at a stage in their training when a preoccupation with psychiatric phenomenology makes it difficult for them to take a broad view of the whole scene.

MICHAEL J. TARSH.

Mental Health and Contemporary Thought. Edited by KENNETH SODDY and ROBERT H. AHRENFELDT. Volume II of a Report of an International and Interprofessional Study Group convened by the World Federation for Mental Health. London: Tavistock Publications Ltd. 1967. Pp. 362. Price 55*s*.

In the introduction, the late Professor Rumke defends the idea of wide-ranging inter-professional discussions associated with a comparative lack of objectivity. He argues that new hypotheses are less likely to be produced without the co-operation of such a multidisciplined team.

This second volume tries to delimit "mental health" and show how such a concept has arisen. It then attempts to set out guidelines for the training of mental health personnel, particularly in developing countries. The editors suggest that this volume might appeal more to those with a general interest in social problems than to those engaged in active clinical work.

In general, the book is difficult reading, particularly in the early chapters. The chapters on social change and individual change are somewhat obscure, and that on the "conceptualization" of mental health and its "operational description" is so vague as to be almost incomprehensible. The book would have been easier to read if there had been summaries at the end of each chapter. Much of it seems a little dated, because so many of the topics have been general talking points in the six years that have passed since the study group met. This "dated" quality is a little redeemed by the inclusion of references up to the end of 1964.

On the credit side, the book is perhaps most useful for its efforts to synthesize the views of observers from Africa and South America with those of group members from more sophisticated European countries and from the U.S.A. Observations of the difficulties caused by the impact of Western ideas and industrialization on tribal cultures may help us to understand better the recent race riots in North America. The observations about individual aggressiveness and studies on aggressive behaviour in monkeys and young children will however probably be of less help in elucidating the psychogenesis of war. The chapter on the fear of nuclear destruction seems almost "old hat", coming as it does years before the Cuban débâcle.

The second half of the book, dealing with training programmes, is more concrete and easier to assess. I found of great interest the discussion of plans for producing a psychiatric service from scratch in an emerging area. The reasons for sending doctors for training elsewhere or for keeping them at home are most thoughtfully discussed. One wishes we could have been given views of the study group on the strange way in which the British National Health Service only continues in being by exploiting the labours of doctors from a very different cultural background—particularly in its psychiatric hospitals.

In sum, the book suffers from the defects of most "agreed documents" and is generally rather woolly. Parts of it, however, are stimulating. It is well printed and not outrageously expensive.

MICHAEL J. TARSH.

Psychiatry in the American Community. By H. G. WHITTINGTON. New York: International Universities Press, Inc. 1966. Pp. 476. Price $10.00.

The scope of this book is less ambitious than its title may suggest; it is in fact concerned entirely with the planning and organization of those community mental health centres called for in the late President Kennedy's 1963 Message to Congress. The theoretical basis of such planning has been made familiar by Professor Caplan and others; nevertheless, in practice the development of comprehensive community services remains largely a matter of trial and error, and clearly it is important that those who have pioneered in this field should provide some documentation of their work.

For this task, Dr. Whittington would seem well qualified. During the three and a half years which he spent as Director of Community Mental Health Services for the State of Kansas, he and his staff established ten new treatment centres and more than doubled the clinical services available through the state: an impressive record. Much of his experience is embodied in the present volume.

In a thoughtful introductory chapter, the development of modern community psychiatry is placed in its historical setting and also related to contemporary patterns of medical care in the United States. In the author's own words, "A double standard of treatment has increasingly developed . . . . With the American genius for compromise, the community mental health center program . . . . can be seen as an understandable sociological development."

Throughout the book, the psychiatric services are viewed as operating within a framework of social agencies; indeed the author considers that something

like one third of the total mental health programme should be devoted to consultation with such agencies. There are short sections on a number of special topics, including mental subnormality, juvenile delinquency, drug addiction and mental hospital after-care. In addition, Miss Susan Ellermeier has contributed two chapters on the public relations aspects of community health programmes.

Unfortunately, the book does little to clarify its subject. From internal evidence, it appears to have been based on a series of memoranda or working papers, some possibly written in collaboration, and not always thoroughly integrated into the text. There is a resulting unevenness of style and, more serious, a confusing chronological indeterminacy, so that the reader is often unsure what has been achieved, what is currently in progress, or what is still only a blueprint. A number of references make it clear that the early stages of planning here described did not include any careful assessment of the need for services; thus the only prevalence statistics cited are derived from external sources, such as the Midtown Manhattan study. Nor does there appear to have been any attempt at evaluation of the treatment programme. But then, as the author remarks, "Research can be rather a scary word".

In view of these inadequacies, it is difficult to know how much weight to place on the author's conclusions. Briefly, Dr. Whittington advocates that community mental health programmes should be set up independently of the public health authorities, and that they should be operated by private non-profit making groups, partly on a fee-paying basis, partly subsidized by the state. This is compromise with a vengeance.

Certainly, it may be doubted if programmes of the kind here envisaged could be wholly maintained from public funds. Thus, the annual cost of a comprehensive service for a population of 100,000, in staff salaries alone, is estimated at about $600,000. Such a figure (which of course excludes hospital services) seems incompatible with the statement that community mental health centres are essentially a way of redeploying professional workers already in the field. In any case, a number of comments throughout the book make it clear that the basic objection to a publicly controlled mental health programme is ethical, since it conflicts with what the author regards as the cultural norm of individual payment for services received.

While this viewpoint cannot be dismissed, one would require firmer evidence than is here provided before accepting a model which in the long run would serve to perpetuate and reinforce that double standard of treatment deplored by the author himself.

On the whole, this is a confused and disappointing treatment of an important theme.

BRIAN COOPER.

An Introduction to Social Medicine. By THOMAS MCKEOWN and C. R. LOWE. Oxford: Blackwell. 1966. Pp. 327. Price 50*s*.

In the context of present-day British social medicine, this book is timely and thought-provoking. In spite of an introduction which confines the subject matter almost solely to what can be discovered by using epidemiological techniques, the authors in fact break away from this restraint and restore to primary importance some of the subjects which more academically-minded epidemiologists would like to exclude altogether. No doctor (and, certainly, no psychiatrist) can read the sections on the origins and present dispositions of the socio-medical services without benefit, or fail to profit from the discussion of comprehensive medical care. Medical students, to whom this book is primarily addressed, will discover that the prescription of services is at least as important as the prescription of drugs, and one hopes that the concept of integrated medical care (replacing that of a rigid division into three professional hierarchies) will become firmly implanted into young minds. Taken in conjunction with Professor Morris's *Uses of Epidemiology* this book gives a much needed new look to social medicine, and it deserves to become widely influential.

On the other hand, looking to the more distant future, the book will disappoint those who believe that social psychiatry is an integral part of social medicine. Although the authors are progressive and liberal-minded men, certainly not prejudiced against psychiatry or the mentally ill, their book continues the traditional separation of psychiatry from medicine, the historical origins of which they elucidate so clearly. The fourteen pages on the mentally ill and subnormal, which are all they can find room for, remind one of the sections at the end of textbooks of neurology, where a few general remarks sum up the limitations in the authors' knowledge. This disappointment is all the keener because of the way in which the behavioural sciences are ignored. Although more than half the book is devoted to services, or to subjects such as "Rehabilitation", "The Home", "Place of Work" or "Modification of Personal Behaviour", there is nothing on the sociology of institutions, nothing about the social psychology of attitudes, nothing about the enormous literature on small groups, or about family relationships and their influence on health. The home, for the authors, may