On the whole I am very enthusiastic about this book, the text is produced to a relatively high standard but I found the photographs unhelpful and could see no purpose in their inclusion. The idea of radically revising a classic although out-of-date work is not new, and more sales must be achieved through familiarity of style and format. The terminology struggles to meet the more acceptable norms used in recent government circulars. Unfortunately as soon as one label achieves common usage, it will already have fallen out of favour with some advocates of this minority groups rights! It may therefore be too much to expect the 13th edition to appear with a different title.

In conclusion I would definitely recommend that you replace your library copy of the 11th edition with the 12th edition which however was published in 1979 and those wishing to buy a personal copy might prefer to wait for the next edition.

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